



Press release

Peru-based English teacher-trainer gets top prize from Cambridge

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Peru-based English teacher-trainer Ralph Grayson has recently been awarded a prize by a department of Cambridge University in recognition of his teaching skills. Ralph, who currently teaches at Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, was presented the *Best Practice in Teacher Training* – a new Scholarship from Cambridge ESOL for his ideas and work on using authentic reading materials in the English language classroom. His award included funding to attend the annual global IATEFL conference for teachers of English as a foreign language which took place in the United Kingdom earlier this month. Speaking at a special award ceremony at IATEFL, Grayson said:

“Winning the award was a big surprise to me. I’ve been involved in English teaching in Peru for almost two decades and there is a real need to get more students reading authentic material in and out of the classroom. This gives them a closer approach to real-life English and is a great benefit to them in the long run. However, it’s essential that classroom tasks are adapted to compensate for complex texts to ensure potential frustration in students is avoided.”

Ralph’s award winning work look at ways teachers can successfully use authentic restaurant menus, posters and tube maps as effective teaching resources in the classroom. He feels that the Internet has exposed more students to real English and as a result they “appreciate and benefit from real material”.

Cambridge ESOL’s Chief Executive Dr Michael Milanovic commented:

“We’re delighted to be able to present this prestigious award to Ralph. His work not only highlighted the importance of using authentic reading texts in the English language classroom, but also how teachers can overcome the barriers and challenges associated with this approach”.

Grayson who is also involved in designing English language exams, explains what makes a good test:

“I’ve learnt a lot from working with Cambridge and I think that a good language exam needs to be standardised, clear and accessible with a set of tasks that are appropriate for the student.”

Germany's Thomas Lenth also received a scholarship from Cambridge under the category of "Best Practice in Language Assessment" for his work on the impact assessment has on reading skills. Both winners were presented with their award at IATEFL 2010 conference which was attended by over 2000 teachers from around the world. Other highlights included a talk by Professor John Hawkins showing some of the groundbreaking work that the that the English Profile project is doing to profile learners' level of ability in more detail than has ever been done before.