

## Little Gems

I like to come to class with new words and propose them to students. I sometimes say to students, smiling, ‘the gods are with us’ and this is true. Thus, I was listening to part of the first presidential debate for the US elections. As it happened, there were some exciting words and turns of phrase to be taught to students and so, following an irresistible impulse, I rushed to catch a notepad and jotted down these exquisite gems.

A couple of days later I was listening to some BBC on a morning before starting class and came across some fascinating sentences and words which, once again, I noted down hastily. A few minutes later, the students saw their teacher with a broad smile on his face and we talked and translated this vocabulary.

Even better: the use of Smartphones in the class/seminar room is debatable. My attitude towards them is to allow them for specific activities. I tell a student to put their mobile phone away when I talk, even though I very rarely need to make that remark to them. But sometimes, these little devices turn out to be great teaching assistants. I was thus teaching on a bright and sunny day. I was pointing out to students that *will* can have the same meaning as *want* in English and that this can be perceived in the exchange of wedding vows. I pointed them to the question *will you marry* and the answer *I will* and made an allusion to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge’s wedding. A student raised her hand and told me she thought they had used *I do*, in which case the question had to be something like *do you want to marry*. That was exquisitely interesting: were the *do*-forms possible at all? In my understanding, at that particular moment in time, they were non-existent. Not having any computer to hand, I allowed the students to search for the answer by surfing on the internet, using their mobiles. One student got in touch with an English friend of hers, another with an Australian friend. The answer we got was that both forms were possible. This moment when our little classroom had been *directly* connected with the English speaking-world remains one of the best moments in my career!

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