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# THE TC-TUNISIA PROJECT

Vol 2 Issue 2

*Newsletter*



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## PROJECT UPDATES

- The 2022 cohort of the TC-Tunisia Project has nominated three class representatives who will serve as liaisons between the Project staff and participants.
- The cohort has finished the first module of the year and attended their first community-building event co-hosted by the Project Assistant and Class Representatives.
- The participants are now at the beginning of their journey through Module 2.

# MEET THE 2022 CLASS REPRESENTATIVES



Shehrazad Louhichi has been a teaching advisor for 4 years. She is from Kebili in southern Tunisia, where she currently lives and works.



Amel Moutakel is an English language teacher at the Higher Institute of Social Sciences and Education of Gafsa, located in the south of Tunisia. She is keen on teaching English to everyone who has the desire to learn English.



Ahmed Jouini is an university teacher of English from Tunisia. He teaches at the Higher Institute of Education and Social Sciences of Gafsa.

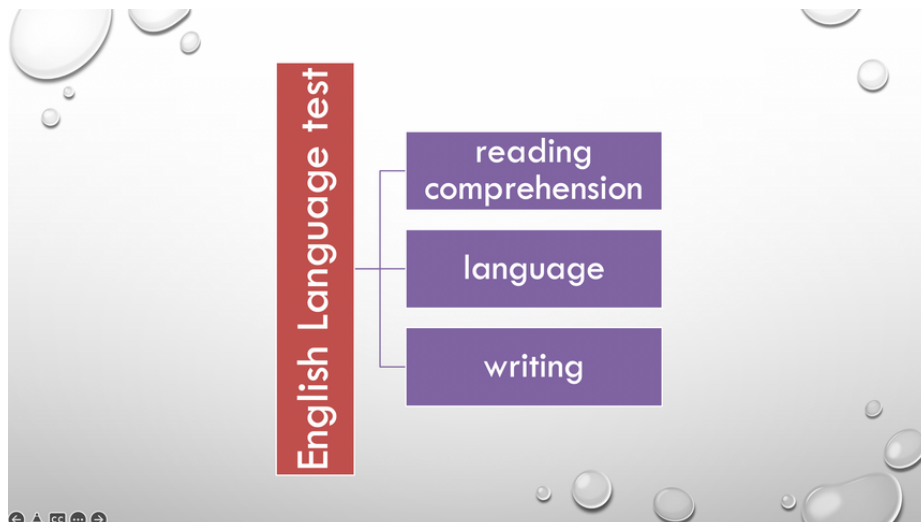
## MODULE 1

Module 1 commenced on Friday, February 4 and concluded on Saturday, March 12, 2022. During this time, participants were introduced to the fundamental principles of second language (L2) assessment. Specifically, it addressed the role of assessment in instruction and curriculum planning and highlighted the value of assessments in promoting learning.

At the end of the Module 1, participants worked in groups to complete a final project. This project required participants to design an assessment and present it to the rest of the class. In doing so, the participants described the assessment context, described the inferences and decisions to be made based on the assessment, created a rubric to be used with the assessment, and indicated the potential usefulness of the assessment.

To view some of the groups' final projects, please visit the following links:

- [Project Exemplar #1](#): Created by Abir Mnafeq, Amel Faleh, Amel Tlili, Manoubia Saad, Olfa Hammami, and Tarek Hasni
- [Project Exemplar #2](#): Created by Hichem Abidi, Cyrine Kortas, Shehrazad Louhichi, Nejah Sediri, and Salma Ghaoui



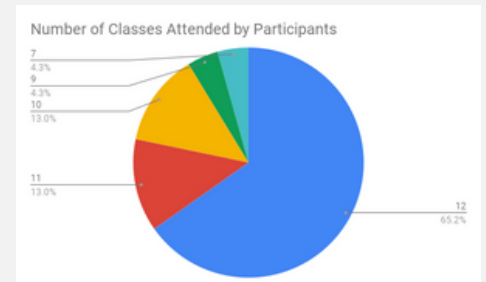
## MODULE 1 ATTENDANCE

Consistently attending class sessions on Zoom is essential for participants to get the most out of the TC-Tunisia Project. To track participants' attendance, two methods are employed: Zoom attendance reports and participants' self-tracking of their attendance.

Participants' attendance rates for Module 1 were quite impressive. A breakdown of the attendance is as follows:

- The majority of participants (65.2%) attended all twelve of the class sessions.
- 26% of participants attended either 10 or 11 of the 12 sessions.
- 8% of participants attended 9 or fewer sessions.

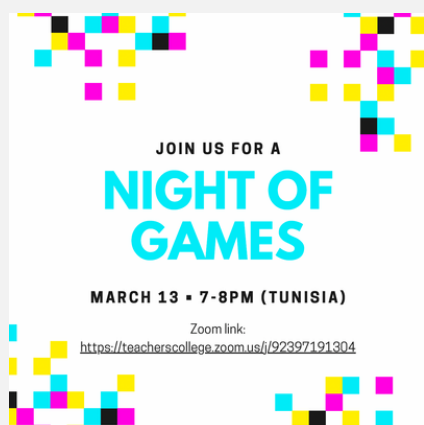
This information is presented visually in the pie chart below.



*Click the chart to enlarge*

## COMMUNITY EVENT: GAME NIGHT

On Sunday, March 13, nineteen participants gathered on Zoom for the first community-building event of the year. The event was planned and co-hosted by Project Assistant Ashley Beccia and the three class representatives. During the fun-filled event, participants played the game "Two Truths and a Lie." To do so, each participant shared three statements about themselves: two truthful and one fictitious. The other participants guessed which statement was the lie.



*The invitation to Game Night*

### *Can You Guess?*

Project participant **Kawthar Ben Slema** shared the following three statements:

- I have a twin.
- I live with my parents.
- I do yoga every day.

Participant **Yagouta Beji** shared the following statements:

- I traveled for the first time in 2002.
- I got married in 2002.
- I taught for the first time in 2002.

Which statements are truthful?  
Which statements are fibs?

# MODULE 1 REFLECTION

*A Promisingly Enriching and Informative Journey*

*by Cyrine Kortas*

The TC Tunisia Project in its second version has started its classes on February 4th, 2022 with an insightful class by Dr. Vivian Lindhardsen. The course extended over 6 weeks aiming at introducing the trainees to the fundamental principles of second language assessment and asserting its role in promoting learning. As one of these trainees, my expectations were rewarded from the very introductory session that announced a promisingly enriching and informative journey. Additionally, Dr. Lindhardsen displayed a great sense of professionalism, commitment and dedication that she transmitted to all of us.

The sessions granted us room for fruitful discussions that opened horizons for approaches, methods and objectives on teaching, testing and assessing that cemented a student-centred pedagogy. Many of the instructor's ideas still resonate and echo in my mind. Effective and successful testing is meant not only to evaluate the students' learning achievements, but also to assess one's teaching performance. Hence, to promote learning, one is to develop a test that meets the following requirements of consistency, reliability, practicality, and authenticity as well as trustworthiness and validity. The design of such a test is conditioned by having clear inferences of what we want to assess and how we want to assess it and in what shape it shall be formulated. The testing process is not an on-the-spot decision, but a full procedure that the teacher is to be aware of and that stretches out to include the student when formulating a communication responsive testing rubric, rather than a judgmental one that hampers the learning process. A test is said to have a positive wash back on both teacher and student when it permits the student to formulate self-feedback. These ideas enabled us to communicate our experiences, engage in the different discussions and extend these ideas to our classes. As a teacher of literature, I benefited from the importance of developing a communication responsive rubric that guarantees objectivity.

My experience with Dr. Lindhardsen's class is an enriching one by all means; not only academically speaking, but the class also installed principles of collaboration and teamwork that allowed me to feel part of a community and participate in its growth.




*Cyrine Kortas attending a Zoom class for Module 1*

# MODULE 2 OVERVIEW

The second module of the TC-Tunisia Project is *Pedagogical Training*. In this module, participants are introduced to the principles and practices of communicative language teaching (CLT), with an emphasis on teaching young learners. Some of the topics that will be addressed in the module include:

- Developmental issues working with young learners
- Building routines for language learning
- Using picture books, games and realia in the language learning classroom

In addition to attending class sessions, participants will complete a variety of required readings and post their reading responses to Schoology. An example reading response is shown below. For the final project of the module, participants will work in groups to create an electronic poster. This project affords participants the opportunity to research an issue pertaining to the teaching of young learners. In the final session of the module, participants will present their electronic posters.



**Majid YAHYAOU** Edited · Fri Apr 1, 2022 at 10:33 am

Q 1:

There is in Tunisia a firmly-established awareness and a wide agreement among teachers on the importance of the communicative approach to language teaching especially for EFL. Where I teach, teachers' attitudes and practices across all levels can be considered as relatively consistent with the CLT principles particularly with regard to the roles they play in the classroom and to the activities they use in CLT contexts.

Personally, I use, as frequently as possible, pair/group work, student presentations and class discussions not only to help students communicate effectively but also to make them enjoy communication in English. The problem is that sometimes we are faced with restrictions mostly related to the teaching context.

There are major problems and challenges that sometimes constitute an impediment to our attempts to implement CLT. In fact, a combination of factors concerning the teacher, the learner and even the educational system hinder the teaching of language with a communicative approach. These factors include: the number of class hours, work load, class size, lack of materials for communicative activities and in some cases low level of students' English.

*Abdelmajid Yahyaoui responding to the question, "What do you consider to be the greatest challenges to implementing CLT in Tunisia? How might you overcome these challenges?"*

## GENTLE REMINDERS

1

The class time for Module 2 is 3:00-5:00pm (Tunisia). Participants are expected to arrive to class on time.

2

During class sessions, to the greatest extent possible, participants must keep their cameras on. Participants are expected to actively participate in all sessions.

3

After each class session, participants must self-track their own attendance by completing the [Google Form](#) on Schoology.

## MEET THE INSTRUCTORS

Module 2 of the TC-Tunisia Project is unique in that it is co-taught by two instructors.

Dr. Donna Brinton

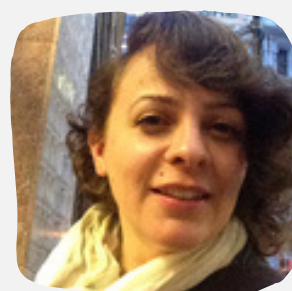


Dr. Brinton is a private educational consultant in Applied Linguistics/TESOL. She has held several positions at institutes of higher education, including the University of Southern California and Soka University of America.

Did you know Dr. Brinton...

- Spent 6 months camping in Europe with her parents when she was a teenager?
- Played piano and accordion as a child?
- Once had a pet pigeon who followed her everywhere?

Dr. Sarah Creider



Dr. Creider is a lecturer in Applied Linguistics and TESOL at Teachers College, Columbia University.

Did you know Dr. Creider...

- Was born in Kenya, and her first "second language" was Kipsigis?
- Has been studying martial arts for almost 20 years?
- Was a cookbook editor before studying Applied Linguistics?

# PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

## *Hajer Ben Lagha*

*Participant of the 2022 Cohort*

Hajer Ben Lagha is an educator from Bizerte, a town in the north of Tunisia. As an undergrad, Hajer studied International Relations at the Higher Institute of Human Sciences in Tunis. After graduating, Hajer contemplated her career path, and ultimately opted to pursue the field of education. She began teaching English at the primary level, and continued to do so for fifteen years. Then, Hajer became a teacher advisor, which she has been working as for four years. In this position, she visits teachers in their classrooms, supporting them by providing guidance and feedback. Amazingly, Hajer supports 190 teachers in her district.



When Hajer became a teaching advisor, she also decided to carry on with her studies. At the graduate level, Hajer has been studying educational technology. By studying educational technology, Hajer hoped to improve her own technology skills as part of her continuous professional development. Additionally, Hajer studies educational technology because she considers it as an essential part of the 21st-century classroom. That is, by integrating educational technology into the classroom, learners gain the digital skills needed to fully participate in our modern, digitalized world. What's more, educational technologies open up the possibility for distance learning and assessment. Connecting with students at a distance helps promote education on a wide scale and therefore contributes to the betterment of humankind.

For the final project of her master's degree, Hajer is investigating how technology can be used for teaching English to visually-impaired learners. One technological tool she has explored for this project was CrazyTalk, a "facial animation software that uses voice and text to vividly animate facial images" (Reallusion Inc., 2022). Though her journey through the master's program has been quite challenging due to her busy schedule as a working professional and mother of two children, Hajer has recently received honorable marks on the written portion of her degree requirements and will be discussing her project of final studies (PFE) in June 2022.

Moving forward, Hajer will make use of her knowledge about educational technologies as she supports English teachers across Tunisia. Though Tunisian teachers have begun making use of technology in their classrooms, there is ample room for growth. In short, Hajer will help propel education in Tunisia forward into a digital future.

## ON BEHALF OF THE TC-TUNISIA STAFF...

