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A FEW THOUGHTS ON WRITING INTERNATIONAL ENGLISH

By Craig Lock

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Here is my "dime's worth" (see learning "American English" , or at least your expressions already) on the subject of writing for an international audience on the world wide web. The Web offers you an opportunity, unique in history, to speak directly to millions of potential customers. Some commentators advise that if you want to be listened to, speak to them "in their language". I only partially agree (but then, I'm always breaking the rules!)

When I write articles for "the international market" of the net, I don't target particular countries and try to adapt my writing style. I've found that people around the world don't seem to mind the fact that I may use "funny" words or spelling – small details, like "s's" instead of "z's", color or colour...as long as the grammar is reasonably correct. I just try to write in my "natural style" – one in which I feel comfortable (seeing I was brought up in South Africa with British English) and suggest you writers do the same.

Incidentally, I put this short note at the end of all my articles...

"PS: Dear Americans, please excuse my British English spelling. Very Colonial! I just write and use my own style and spelling, one that I'm accustomed to (sounds funny that ending sentence in a "preppie"). I am quite happy for these articles to be used and distributed by other electronic and other magazines. If they help others out there in any way, then I'm happy."

To sum up...
My advice is just find your "natural style" by writing as you

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speak— as practice writing in your "natural style" breeds confidence. Then submit your articles to ezines and announcement lists, like Article Announce, Free Content and Publish In Yours. I find this marketing method by far the most effective means of getting traffic to our various sites (and one thing then leads to another)... and best of all it costs nothing, but a little time and effort!

Make sure your layout is good (not one of my strong points!), as this greatly enhances your prospects of getting published.

Hope this may help you readers "out there in cyberspace".

Happy writing and

Just GO FOR IT

Craig Lock

Craig LockMy various books* may be viewed
at:<http://www.nzenterprise.com/writer/books.html>and<http://www.novelty-gift.com/>

An Acronym By Any Other Name

By Brenda Townsend Hall

I don't know about you but I loathe acronyms. Yes, I know they have a convenience factor but they also seem to me to be potentially sinister, redolent of George Orwell's Newspeak. Our field has its fair share of them and woe betide anyone who uses one wrongly. Never, for example, say ESL or TESL when you mean ESOL or TESOL. Why? because you might unwittingly insult a learner by referring to ESL (English as a second language) when the learner might be a speaker of several languages with English some way down the pecking order: it is politically more correct to refer to English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). So important has this distinction become that the heavy hand of officialdom in the UK now requires people seeking British citizenship to demonstrate that they have at least ESOL Entry Level 3 from the national "skills for life" curriculum (strange distinction, after all we hardly need "skills for death"). Exam boards now dutifully provide ESOL qualifications that seem to have eclipsed the old EFL certificates, making English as a foreign language somehow less relevant.

So have EFL and TEFL lost status? Not exactly, but they imply the use of English in international situations, perhaps among non-native speakers. They still get a look in, but to teach English as a "foreign" language requires different emphases. For example, TESOL would require the teacher to concentrate on situations and contexts that the learners would meet in everyday life in an Anglophone country. TEFL, on the other hand, suggests an orientation towards travel and global situations. I don't dispute that these distinctions have their uses but the trouble is that you can see the potential for all

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sorts of new acronyms on the horizon. When we will start to teach EIL (English as an international language) or EIB (English for international business)? I'd happily settle for good, old-fashioned ELT (English language teaching).

Brenda Townsend Hall, a contributing editor to ESLemployment, is a writer in the fields of English for business, cross-cultural awareness and business communications. Interested in receiving TEFL job listings weekly for free? To learn more visit



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