

# ENGAGING LOW LEVEL LEARNERS: THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DISCUSSION BOARDS.

# CONTEXT

## ◎ LEARNERS

- IELTS 4.5 – 5.5
  - Including jagged profiles
- Mixed UG and PG
- Mixed ages 18 - 30
- Mixed discipline
  - Transfusion & Transplantation; Chemistry
  - Management; Geography; Law
- Mixed cultural background
  - Saudi, Nigerian, Chinese, Italian
- Two groups
  - 18 students

# CONTEXT

## ◉ PROGRAMME

- International Foundation Programme
- One academic year
- 120 credit points
- Standard EAP variant
- 6 units
  - EFL1 & EAS1
  - EFL2 & EAS2
  - ESP1 & **ESP2**

# CONTEXT

- ◎ UNIT: English for Specific Purposes 2
  - CLIL
    - Sociology
  - UK HE experience
    - Reading
    - Lecture
    - Seminar
    - Essay
    - Exam
  - Academic language input
    - Wimba create

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- read and make notes for an analytical discussion
- ask critical questions to analyse and evaluate given information
- take an active part in a discussion on academic topics
- lead a seminar

# PROBLEM

- ⦿ Student Preparation
  - Pre-reading
- ⦿ Student Participation
  - Presentation vs discussion
  - Quantity
  - Nature

# SOLUTION

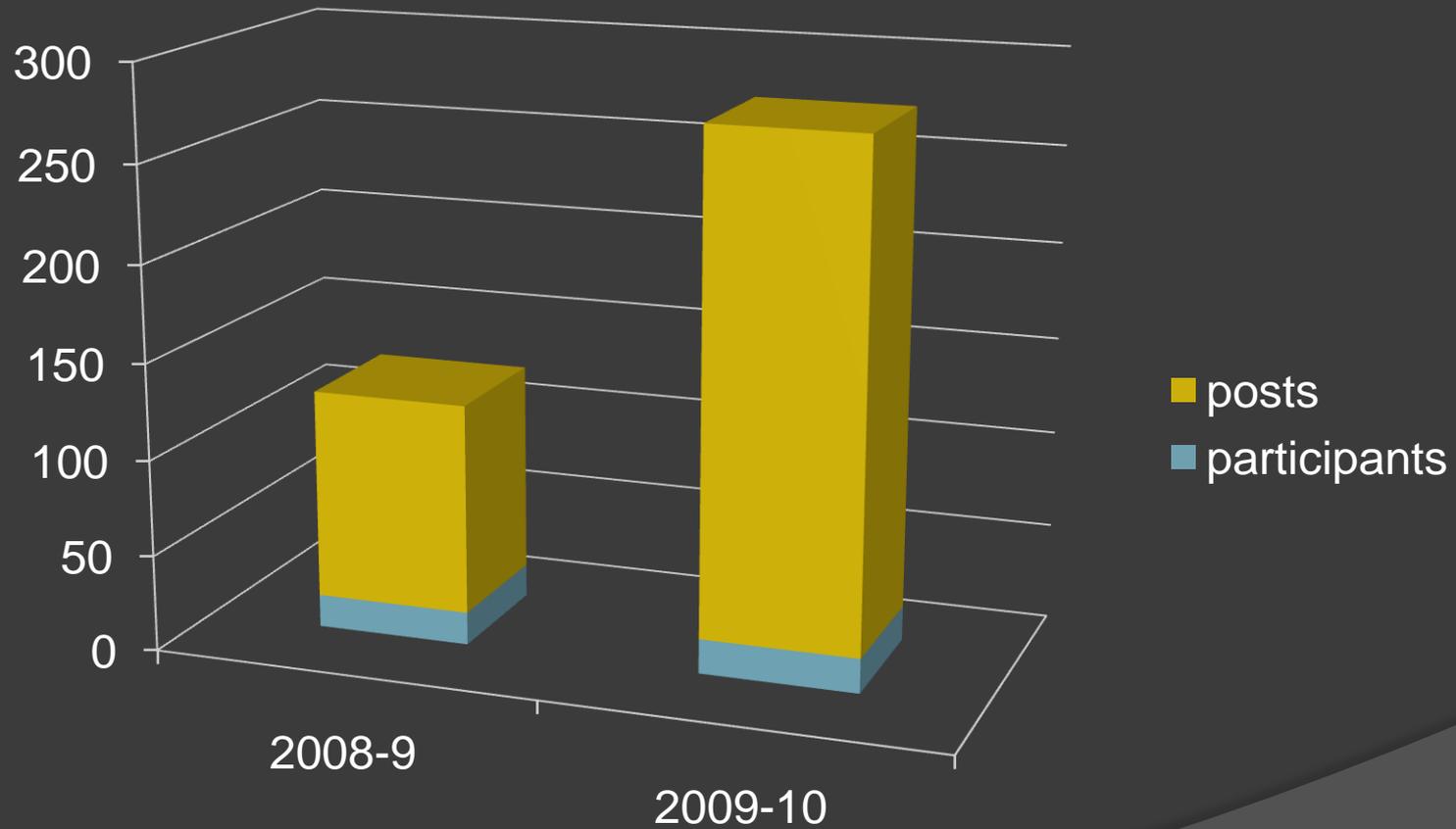
## COURSE WORK ASSIGNMENTS:

Preparation for and participation in weekly seminars –including leading one. (20%)

This involves 1) taking notes in the weekly lecture and preparing questions for clarification; 2) reading the relevant texts each week and posting your reactions - comments or questions - on Blackboard (min. 2 questions, 2 responses); 3) taking an active part in each seminar; and 4) leading 30 mins. of one seminar on your chosen topic.

- ◎ Required participation in electronic discussion
  - Asynchronous = advantages
- ◎ Number of contributions
- ◎ Type of contributions
  - Initiate and respond

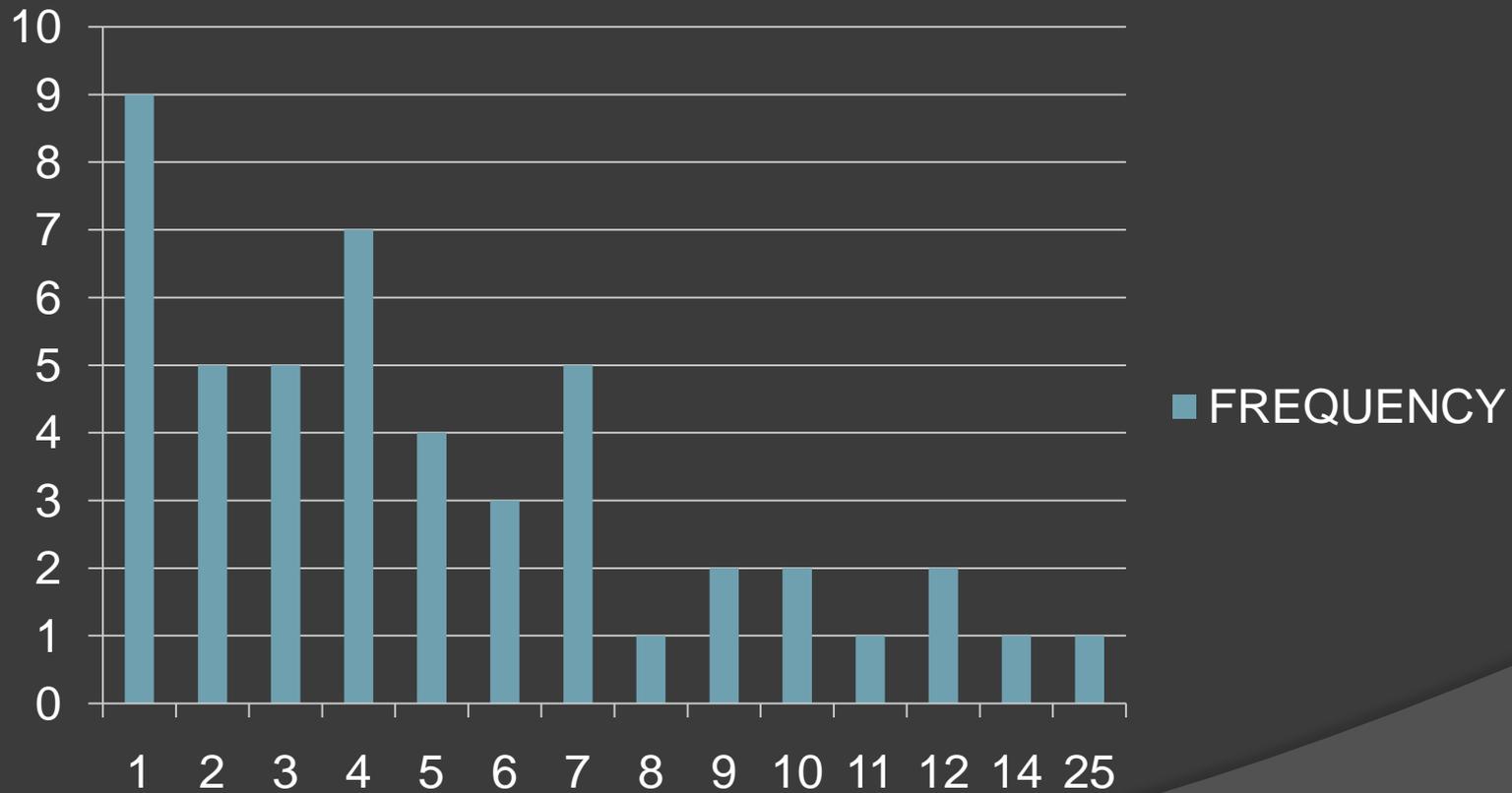
# ENGAGEMENT



REQUIRED = 4 each = 72

# INTERACTION

## NUMBER OF POSTS PER THREAD



# PEER PRESSURE TO INTERACT

I would like to let group PE1 about the aspects that we will discuss in the seminar which are :

- 1- background of education in Britain .
- 2- The key aims of educational change.
- 3- Making school aware of industry and employers.
- 4- Rising standards:
  - More money for schools.
  - Activity-based learning.
  - Specialist school .

**PLEASE EVERYONE CONTRIBUTE  
THE SEMINAR :((**

# INTERACTION BETWEEN CLASSES

Chengjin Li,

what do u mean by diferent kinds of  
classes? the method of teaching..or  
something else??

# INTERACTION

S1 MAY 19th

HI (( salam)) Abdullah

I am afriad I didn't quite get the question but if you mean

S2 MAY 27th

i'm not sure what you mean by the second question, please clarify it to us.

S3 MAY 28<sup>TH</sup>

Sorry Mousa !!

Could you clarify your question.

Equality in terms of what?

# IMPROVING INTERACTION

S2 It is really Interesting questions 27/4

S2 That is really good question. 28/5

S2 I strongly agree with you 27/4

S2 Malik you are absolutely right 6/6

# LEARNING = MOTIVATING

## The family - May 4th

Hi Abdullah,

- ⦿ First question : I think they have to divorce before marriage.
- ⦿ Second question: I think that depend on what they are agreement before marriage and they understanding who has the authority.

## Holidays – June 5<sup>th</sup>

Hi Riccardo,

I agree with you I think it's enough, but on the other hand there are some jobs that require hard labor and more effort.

So I think this depends on the nature of the work done by the person.

# 2009/10 DISCUSSION BOARD

## POSTS PER TOPIC IN TIME ORDER



# STUDENT EVALUATION

I did the required reading	Never	Some weeks	Most weeks	Every week
	0	7	3	4
The Blackboard discussion was useful	Not very	Quite	Very	Extremely
	1	2	8	2

Participating in a seminar was challenging	Not at all	Not very	quite	very	extremely
	1	1	2	7	3

# STUDENT EVALUATION

The seminars were interesting	Agree	Strongly Agree
	9	5
Participating in a seminar was useful	Agree	Strongly Agree
(Neither = 1)	3	10
Leading a seminar was useful	Agree	Strongly Agree
	4	10