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Butlletí de l'Associació de Professors d'Anglès de Catalunya



APAC of NEWS

Butlletí de l'Associació  
de Professors d'Anglès de  
Catalunya (APAC)

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*Judy Garton-Sprenger  
Simon Greenall*

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## FROM ME TO YOU

Dear APACs,

After a well-deserved and long-expected summer rest, here we are again sending you welcome messages with this issue of our bulletin *APAC of News*. ["...number 12 already...", some will say. "When we started, three years ago, who would have imagined that we would get that far", we might add.]

Besides several new contributions you will find in this issue the last series of the article reprints you have been asking for and we promised some time ago.

We also have 2 special (invited) contributions. One comes from Martin Parrott (International House, London) and the other one from Dr. Brian Mott (Universitat de Barcelona). Thanks, Martin. Thanks, Brian.

If you are a public school teacher, remember that now is the right time to apply for Assistant Teachers for 1992-93 and for Foreign Language Classroom equipment.

*APAC of News 13* is in the pipeline and we expect it will reach you before Christmas.

We want to insist on the fact that your contributions to *APAC of News* are specially valuable and always welcome. If you have never told your colleagues about your ideas and experiences, have a go at it now. Publish them. We are convinced the most wonderful ideas are being kept hidden from general knowledge and admiration. And it is not fair!

FAPIE (Federación de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés de España) finally exists. It has a provisional Committee. You should be receiving the first FAPIE bulletin around Christmas time, *free of charge*! The fact that you are member of APAC gives you access to it.

Welcome to the new academic year. Have a good start!

Yours,

APAC

## APAC INFO

### 1991 TESOL Mediterranean Institute: A Brief Summary

The Organising Committee  
TESOL Mediterranean Institute

---

The 13th annual TESOL Summer Institute, the "TESOL Mediterranean Institute," took place at ESADE in Barcelona July 1-26, 1991. The Institute was organised by ESADE (Barcelona) in conjunction with Teacher College, Columbia University (New York) and the Institute of Education, University of London, with the collaboration of the University of Barcelona. The event was sponsored by TESOL International (Washington D.C., United States).

450 participants representing 48 different countries attended what has surely been the biggest and most international Summer Institute to date. [See attached sheet no. 1., showing the nationality and residence of participants].

The extensive programme, with a total of 51 courses, covered topics ranging from Syllabus Design to Computer Assisted Language Learning. Institute staff came mainly from the U.S. and U.K., but also from Australia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, and Israel. [See attached sheet no. 2 for a list of courses and professors.]

In addition to regular courses, staff offered special lectures outside of class hours on a broad range of topics open to all Institute participants and the public at large.

The Institute theme was "Work Hard, Play Hard", and a comprehensive social programme enabled participants to fulfil the second aim amply. Among the more popular social events were the bus tours of the Olympic installations, the tours of the Freixenet champagne cellars, the visits to the Barcelona City Hall, the wine-tastings, and the "tapas" crawls. [See attached sheet no. 3 for a complete list of events]

Ten participants began the two-year MA in Educational Studies offered by the Institute of Education, University of London and based on the Mediterranean Institute. This programme is now in its fourth year.

The enthusiasm felt by all involved is captured in comments made by participants. The many adjectives used to describe the Institute include *wonderful, incomparable, fantastic, excellent, absolutely great, terrific, and amazing*. [See attached sheets nos 4 and 5 for comments.]

From here it's on to next year -The 14th TESOL Summer Institute to be held in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, July 6-31, 1992; the 6th Mediterranean Institute to be held, as always, at ESADE in Barcelona, June 25-July 15, 1992. New departures for 1992 in Barcelona include the incorporation of courses for teachers of Spanish, French, and German as foreign languages and the beginning of a full MA in TESOL programme offered by Teachers College, Columbia University, based on the Mediterranean Institute, and similar to the London programme in format.

#### COUNTRIES

#### PARTICIPANTS

N.B. Countries as described by the participants

	NATIONALS	RESIDENTS
ALGERIA	4	6
AUSTRALIA	4	2
BELGIUM	1	0
BRAZIL	4	4
BULGARIA	1	1
CANADA	11	4
COSTA RICA	1	1
CUBA	1	0
CROATIA	1	1
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	5	6
EGYPT	35	38
ETHIOPIA	1	0

FINLAND	3	2
FRANCE	7	6
GABON	0	1
GERMANY	4	3
GREECE	1	1
HUNGARY	1	1
INDIA	0	1
IRAN	1	2
IRELAND	3	0
ITALY	7	9
JAPAN	4	12
JORDAN	6	0
LEBANON	3	3
LUXEMBOURG	0	1
MEXICO	5	2
MONGOLIA	1	0
MOROCCO	2	2
NETHERLANDS	2	2
PALESTINE	1	6
PHILIPPINES	1	1
POLAND	19	19
ROMANIA	1	1
SENEGAL	0	1
SINGAPORE	0	1
SOUTH AFRICA	1	0
SPAIN	177	240
SWAZILAND	1	0
SYRIA	1	0
TAIWAN	2	1
THAILAND	0	2
TURKEY	5	5
U.A.E.	0	2
UNITED KINGDOM	40	5
U.S.A.	77	48
VENEZUELA	2	2
YUGOSLAVIA	6	8
	453	453

ATTENDING 1ST SESSION: 148, 2ND SESSION: 183, BOTH SESSIONS: 122

# BELLS

## Barcelona English Language and Literature Studies

**Bells** és una publicació del Departament de Filologia Anglesa de la Universitat de Barcelona dedicada a la difusió de la investigació i dels estudis realitzats en l'àrea de coneixement que el seu nom indica. Consta de dos números a l'any (Desembre i maig).

### Naturaliza i presentació dels treballs

Els treballs poden estar escrits en qualsevol llengua de l'estat espanyol o en anglès. Cal que s'ajustin a les normes del MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers Theses and Dissertations. Els treballs han d'anar acompanyats d'un resum d'unes 100

paraules en anglès. Els treballs es poden enviar en MS-DOS amb un sistema IBM compatible (WordPerfect), juntament amb còpia del text extret del diskette per triplicat. També es pot enviar el MS i dues còpies. La devolució dels treballs es farà per petició expressa dels autors, per la qual cosa caldrà que ens enviïn prèviament el franqueig corresponent.

Els treballs se enviaran a: El Secretari. **Bells** Secció d'Anglès Departament d'Anglo-Germàniques, Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 585, 08007- Barcelona.

Anuncis Bells s'ofereix a incloure anuncis relatius a la seva especialitat. Per a més informació sobre espai i tarifes, podeu dirigir-

vos al Secretari. Intercanvis Bells té interès a establir intercanvis amb altres revistes nacional i internacionals. Les propostes s'adreçaran al Secretari.

Subscripcions Per al públic en general: 1 any: 2.500 ptes (2 números). 2 anys : 5.000 ptes (4 números). Per als estudiants que ho acreditin i per als particulars que renovin la subscripció: 1 any: 2.500 ptes (2 números) 2 anys: 4.000 ptes (4 números). Per a biblioteques i institucions. 2 anys: 6.000 ptes. (4 números). Al final de la revista hi trobareu una butlleta de subscripció. El pagament de la quota s'efectuarà mitjançant taló barrat al portador.

TESOL MEDITERRANEAN INSTITUTE COURSES

SESSION 1 (July 1-12, 1991)

Exploratory Language Teaching  
Writing and Reading: Methods and Materials  
Materials Analysis  
Anthropology for Language Teachers  
Psycholinguistics  
Computer Assisted Language Learning  
Fluency Practice  
Learner Strategies for Learner Autonomy  
Task and Teaching Context  
Simplification in the Language Classroom  
Grammar and Discourse  
Issues in TESOL Teacher Education  
Sociolinguistics: Gender and Language  
Writing Practicum  
Video in ELT  
Listening Comprehension  
Vocabulary Teaching  
Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching  
Teaching Grammar  
Discourse Analysis and the Sociology of Knowledge  
The Language of Business  
Understanding Classroom Language Learning  
Testing in Business English

Dick Allwright (Lancaster Univ.)  
Gay Brookes (Columbia Univ., NY)  
John Fanselow (Columbia Univ., NY)  
Philip Riley (Univ. de Nancy)  
Richard Schmidt (Univ. of Hawaii)  
Macey Taylor (Univ. of Arizona)  
Penny UR (Haifa Univ., Israel)  
Anita Wenden (York College, NY)  
Ramon Ribé (Univ. de Barcelona)  
Tony Lynch (Univ. of Edinburgh)  
Michael McCarthy (Univ. of Nottingham)  
Jack Richards (City Poly., Hong Kong)  
Leslie Beebe (Columbia Univ., NY)  
Gay Brookes (Columbia Univ., NY)  
Ken Cripwell (Univ. of London)  
Tony Lynch (Univ. of Edinburgh)  
Michael McCarthy (Univ. of Nottingham)  
Jack Richards (City Poly., Hong Kong)  
Penny Ur (Haifa Univ., Israel)  
Philip Riley (Univ. de Nancy)  
Richard Schmidt (Univ. of Hawaii)  
Dick Allwright (Lancaster Univ.)  
Tricia Smith (ESADE, Barcelona)

SESSION 2 (July 15-26, 1991)

Bilingualism in Education  
Second Language Acquisition  
Language Planning  
Classroom Practice  
Curriculum Development in Language Study  
Diversity in Language Learning  
Stylistics and Literature Teaching  
Content-based Language Teaching  
Teaching the Young Learner  
Self Expression in the Language Classroom  
Bad and Good Tests  
Media Discourse  
Reading in a Second Language  
Communicative Language Teaching  
Research Methods in Applied Linguistics  
Structure of English  
Computer Assisted Language Learning  
Techniques in Language Testing  
Cross-cultural Issues  
Discourse Analysis  
English for Science and Technology  
Learning by Acting  
The Imagist's View of Language Learning  
The Culture of the Language Learner  
Video in ELT  
English for Specific Purposes

Celia Alvarez (Columbia Univ., NY)  
Evelyn Hatch (UCLA)  
Robert Kaplan (Univ. of S. Calif.)  
Pamela Martin (Columbia Univ., NY)  
David Nunan (Macquarie Univ.)  
Earl Stevick (Univ. of Maryland)  
Henry Widdowson (Univ. of London)  
David Eskey (Univ. of Calif.)  
John Norrish (Univ. of London)  
Pat Mills (ESADE, Barcelona)  
Charles Alderson (Lancaster Univ.)  
Ulrike Meinhof (Univ. of Manchester)  
David Eskey (Univ. of Calif.)  
John Norrish (Univ. of London)  
David Nunan (Macquarie Univ.)  
Jacquelyn Schnachter (Univ. of S. Calif.)  
Macey Taylor (Univ. of Arizona)  
Charles Alderson (Lancaster Univ.)  
Ulrike Meinhof (Univ. of Manchester)  
Evelyn Hatch (UCLA)  
Robert Kaplan (Univ. of S. Calif.)  
Richard LaRose (ESADE, Barcelona)  
Earl Stevick (Univ. of Maryland)  
Celia Alvarez (Columbia Univ., NY)  
Richard LaRose (ESADE, Barcelona)  
Henry Widdowson (Univ. of London)



## QUOTATIONS FROM SPEAKERS AND PARTICIPANTS 26 July 1991

### Speakers

Bob Kaplan: "You made a wonderful Institute".

Henry Widdowson: "Where this Institute is unique is in the quality of the organisation and the way that people manage to be both efficient and friendly at the same time. Incomparable!"

David Nunan: "The quality of the participants and the intense way in which they worked and played made it worthwhile for me. They were absolutely fantastic."

### Participants

"Thank you so much for excellent organisation and course teaching." Isa Blyden, Dakar, Senegal.

"Exhausting but well worth it." Jane Honka, Finland.

"It's been absolutely great! Roll on 92." Jonathan Roche, Spain.

"I have a whole bookful of addresses of people I met." Terry Judson, New York.

"This is the best organised seminar of this kind I have ever seen. It is neither invasive nor does it abandon you. It was absolutely terrific." Ilona Leki, University of Tennessee.

"It really is amazing!" Helen Helmore, Brisbane, Australia.

### Anonymous Comments Extracted From Institute Evaluations Completed By Participants

"I feel extremely happy with the Mediterranean Institute. I think its offer on courses has been just what anyone committed to linguistic enquiry would want..."

"Super experience---loved meeting all these people from other countries while studying."

"Excellent and unique Barcelona TESOL atmosphere created---very interesting as an experience and enjoyable. I will be back!!!"

"I really enjoyed myself these two weeks. I've learnt a lot of things and I've met lots of nice people. I will try not to miss any Mediterranean Institutes from now on."

"You found great teachers!... The organization at the institute is also very impressive---smiley, caring and efficient---Thanks."

"The Institute was excellent in many ways. Thank you for a rewarding and interesting experience."

"Thank you very much for, in my opinion, a highly successful Summer Institute. Everybody was very helpful, positive and dedicated. I'm looking forward to coming back next year."

"I'm really very much satisfied with the courses I took... I'm thanking warmly, both teachers and Committee for this effort. Keep on helping English teachers, we need it!!!"

## APAC INFO

### Seminari permanent d'anglès d'EGB

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El Seminari Permanent d'anglès de l'ICE de la UAB ha organitzat un curs-seminari i tres cursos monogràfics.

#### 1- CURS-SEMINARI: *Activitats comunicatives i pràctica oral de la llengua.*

Aquest curs està pensat per a aquells mestres que ensenyen anglès a EGB i no han tingut possibilitat de prendre part en activitats de formació didàctica.

El curs té dues parts: metodologia i pràctica oral de la llengua.

La durada del curs és de 54 hores, 12 de metodologia i 30 de conversa.

Les sessions de metodologia seran els dilluns, de 18 a 20h i les de conversa els dimarts o dijous, de 18 a 19.30h.

#### 2- CURSOS MONOGRAFICS.

Aquests cursos estan pensats per a aquells mestres amb experiència en l'ensenyament de l'anglès que volen millorar la seva formació i intercanviar idees amb altres companys.

##### A. PRONUNCIACIO.

La durada del curs és de 20 hores i les sessions seran els dimarts, de 18.30 a 20.30h, de novembre a gener.

##### B. "PROJECT WORK".

La durada del curs és de 20 hores i les sessions seran els dimarts, de 18 a 20h, de gener a març.

Dates d'inscripció per a tots els cursos: del 28 al 31 d'octubre, de 17 a 20h a la secretaria de l'ICE de la UAB, Sant Antoni Maria Claret, 171.

per a més informació, truqueu al telèfon 235 82 57.

## APAC INFO

### Reminders

<i>Activities for this year.</i>	<i>Contact</i>
Postgraduate Courses in TEFL. ICE - Universitat Politècnica Universitat Autònoma	ICE-UPC Escola de Mestres
Master Courses in TEFL. Universitat de Barcelona Universitat Autònoma	ICE-UB English Philology Dep.
PhD credit courses Universitat de Barcelona .linguistics & methodology .literature .methodology Universitat Autònoma .literature .general	English Philology Dep.  Divisió 5a. Escola de Mestres.  English Philology Dep.
Seminaris Permanents.	s. list of local seminars in <i>APAC of News 11</i> .
Teacher-training courses	ICE UAB  ICE UB  ICE UPC
Wednesday teacher-training sessions	British Institute
Jornades Pedagògiques Girona (November) Lleida (Spring) Barcelona (Spring) Baix Llobregat	
APAC teacher training activities for EGB teachers Secondary/High-School teachers	s. next bulletin s. next bulletin
TESOL Mediterranean Institute-92 (June-July)	ESADE
Applications for "English assistants" (92-93) (s. application form in <i>APAC of News 7-8</i> ).	Dep. d'Ordenació i Innovació Educativa del Dep. D'Ensenyament. Generalitat de Catalunya.
Applications for "Aules d'idiomes" (92-93) (s. application form in <i>APAC of News 7-8</i> ).	Dep. d'Ordenació i Innovació Educativa del Dep. D'Ensenyament. Generalitat de Catalunya.

## **DON'T TELL ME IT WORKS**

### **A Teacher's Lament or How to Make the Most of a Dull Story: 'The Verger'**

J.L. Bartolomé  
I.B. Montacopa, Olot

---

Somerset Maugham's 'The Verger' (El sagristà) tells the sympathetic tale of a man, who although unable to read or write, becomes a very successful businessman guided only by his personal pride and self-assurance. It seemed to me that the moral of this short story could make a challenging invitation to break away from school worries and teachers' boring stuff and open up our minds to the world of fancy and idle speculation. That was the aim of my setting this story as a dutiful reading matter for my 2nd BUP students. However, an exploratory test did not meet my initial expectations.

I had taken for granted that most teenage readers are pretty unlikely to enjoy a static story; but, more disappointingly, I found that the average fifteen-year-old High School student is rather conformist and not too enterprising or willing to change their status (should I have better tried it out with my COU pets?).

The actual exploitation of 'The Verger' consisted of the serial development of a pack of classroom activities (reading, writing, listening and speaking tasks), which altogether turned out to be quite enjoyable and (I hope!) fairly useful. This is the outline of the six-lesson project.

#### **STAGE 1: UNDERSTANDING THE STORY**

\* A fine translation into Catalan had been handed out as an encouraging alternative to the unsimplified version of 'The Verger' (the students with a shaky mastery of English could not believe their eyes!).

\* The original story was read out in the classroom, occasionally switching to some improvised sketches of several dramatic events in order to release ourselves from pressure and boredom.

\* The teacher gave dictations of a number of statements about the gist and some details of the story. The students were to decide whether they were true or false.

Mr Foreman was a heavy drinker and smoker (f)  
He had worked as a verger for sixteen years (t)

\* A smart student had been commissioned to perform a picture-story. Eighteen lovely drawings showed the main points of the plot. It was up to the classmates (pair-work was welcomed) to write a caption under each picture.

\* Finally, the 'pusher' got the students to think of a more appealing title for the story: 'You never can tell', 'The lucky foreman'... were suggested.

## STAGE 2: SETTING THE PLACE & THE TIME

\* The pupils were requested to list down all kind of direct/indirect references to the place and the time where/when the story might have happened. The background was definite: a fashionable church, as bank and long streets in London (also the East End was hinted).

Getting a rough idea about the date became a puzzle. Still, a few brainy learners found that the reference to cigarette-smoking and tabloid newspapers might be the clues (early twentieth century). Actually it was written in 1936.

## STAGE 3: CHARACTERS

The main star –a verger– had aristocratic features as well as an aristocratic name! Albert (first name, after Queen Victoria's Prince Consort?), Edward (middle name, after Edward VII?) Foreman (a family name meaning 'capatàs'). He was unmistakably a 'self-made man'. This concept was explained and then a few American examples were called to mind! Rockefeller, Edison, Graham Bell, Henry Ford... The students were encouraged/spurred to talk about a 'self-made person' they might have heard about: a local tycoon, someone in their neighbourhood, their grandfather perhaps...

The second shining star of the story –the villain– was a nameless vicar 'who wanted to have his finger in every pie'. He was christened 'Mr Fussy', 'Mr Unkind', 'Mr Mind-your-Business'. Shortly afterwards I inquired, 'What about your teachers, do you give them nicknames? What do you call me? The whole class broke into smiles and laughter; yet, I did not manage to find out what they call me (I guess it must be something like 'Stinging Nettle').

## STAGE 4: LANGUAGE

Londoners like Mr Foreman speak a funny sort of English: 'Don't 'e know?', 'only me name', 'I shall be 'appy to 'and in my resignation'. Some more features of non-standard English, including Cockney, were chalked on the blackboard. The students were delighted to learn that words like 'Ta ta' and 'Ta' are Cockney for 'goodbye' and 'thank you'. The reading games in rhyming slang and the tapes recording Cockney voices were really amusing (next time they watch Gent del barri – Eastenders, on TV3 they will plug in the 'Dual System').

\* 'Do you think that the new vicar's decision to sack Mr Foreman was fair?'

\* 'Do you think Mr Foreman will ever change his mind and learn to read and write?'

\* 'How important do you think is a formal education?'

\* The old vicar had said that 'there was a great deal too much education in the world'. Do you agree?

We commented on the rates of illiteracy in the world (UNESCO, 1980: 28.9%) and Catalonia (SEPT.1978: 7.2%)

\* Mr Foreman said, 'I think a lot of these young fellows/students/waste a rare lot of time readin' when they might be doin' something useful'. Do you agree?

\* Imagine you are a Health Inspector. One day you discover that a successful dentist, Ms Sugarless, is not fully qualified as she did not complete her training. In other words, she has not got a University degree ('títol'). What would you do?

\* You are illiterate. How would you manage to vote for you favourite political party?

As a curiosity, I explained the origin of the Elephant and the Donkey as the emblems of the Republicans and the Democrats in the USA.

## STAGE 9: SCHOOL & POP MUSIC

As a farewell party I tried to preach rebellion one more time by playing a couple of nice pop songs in which school and teacher are scorned:

'When I think back on all the crap I learned at high school/ It's a wonder I can think at all'. (Paul Simon)

'They /teachers/ are old and wise. Do as they tell you to, don't want the devil to come and put your eyes. Maybe I'm mistaken expecting you to fight'. (Supertramp)

'We don't need no education, we don't need no thought control. No dark sarcasm in the classroom. Teacher leave the kids alone'. (Pink Floyd)

No way! I felt lousy and blue again: my students (flattering me?!) believe coming to school is not a waste of time or rubbish. Ladies and gentlemen of the 'Reforma', take note!

## **DON'T TELL ME IT WORKS**

### **Writing Skills in COU**

Patricia María Martínez Rico

---

#### **Background**

This is an experience I carried out with a group of students in their last year at Secondary School (COU = University-Oriented Course). They should be about 18 years old, but most of them are older. They attend the evening shift after a hard day's work, so they feel tired and reluctant to participate.

These students have to pass an exam for entering University where the English part consists of a text with a set of three reading comprehension questions and a short composition about a topic related to this text.

This is my first year with them and I realised that they were unable to write a short compositions with cohesion and coherence, appropriate use of linking words, and I wouldn't like to forget the grammar or spelling mistakes.

Then I decided to organise a new approach to writing, at least new for them, trying to reach some of the motivation I needed.

Level: Lower Intermediate

#### **Procedure**

##### **Stage 1**

- 1.- For 5 min, the teacher asks the students which topics they would be interested to write about (Brainstorming).
- 2.- The teacher writes them on the blackboard.
- 3.- They vote so that just one is selected.

##### **Stage 2**

- 1.- The topic chosen was 'The Gulf crisis'.
- 2.- From two newspapers, 'The Daily Telegraph', and 'The Times', we took the vocabulary and expressions they might need, some of them belonging to the same semantic field. It was:

Saddam Hussein	allied
George Bush	missile (Scud, Patriot, cruise)
demonstration	chemical weapons
land forces	P.L.O.
to withdraw	bomb
warships	bombers
aircraft	encourage
peace arrangements	culture of life versus

Foreign Minister	culture of death
friendly fire	oil spill
fruitless peace efforts	Persian Gulf region

### Comments:

- By including here some words with their complements we avoid the fact that they may use the vocabulary correctly but making syntactic mistakes.
- It was a very interesting topic as they were listening to the same news on TV in their mother tongue, so they well knew what it was all about.

### Stage 3

- 1.- A debate had to be organised as a warming-up activity. We assumed and checked that nobody liked war, so this debate had to be:
  - Those who thought war was necessary in this case, on one side.
  - Those who thought it wasn't, on the other.
- 2.- Each student prepared for the following day a list of three arguments to defend his/her position. Doing this as a homework, their opinions had been meditated and expressed with more or less correction.
- 3.- The day of the debate came. They were all sitting in a semicircle. Everybody participated in it, even those ones whose voices I had seldom heard up to then. They weren't afraid to participate because of:
  - high motivation towards the topic.
  - eagerness to contradict their classmates.
  - they knew what to say.
4. The bell rang, the following class had to begin and they didn't feel like stopping talking about it.

Comments: At this stage I could check two things:

- 'self-confidence is very much related to second language development'
  - (1) the most self-confident in the group took the opportunity to speak more than anyone, and at the end he was alone to defend his point of view against the whole class (but he didn't care) and he did so successfully. His participation doesn't imply that he didn't make any syntax or grammar mistakes or that he didn't stop frequently to ask me how to say a Spanish word in English. On the other hand, one of them who is very nervous, with the highest anxiety level I've ever seen, was just able to read her opinion summarised in a single sentence.



- 'learning a language requires careful listening to others and caring more about communicating ideas than about avoiding speech errors' (op.cit.).
- This statement made me think that my students could learn much more if I gave rise to situations in which they had to pay attention to their mate's speech (in the debate) or their written mistakes (in the group or individual correction).

#### Stage 4

- 1.- Each one writes an outline that the teacher checks (suggesting ideas to include, a different order...)
- 2.- They write a composition developing this outline.

#### Stage 5

- 1.- They correct their classmate's composition
- 2.- Each one fills in the 'Classmate's Assessment Paper' (Fig.1) explaining to him/her the reasons for the marks given in each part.

Comment: This is a very good and well-accepted feedback as it comes from a peer, not the teacher.

#### Stage 6

- 1.- They re-write their own compositions in a transparency.
- 2.- It's projected on a screen. The teacher underlines the remaining mistakes and encourages the students to take part in the correction process by saying: 'Why do you think it isn't right?', 'How do you think the idea could be expressed?'

Comment: This technique has many advantages:

- Oral participation
- Learning from their mate's mistakes
- The darkness in the classroom, just with the light of the overhead projector focuses their attention on the screen
- They are conscious of their learning process

Stage 7

- 1.- The composition is re-written
- 2.- They fill in a Questionnaire (Fig.2)
- 3.- Questionnaire results (average percentage)

Questions	Yes	No
1	80%	20%
3	90%	10%

As far as questions 2, 4, 6 are concerned, they show the teacher the guidelines to follow in his/her teaching process from then on.

(1) The idea of a debate came after reading Dulay, Burt and Krashen *Language Two*, OUP, 1982, and the quotations were also taken from there.

FIGURE 1

CLASSMATE'S ASSESSMENT PAPER

- |   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.- One idea of the outline corresponds to one paragraph.     |   |   |   |   |
| 2.- Cohesion: logical arrangement of paragraphs.              |   |   |   |   |
| 3.- Linking words...  |   |   |   |   |
| 4.- Grammatical structures.                                   |   |   |   |   |
| 5.- Choice of vocabulary (belonging to the semantic field...) |   |   |   |   |
| 6.- Variety of vocabulary.                                    |   |   |   |   |
| 7.- Spelling.   |   |   |   |   |

- 1 = Poor
- 2 = Good
- 3 = Very Good
- 4 = Excellent

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**FIGURE 2  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**1.- Have you found this approach to writing useful?**

Yes                  No

Why?

**2.- Which is the stage you regard as the most interesting?**

**3.- Did you learn from your classmate's mistakes?**

Yes                  No

**4.- Which of the eight aspects in the assessment paper do you need to improve most?**

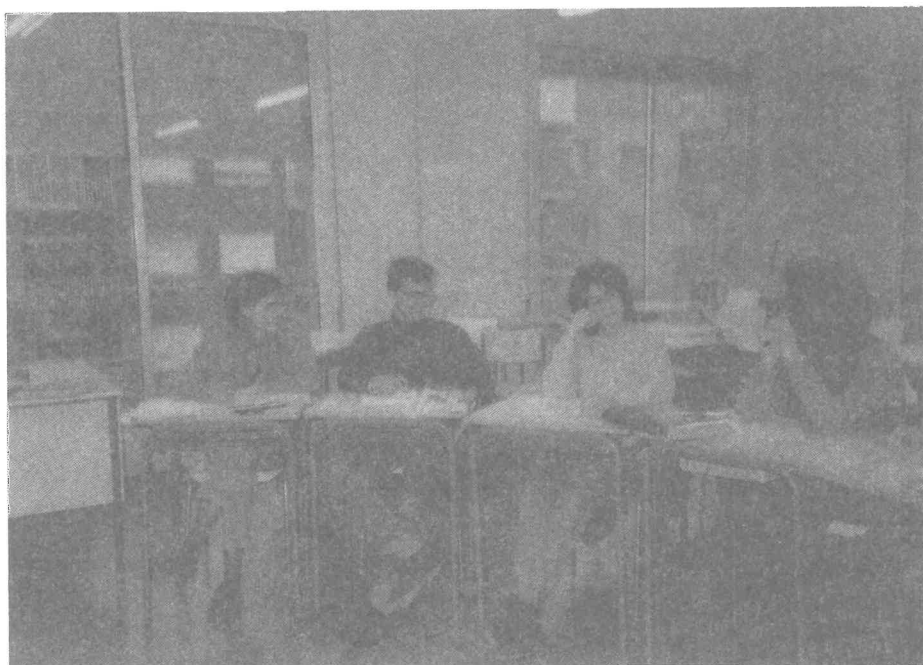
**What are you going to do to improve it?**

**Can the teacher help you? How?**

**5. Would you like to do it again?**

Yes                  No

**6. Anything else to comment? Be positive!!!**



## **DON'T TELL ME IT WORKS**

### **Travelling Light – a Fun Game Designed by 3rd BUP Students**

Kathy Knott

I.B. F. Martí Carreres, Girona

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I am sure there are few high-school teacher in Catalonia who, after seeing Margarita Ravera and Núria Vidal's COU syllabus based on a journey, have not incorporated some aspect or other of travelling in their teaching programmes. The following activity is based on a personal experience but it is also inspired by my colleagues' creative and stimulating work, so first of all I would liked to express my gratitude to Margarita and Núria.

Most students enjoy playing games in English but it is not always easy to find suitable ones for them; sometimes the game are too childish or too complicated for them. However, if the students design the game themselves, they can't really complain! 'Travelling light' was designed by my 3rd year students after spending several lessons working on different aspects of travelling.

The idea came up while doing this theme as I had taken several of the students to England the previous year and during our trip we had quite a few mishaps: the coach drivers kept getting lost in France, there was a ferry strike, we were attacked one night by a gang of yobs. Consequently, it seemed only logical to talk about things going wrong while on the subject of travelling. This is how I further developed the idea:

#### **PREPARATION**

At home I prepared a list of possible adversities that might occur at each stage of the journey. e.g.

##### **1. Before you leave home:**

- your luggage won't fit in your suitcase.
- your parents don't want you to go.

##### **2. Setting off:**

- the car won't start.
- you miss your train.

##### **3. During the journey:**

- the car breaks down.
- the train is so full you can't sit down.

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4. On holiday!

- the hotel is disastrous.
- the weather is terrible.

5. The return journey:

- there is a traffic jam.
- you lose your luggage.

I also wrote a list of adjectives that would describe a person's feelings in such adverse conditions: fed up, frustrated, exhausted, furious, etc.

Class Procedure:

First I worked with the class as a whole (or rather half the class as it was a 'B' hour!). I introduced the theme of things going wrong when travelling and asked the class to say what things might happen before leaving home. I wrote their suggestions on the blackboard.

For the second part, the students worked in groups of four or five. Bearing in mind that travelling is an adventure and doesn't always go smoothly, they were asked to discuss and make notes about the things that could go wrong at the other stages of the journey (i.e. stages 2, 3, 4, and 5). Once everyone had finished, they read out some of their ideas. I was surprised how imaginative they were and how much they enjoyed it. After that they wrote out a list of adjectives describing how they might feel in this kind of situations. I found that they needed quite a lot of help (either from the dictionary or from me) with this due to their fairly limited vocabularies.

Finally, the students were given three options for their homework to be done either individually or in pairs:

1. Write a letter to a friend telling her/him about a disastrous journey.
2. Write a letter of complaint to a hotel manager expressing your dissatisfaction with your room, the staff etc.
3. Design a game similar to the Spanish 'oca', based on a journey.

The game should be done on 'cartulina' and decorated in some way, either with drawing or magazine cut-outs to make it visually attractive.

Some of the suggestions and ideas discussed in class should be incorporated in the game, but some positive travel experiences should also be included. Thus, when a player runs into difficulties, he is sanctioned in some way.

It is important that students know the correct language functions related to games e.g. miss a turn, throw again, go back/on etc.

### **Conclusion**

Here are some of the end products so you can see the results for yourselves. I find them really quite imaginative. In fact, some of them are so imaginative that they have little connection with travelling! Never mind. We've all had lots of fun preparing the games and playing with them, of course.

1. START.
2. YOU VISITED PARIS.
3. AIRPLANE, GO TO THE NEXT AIRPLANE.
4. YOU GO TO A RESTAURANT AND YOU HAVE NOT ENOUGH MONEY.
5. YOU VISITED THE HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT.
6. HOTEL? YOU DO NOT LIKE HOTEL'S FOOD.
7. AIRPLANE, GO TO THE NEXT AIRPLANE.
8. STRIKE IN THE BUS STATION. YOU MUST STAY MORE DAYS IN LONDON (GO BACK TO NO. 5).
9. YOU EMBARK IN THE PORT TO GO TO HAWAII.
10. YOU HAVE A GOOD WEATHER AND YOU GO VERY FAST TO HAWAII. GO ON 5.
11. AIRPLANE, GO TO THE NEXT AIRPLANE.
12. YOU GO TO THE CASINO, YOU WIN A LOT OF MONEY AND YOU WIN ANOTHER TURN.
13. NOW YOU ARE GOING BY TRAIN. IT IS FUNNY.
14. YOU DO NOT KNOW WHERE YOU ARE. YOU ARE LOST IN A WOOD AND YOU MUST WAIT FOR ANOTHER PLAYER.
15. YOU ARE IN HAWAII.
16. AIRPLANE, GO TO THE NEXT AIRPLANE.
17. CANNIBALS!!!!!!!! YOU MUST GO TO START.
18. YOU MAKE FRIENDS WHEN YOU GO HOME.
19. YOU ARE SOON GOING TO START WORK AGAIN.
20. YOU HAVE FINISHED THE HOLIDAYS AND NOW YOU MUST WORK YOU WIN THE GAME BUT YOU MUST WORK AGAIN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

## **DON'T TELL ME IT WORKS**

### **SELF-ACCESS**

Leslie Denham

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Self-access is a mode of learning that can be incorporated into the classroom as well as taking place in a self-access centre. Indeed, if you plan to open a centre then it is a good idea to pilot self-access materials in the classroom first. Whether in the classroom or in a centre, what is it that makes self-access different from other exercises the students do?

The most important aspect of self-access is that students are given more responsibility to decide how and what they learn. In the classroom, the teacher usually, though not always, decides what the content of the lesson is and what material will be used to practise that. The students do not have access to all the possible material to practise a certain skill or grammar point as this is kept in the teachers' room and not available to them. With self-access, the student has a range of material available and the individual can decide what s/he wants to study and how. Given a range of possibilities, students can experiment and find out more about how they learn best. Some may find that grammar exercises help them remember a grammar point while others might find a video more helpful.

In this situation, the teacher's role changes from teacher to counsellor. For students, identifying problems, be they grammatical or skill problems, and finding different ways of trying to improve in those areas is a difficult task if they are not used to taking responsibility for their own learning. Within the classroom students can be encouraged to think about their individual needs and be given more responsibility in deciding, for example, the content of the classes and the way in which things are practised. Self-access time within the classroom is a good opportunity for the teacher/counsellor to talk individually to students who need guidance, to encourage them to think about their learning and for students to begin to learn from each other.

#### **Material in the Classroom**

Self-access materials in the classroom can start in a very modest way with just a file or a small filling cabinet that can be wheeled into the classroom. Obviously, the range of materials is more limited than within a centre but students are still encouraged to think about their individual needs and decide themselves what they want to do and how they want to do it. All the materials must have the answers with them as the counsellor does not want to be seen as the 'answers machine'. Materials can be divided up into skills which include reading, listening, writing, speaking and grammar. For listening, a small cassette-recorder and a spider headset with six headphones means that a group of students can work together, discuss their problems and help each other. The classroom can be divided up into sections for each skill and the students can decide what they want to concentrate on.



### **Material in a Self-access Centre**

When material is presented on a far larger scale it is important to have a simple coding system which shows the level and skill practised in each piece of material. Colours and letters seem to be the easiest for students to follow. The material has to be accessible and not hidden away in cardboard files or drawers. It also has to look attractive so the student wants to pick up and look at it! As in the classroom, also make sure that all the material is self-answering.

When about opening a centre, material is only one aspect to be considered. Also take into account the type of atmosphere you want to create in the centre and choose the furniture, decoration and the way you display material accordingly. Look at the space you have and be careful not to overcrowd it. If it is small space, then rotate materials rather than fill the room as an overcrowded space soon becomes untidy and difficult to handle.

### **Preparing Teachers**

The success of a centre in terms of how well the students use it will depend greatly on how much teachers have been involved in the project. If self-access has been introduced in the classroom with the involvement of teachers in material preparation and seminars about learner training, increased student responsibility and counselling techniques, then when the students use a centre they will be more prepared for this way of learning. The teacher can also be involved in the centre as counsellor and/or material preparers.

Girona Jornades 1989

## **PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTIONS: From Theory to Practice**

### **Language Teaching: Silver Bells, Cockle Shells and Good Gardening Sense**

Martin Parrot

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Mary, Mary, quite contrary,  
How does your garden grow?  
With silver bells and cockle shells  
All neatly laid in a row.

The connection between language teaching and gardening is, I have to confess, a personal one. I have been a teacher of languages for 17 years –primarily of English, but also of French and of Chinese. I have been a gardener for only 3 years.

As a language teacher there have been many influences on my practice in the classroom, and on the assumptions and beliefs which underlay this. There has been my training –for the RSA Diploma, for a PGCE and for a Masters degree. There have been the conferences that I have attended and the seminars. There has been my observation of other teachers and observation by others of my own teaching. There have been my reading. The way I teach now is different from the way I taught a year ago, five years ago, ten years ago. It is constantly changing and will continue to do so.

Yet the longer I teach, the more sceptical I become about 'recommended approaches'. We live and work at a time which is dominated by Communicative Language Teaching. Variations on Communicative Language Teaching are recommended to us as the 'best' approach in a wide variety of learning and teaching contexts. The initial impetus to this movement came from changes in thinking about the nature of language and about the nature of language learning, and was quickly taken up by publishers. All the major publishing house now have large lists of materials claiming both theoretical and empirical grounds for these being superior both to what went before, and what is produced by the rival companies. We live and work in a world where we are bombarded with publicity to persuade us that we only have to find the right materials and the right methodology and we shall become better teacher –that is to say that our students will learn better.

I began my listing some of the influences on my own practice as a language teacher. Other influences I neglected. Every time I am engaged in learning, I find myself making cross references between that experience and other learning experiences. So for example, when I began learning to drive some ten years ago, and was astonished to discover how completely I could lose the mastery of one skill in the initial stages of trying to acquire another, and this enabled me to

understand better those apparent 'dips' in ability our learners often show, and encouraged me to be far more accepting of this as a necessary developmental process. It had quite a concrete effect on my teaching –I came to stop trying to 're-teach' skills or aspects of the language my students appeared to have acquired and then lost.

My most recent learning experience, however, has been to do with gardens. As you know, British people are often obsessed with gardens and with gardening. We often ignore the attractions of living in a flat in the city centre, close to where we work, and instead we live a dozen or more kilometres away and commute in to work at enormous inconvenience and loss of time, purely in order to have a patch of land around the place we live, which we can cultivate.

Three years ago this happened to me. I moved out of London and found myself responsible for about 200 square metres of garden. When I moved this was barely more than a patch of waste ground and so, with great enthusiasm, I set to and determined to convert this into one of the loveliest gardens in the area.

I began by going to a garden centre for advice. Now, like publishing companies, gardening centres are commercial enterprises which exist to make money for their owners or share-holders. Advice was freely available. First of all I was told what plants were available, how large the flowers were, how exotic the colours, how heady the perfumes. Then I was introduced to a range of products to coat them with to ensure that they would not be attacked by pests, to put into the soil to ensure that they would grow fast. I was also advised to buy a range of implements and containers to help me in my task of hoes, barrows, barrels. Finally I was advised to buy some books which would continue to feed me with good advice.

I dug the ground, planted the plants, the bulbs, the seeds. I added the fertilisers and sprayed the pesticides. And I waited. And waited and waited. A few flowers appeared –on the whole not quite as large and as exotic as I had been led to expect, but they were flashy and I was pleased with them. Other plants seemed to remain stagnant, and others died. And yet around me my neighbours seemed to have gardens full of colour and perfume, vigorous plants, shrubs and trees. And yet they seemed to work with just a few rusty old tools and, as far as I could see, they had little recourse to chemical pesticides and fertilisers, and rarely consulted a book.

By the middle of summer my garden was so pathetic in comparison with that of my neighbours that I went out and bought a few tubs with plants already in them and sat them down in the beds where my hopes had failed to materialise.

I was in the pub a week or so later when one of my neighbours, a very old man came in.

"You be the one as don't know nothing about gardening", he said to me.

I protested. I told him what I had bought, what I had read and what I had done.

"You don't know nothing", he repeated. "Contrary, that's what you are, contrary. Next thing you'll be having silver bells and cockle shells. You don't know where to begin".

At last I saw some hope of success. This man was a good gardener. I could ask him to tell me the secret of success. So I plied him with beer and listened. This is what he had to say:

"– Go slowly. You can't accelerate natural processes. Don't trust anything which claims to make things grow faster or better. Particularly if they cost money!

– Get to know your soil. Test different parts of the garden for acidity/alkalinity. See how much shade different parts of the garden get, and at what time of day. Observe how well water drains through the soil in different places.

– Look carefully at what you have got and observe what seems to grow effectively in different places. Add more of the same in those places.

– Once you know the qualities of your soil, make small adjustments to it if you must, by adding a little lime to it to reduce the acidity, or by adding a little compost to help it retain water, or a little sand to help it to drain better.

– Make use of all your resources. Collect all dead plant matter and allow it to turn to compost. Put this back on the soil.

– And only when you feel you know exactly what kind of soil you have and what kinds of plants like to be here, is it really worth buying much new stock."

"So how long till I have a beautiful garden?", I asked.

"Depends on the soil and how well you get to know it. The better you get to know it, the faster. But it won't be quick. It can't be."

This probably seems like a long digression, but I believe, as language teacher, we have a lot to learn from this advice:

- There is no point in rushing.
- Really get to know your raw material (learners) –identify individual characteristics and preferences.
- Be wary of any claims to be able to accelerate natural processes.

I began my referring to the dominant position of Communicative Language Teaching and criticised the way in which, in its various forms, it is advocated as a global approach. My primary objections are two-fold.

Firstly I object to its claims to accelerate learning, and (to refer again to the gardening metaphor) I believe that it gives rise in many cases to silver bells and cockle shells rather than to sturdy growth.

My second objection is not so much to CLT as to any globally-advocated approach (of which CLT is one). I believe that within any group of learners there are significant differences in the ways in which the individuals are predisposed to learn, and the teacher needs to make herself aware of these differences as far as possible, and to take them into account in her teaching. These differences are all the more marked between different groups of learners –for example groups of children as opposed to adults, groups of learners studying a foreign language in order to acquire oral learners studying a second as opposed to a first foreign language.

My contention, then, is that like gardeners, teachers have a lot to learn from systematically observing and studying their soil and their plants –the contexts in which learning takes place and the learners and the learning themselves. And just as a good gardener may try one plant in a particular part of the garden to see how it takes to the soil, drainage and light conditions before sowing a whole bed, I believe that it is to our advantage as teachers to introduce changes piecemeal and to study the results carefully before implementing more radical innovations.

Happily, this is the way things are happening in many areas of language teaching. Classroom-based research provides teachers with the means to analyze their work, to monitor changes and to tailor changes to specific circumstance.

The focus of classroom-based research may, in fact, be quite narrow. Sixteen years ago I was told not to use red pen in marking students' work as the effect of the red ink was discouraging for the learners. Only very recently did I check asking them if they preferred their work to be marked in pencil, red ink or in blue or black ink (blue if they had written in black and vice-versa). Most students preferred red ink!

Classroom-based research can be a way of putting to the test our assumptions –either by using questionnaires to find out what students think, or by using tests of different kinds in order to see whether our practice is as effective as we think it is. Often the same questionnaire or test will be given to two different groups of students whose experience of learning in some way has consciously been differentiated by the teacher, or to the same group of students before and after some change has been introduced.

'NETWORKING' – the small scale of this kind of research can be a drawback. However, by working in a group with other teachers who replicate the research with their own classes, and by contact between different groups of teachers, a great deal can be discovered. It may be argued that this is still subjective, but some information is better than none, and a lot of our assumptions about what learners like and find useful comes down to little more than fossilised assumption. It is useful to put these to the test. Throughout the world, associations of language teachers are engaged in small-scale research of this kind. Through newsletters they exchange their findings, and teachers in one group endeavour to find out whether what appears to be true of one group of learners is equally true in the case of their own.

**IDENTIFICATION OF PROBLEMS** – the starting point for this research is often the identification of problems. An example might be that several teachers find that students seem not to understand their instructions when these are given in English. They might decide to teach several lessons in which instructions are given entirely in the first language of the learners, lessons in which instructions are given in English, and again a series of lessons in which the instructions are given in English but then repeated in the students' first language. After each lesson the students are given a very brief questionnaire to elicit how clearly they understood what the teacher wanted them to do. In this way the teachers are able to check out their initial estimation of the problems and to decide on a more informed course of action.

**EXPERIMENTATION** – classroom-based research need not necessarily involve experimentation (it might simply involve the systematic description of what takes place in the classroom), but often it is useful to contrast the effects of using two different approaches, materials or patterns of classroom organisation etc. Questionnaires and tests can be used, or colleagues can be asked to attend the lessons in order to record their observations. Lessons may also be filmed or taped so that the teacher can retrospectively analyze the data –the proportion of time spent talking by students, for example.

Please see the accompanying appendices for examples of questionnaires which may be given to classes.

– Look carefully at what you have got and observe what seems to grow effectively in different places. Add more of the same in those places.

– Once you know the qualities of your soil, make small adjustments to it if you must by adding a little lime to it to reduce the acidity, or by adding a little compost to help it retain water, or a little sand to help it to drain better.

– Make use of all your resources. Collect all dead plant matter and allow it to turn to compost. Put this back on the soil.

– And only when you feel you know exactly what kind of soil you have and what kinds of plants like to be where, is it really worth buying much new stock.

– Go slowly. You can't accelerate natural processes. Don't trust anything which claims to make things grow faster or better. Particularly if they cost money!

– Get to know your soil. Test different parts of the garden for acidity/alkalinity. See how much shade different parts of the garden get, and at what time of day. Observe how well water drains through the soil in different places.

**Questionnaire** to elicit aspects of what learners want from lessons. This can be used to compare the attitudes of learners in classes experiencing different approaches and, through regular use with the same class, can also be used to monitor changing attitudes (in response to changing approaches?)

Indicate the extent to which you agree with these statements by writing a number from 1 – 5 by each one.

1 = I absolutely disagree

5 = I absolutely agree

1. I want the teacher to explain grammar to me in my language.
2. I want the teacher to explain the meaning of all new words.
3. I want to work in pairs with other students in my class.
4. I want to speak in English in class as much as possible.
5. We should never speak our language in class.
6. I want to use real materials even if they are difficult to understand.
7. I want to be told why we do what we do.
8. I want to prepare texts at home before we study them in class.

The materials in this lesson were:

Challenging

Interesting

Useful

Varied

The way the teacher used the materials in this lesson was:

Challenging

Interesting

Useful

Varied

In this lesson I understood the teacher instructions.

**Questionnaire** for use after a 'conventional' lesson and after an 'experimental' lesson for purposes of comparison.

Please comment on each of the following statements by writing a number 1-4 against each of them:

1. Very good.
2. Good.
3. Adequate.
4. Inadequate.

This lesson was:

Challenging.  
Interesting.  
Useful.  
Varied

---

**Questionnaire** for use after a 'conventional' lesson and after an 'experimental' lesson for purposes of comparison.

Please comment on each of the following statements by writing a number 1-4 against each of them:

1. Very good.
2. Good.
3. Adequate.
4. Inadequate.

I learned new vocabulary  
I understood the meanings of the new words  
I learned to pronounce the new words  
I learned to spell the new words  
I learned to use the new words  
I developed my confidence in speaking English  
I developed my ability to understand spoken English  
I developed my ability to read faster  
I developed my ability to decide which of the new words in a text I can safely ignore  
I understood why the teacher asked us to do the things we did



**Questionnaire** to elicit general responses to teaching over a term in which the teacher has introduced changes in her teaching.

What differences have you noticed about your English lessons this term?

Think about the materials, the way the teacher teaches, what the students do and the language you have studied.

Do you feel you have learned more or less than usual this term?

Please explain

Do you feel you have learned more effectively this term?

Please explain

## PEDAGOGICAL REFLECTIONS: From Theory to Practice

### Una llança a favor de la GLOBALITZACIO

Encarnació Romero i Buiza  
Col·legi Públic Prat de la Riba, Esplugues de Llobregat

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Al llarg de la meua experiència com a professora en diferents centres d'Educació General i Bàsica, he anat desenvolupant una tendència cada vegada més marcada cap a la GLOBALITZACIO. Suposo que cadascun dels ensenyants amb més de deu anys d'experiència docent reflexiona en algun moment sobre la seva tasca professional i observa com certes inclinacions acostumen a estar presents, cada vegada amb més força, en la seva feina diària. En el meu cas concret, he pogut constatar com la realització d'activitats amb marcades característiques globals a les escoles, ha esdevingut molt positiva, tant per al mestre com per a l'alumne. Tots dos plegats hem pogut gaudir del que estàvem treballant conjuntament, fet que m'ha portat al present article.

Per què hauríem de defensar activitats globalitzadores, especialment a l'Escola Primària? Hi ha motius suficients o són simples preferències de determinats col·lectius de professors? Procurarem donar la nostra resposta a aquests interrogants.

Durant l'escolaritat, els alumnes dels nostres centres de Primària han d'integrar dins d'ells mateixos els diferents aprenentatges escolars. Recordem que el qualificatiu d'*integradora*, era un dels que acostumàvem a sentir durant els nostres anys d'estudiant de Magisteri. Tots sabem que l'educació del nen es proposa aconseguir aquest objectiu entre altres. Des d'aquesta perspectiva, les activitats globalitzades esdevenen un mitjà molt adient per a ajudar l'estudiant. Si programem i planifiquem treballs en els quals des de cada àrea s'incideix sobre el nen amb la intenció d'ajudar-lo a assimilar i aprofundir en els seus aprenentatges, estem desenvolupant no sols un objectiu prioritari a l'Escola Primària, sinó que també l'estem ajudant perquè aconseguixi com a individu dos aspectes molt importants en el seu creixement com a infant: integrar els diferents aprenentatges en el seu món interior i viure l'escola com una experiència positiva i gratificadora.

Amb el desenvolupament de tasques globalitzades, ens acostumem, per una banda, la mateix funcionament intel·lectual de l'alumne. La ment del nen té per si mateixa un funcionament global, ja que a partir de les diverses experiències (i l'aprenentatge no deixa d'ésser una experiència més), intenta construir el seu món interior. Si l'ajudem a interrelacionar els aprenentatges afavorirem aquest procés natural integrador i evitarem una dispersió poc beneficiosa. D'altra banda, en globalitzar ajudem i reforcem indirectament l'assimilació d'altres continguts que ha d'assolir l'alumne en el nivell en què es troba; des de diferents perspectives o matèries tots intentem afavorir l'aprenentatge que realitza un sol subjecte en cada cas. Arribats en aquest punt de la reflexió, hem de dir que unes activitats que s'acosten al funcionament intel·lectual dels nostres alumnes i que el poden ajudar a aconseguir els seus objectius d'aprenentatge escolar, han de ser intrínsecament gratificants per a ells mateixos i, per tant, els motivaran fàcilment. L'educant veu com el que està aprenent en una matèria li és útil per a una altra i aquest factor pot esdevenir engrescador en el desenvolupament de les seves tasques.

Igualment, amb aquest enfocament l'alumne tindrà oportunitat de mostrar el que va aprenent, és a dir, de rendibilitzar el seu esforç com a estudiant: quan assimili un concepte –per exemple de matemàtiques– el podrà fer servir per crear o realitzar una activitat d'expressió plàstica, social, etc. Aquest fet el pot ajudar a interessar-se en l'aprofundiment dins el seu propi aprenentatge, i potser aconseguirem motivar-lo per llançar-se a fer quelcom més, la qual cosa li reportarà un profit bastant immediat del seu esforç.

Un aspecte també importat en relació amb la globalització és el que pot arribar a significar per als mateixos ensenyants. Com ho podrien viure els professors o professores?

El fet de programar activitats globalitzadores implica que el col·lectiu d'ensenyants que es proposi dur-les a terme ha de ser capaç de treballar en grup. La idea de treball en grup és una de les que tot sovint intentem aconseguir dels nostres alumnes, i crec que els mestres hauríem d'acostumar-nos a treballar també de la mateixa forma. L'esforç que en un principi suposa contrastar idees, plantejaments i objectius amb els companys de treball, intentant arribar a propostes concretes i compartides, es veuria a la llarga recompensat amb la tranquil·litat de saber que tots els implicats en aconseguir que els alumnes APRENGUIN (en majúscules) estan canalitzant els seus esforços en la mateixa direcció. A nivell d'anècdota, sempre recordaré el que va significar per a mi veure que la companya amb la qual treballava l'anglès a l'escola a la qual havia estat traslladada, també tenia problemes per arribar, de vegades, als objectius que ens havien marcat. Sempre havia treballat l'anglès tota sola i m'angoixava cada vegada que constatava que no arribaria als continguts i objectius que havia programat. Buscava possibles causes i possibles solucions tot sovint, però era una realitat bastant frustrant de vegades. Poder compartir el fet em va desangoixar immediatament, i el mateix va succeir a la meua companya. Totes dues érem capaces d'analitzar amb més clardat les causes que incidien en els diferents aprenentatges i no ens sentíem tant culpables per aquest fet. Així doncs, des d'aquesta perspectiva, la globalització podria significar, per als ensenyants, un ajut en la canalització de les preocupacions i angoixes que produeix la nostra tasca, i una excusa per aprofundir en les relacions professionals dins el mateix equip de treball en què ens trobem.

Una de les preguntes que actualment ens fan els alumnes dels nostres centres, especialment aquells que es troben en el Cicle Superior és:

... I això que estudiem, per a què serveix?

La globalització dóna, en part, resposta a aquesta pregunta, ja que li possibilita la realització de tasques concretes i que l'alumne pugui gaudir al màxim de l'esforç que ja està realitzant.

En aquest sentit hem d'aclarir que no estem defensant només la gratificació immediata; també hem de saber esperar conseqüències positives a llarg termini dels nostres esforços. Tanmateix, el llarg camí que representa l'educació d'un ésser humà, l'assoliment de petits objectius a curt termini sempre afavoriran el desenvolupament del procés general d'aprenentatge.

Una vessant diferent d'aquesta reflexió compartida pot estar relacionada amb la lectura que vaig fer fa dies d'un article publicat en un diari de Barcelona. La idea central era el

plantejament de la possible relació entre l'excés d'informació que reben en l'actualitat els alumnes i el fracàs escolar. La idea de fracàs escolar, si és que realment existeix, és molt complexa i seria demagògic relacionar-la solament amb la quantitat d'informació que reben els nostres estudiants. Tot i així, és un fet que la dispersió es pot veure afavorida per aquesta causa. L'alumne pot tenir, de vegades, la sensació que no pot assimilar tot allò que se li demana. Cada mestre vol que els seus alumnes assimilïn els conceptes que considera bàsics per a l'aprenentatge. Cadascú pressiona per separat els estudiants i moltes vegades aquests es tanquen en creure que no poden arribar allà on els mestres estant demanant que arribin. D'altra banda, pot tenir l'equívoca sensació que els seus professors persegueixen coses molt diferents. Quan, en realitat, tots ens proposem objectius bastant comuns i el més important hauria de ser ajudar-lo a aprendre i a integrar els diferents estudis en la seva persona. Tasca que es pot veure afavorida amb la realització de tasques globalitzadores durant l'escolaritat.

Així doncs, si he aconseguit compartir amb vosaltres el meu raonament fins a aquest punt, deixeu-me trencar una llança a favor de la GLOBALITZACIO i animar, des d'aquestes línies, tots els professors de l'Escola Primària i, per què no?, als de l'Ensenyament Secundari, a planificar activitats globalitzadores en un món que, de vegades, sembla fer de l'especialització l'únic cavall de batalla.

## SPECIAL INTEREST FOR APAC MEMBERS: Self Training

### Acquiring English Pronunciation

Dr. Brian Mott  
Universitat de Barcelona

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English teachers in Spain often ask me how to set about improving their pronunciation of English and how to help their students acquire an acceptable accent in the language. The desire to pronounce English correctly may stem, as in the case of English language teachers, from the purely practical motivation to do one's job as competently as possible. Certainly, non-native teachers of a language have a particularly heavy responsibility because they have to make their accent sound as near-native as possible. But almost any language learner will be keen to articulate as well as possible in the target language, not just to be understood, but from the point of view of personal pride and self-esteem. On the practical side, too, there is much to be gained from having a good pronunciation of a foreign language, the most obvious advantage being greater acceptance among the social group with which one wants to integrate.

Foreign language learning is no longer a luxury in an international world; it is a necessity. If a country wants to hold its own and take part in world affairs, then it must train its young people to learn foreign languages. Success in the international world of commerce and industry is becoming increasingly tied to competence in languages. Now, many people believe that a good pronunciation of a language can merely be learnt from a period of residence in the country where the language is spoken, but this is not entirely true. There are many people who have spent years in a country whose language they pronounce very badly, simply because they have not undergone any systematic training to rid themselves of bad articulatory habits, which are generally due to interference from the mother tongue.

The interference of the mother tongue in the pronunciation of a foreign language has been widely recognized for many years.

When a person speaks a foreign language, he tends to transfer his own system of sounds and articulatory habits to that language and produce sounds which he has been accustomed to making since he first learned to speak. This may simply mean that words are pronounced with some degree of phonetic distortion but are still recognizable. On the other hand, the resultant phonetic inaccuracy may lead to unintelligibility (for example, if a Spaniard pronounces the English word card without the final [d], it will sound like car) or at least cause momentary lexical confusion (sheep being interpreted as ship, for example).

As soon as we realize that our pronunciation of a foreign language is inhibited by our own articulatory habits, we see that learning a foreign language does not merely imply learning a set of words different from our own, but also a new set of sounds, not to mention the peculiar native rhythm, stress and intonation superimposed on them. To achieve mastery of the new system of sounds and avoid replacement of the foreign sounds by ones close to them in our native stock

(a phenomenon known as *lautersatz*), we must embark upon systematic deconditioning and try and acquire new articulatory habits.

Different languages make a different linguistic use of sound, so the first thing the foreign learner of a language has to know is which sounds are contrastive in the language he is studying. For example, the two sound sequences p-i-g and b-i-g constitute different words in English because the native English speaker recognizes the initial consonants as being different: they are in contrast in his sound system and change the meaning of words. Similarly, p-i-n is not the same as p-e-n for an Englishman, so the sounds represented by i and e are different vowels for him. The English child learns to identify and reproduce these contrasts, and the foreign learner of English must learn to do the same. This is important because not all languages will make use of the same contrasts. There is a North American group of languages, Athapaskan, in which [p] and [b] are not in opposition – in actual fact, they occur in free variation; hence the alternative name Athabaskan.

The contrastive sounds of a language are called *phonemes*, and there is such a strong force binding the phonemes of a language in their complex of contrasts that the adult learner of a foreign language finds it at first difficult to hear sounds which are not identical with those of his own language. But until he can hear the different sounds properly, any attempt at reproducing them will be futile. **Perception precedes production.**

Therefore, at first it may be difficult for the Spaniard to produce different varieties of [e] if he is learning Catalan, Portuguese, French or Italian, so that, for example, he will confuse Portuguese *pêlo*, 'hair', with *pele*, 'I peel'. The [e] in Spanish *pero* is more like the one in Portuguese *pêlo*, and the [e] in Spanish *perro* is more like the one in Portuguese *pele*, but the Spaniard hears no difference in the sounds in his native words because they are not in opposition – they do not serve to distinguish words.

Thai has [p] and [p<sup>h</sup>] as different phonemes. English has not, so this will be an area of difficulty for the English learner of Thai for, although the English person produces these different sounds when speaking English – [p] in *spin*, [p<sup>h</sup>] in *pin*: as they are not contrastive for him, he does not realize that the two [p] sounds in these words are not realized in quite the same way. Similarly, for the Spaniard, the vowels in the English words *sheep* and *ship* will be a problem at first. Even if the Spaniard hears them as different, he will probably reproduce them both with some variety of his own native vowel in *si*.

Once the sound system of the language we are learning is clearly established, we can then go to work on some fine-tuning as regards the realization of each of the individual phonemes. We have just seen that the [p] of *pin* in English is aspirated, while that of *spin* is not, and it is more detailed, phonetic information of this kind that will now be the concern of the learner of a foreign language. To pronounce Spanish properly, the foreign learner of Spanish will need to know that the consonants between vowels in words like *baba*, *dado* and *gogo* are not articulated in quite the same way as the initial ones, even though, as their spelling suggests, they are the same sound as far as native speakers of Spanish are concerned because they have no contrastive value.

Note that the position a sound occupies is highly relevant to the degree of difficulty it poses for the foreign learner. For example, an Englishman will reproduce the [e] of perro, which is similar to his own English [e], with a fair degree of accuracy, but he will probably use [ei] for the [e] of se or monte, or pronounce it with the vowel in we quite unconsciously, as final [e] does not exist for him, while final [ei] and [i:] do. Similarly, a Spaniard will reproduce the [m] of impossible perfectly, but the [m] of ham not so well unless it is followed by a [b] or a [p] because word-final [m] does not exist in Spanish.

Apart from the position of sounds in the word or syllable, the way sounds combine with others in different languages (phonotactics) is also very important. Both Spanish and English people are capable of pronouncing the sounds in the following sequence individually: [skmnde]. But in combination it is not so easy, and the Spaniard and the Englishman will find different areas of difficulty. The Englishman may pronounce final [e] as [ei] or [i:] (as we have just seen); the Spaniard may insert an [e] before the initial [s] + consonant. Both will encounter the difficulty of reproducing the long consonant sequence correctly without inserting vowels (but note that some African and Slavonic languages have elaborate consonant sequences).

Apart from this rather precise information on the segmental make-up of the sound system of a language, it is also helpful if the foreign learner is given a more general idea of the sort of articulations he is supposed to be aiming at. For example, does the target language make any significant use of nasalization? English does not, but French, Portuguese and Polish have nasal vowels opposed to oral ones. The Portuguese words mudo and undo are distinguished by the presence of an oral vowel in the first case and a nasal vowel in the second. The distinction in Spanish, which has the same words, is made on the basis of the presence or absence of the [n].

What rôle do the lips play in the production of sounds in the target language? English, for example, is spoken with relatively little movement of lips and jaws, so foreign students may have to practise holding their lips spread. On the other hand, a Frenchman's lips are rounded for about a third of the time he is speaking. In Spanish and Italian, lip-rounding is more important than in English, but not as important as in French.

Another question might be: Is any significant use of length made in the target language? Are there long vowels opposed to short ones, or long consonants opposed to short ones? English has a series of long vowels opposed to short ones. Thus, the vowel in leave is longer than the one in leaf; the vowel in Luke is longer than the one in look. Italian makes considerable distinctive use of consonant length. Cade, with a short [d], means 'he falls'; cadde, with a long [d], means 'he fell'. Likewise, Italian vale and valle are distinguished by their short and long intervocalic consonants, respectively – a distinction which operates in Spanish through the second word having what is called a palatal [l] sound.

Some languages have vowel reduction in unstressed syllables. English has this relaxation and centring so that the vowels in the unstressed syllables of the words better, occur, Saturday and attempt are all pronounced the same, and the words gorilla and guerrilla are homophones. Unstressed vowels may even become so short that they are lost in English, as in the words pardon, garden, police, vegetable and comfortable, so here is an area that may require special

practice, depending on the language.

Catalan neutralizes unstressed [a] and [e] (parra and pare end in the same vowel in the Catalan of Barcelona), and Russian reduces unstressed [a] to the sound in the second syllable of English better, while unstressed [o] is relaxed to [a], but Spanish has no such gradation, as such changes are called, so the Spanish learner of English must pay careful attention to these processes to avoid producing full vowels in every syllable in English words.

Another way in which languages may differ is in the relative strength of articulation of consonants and vowels. The consonants of Spanish tend to be articulated more weakly in Spanish and thus show a tendency to fall, particularly in rapid speech. Note, for example, the frequent loss of [d] between vowels, especially in the past participle ending -a(d)o (e.g. comprado > comprao). On the other hand, the consonants of Germanic languages, like English, are less subject to weakening, and it is the vowels of these languages that manifest a greater tendency towards variation.

Yet another variable among languages is the action of voice. The term voice, as used in Phonetics, refers to the vibration of the vocal cords. If the vocal cords, which are situated in the larynx, vibrate, we produce voiced consonants, like [b, d, g]; if they do not, we produce unvoiced consonants, like [p, t, k]. In some languages, like German, Russian and Catalan, [b, d, g] become [p, t, k] in final position – in other words, they devoice – so the Catalan words sap, mut, llac all end in unvoiced consonants, whereas Spanish has voiced consonants in the cognate words sabe, mudo, lago. English has partial devoicing, but bag and back, bad and bat are still distinguishable. However, some languages, like French, have fully voiced final consonants.

A very important aspect of the English sound system is the behaviour of [r] and [l] after vowels. In Standard British English, [r] is not pronounced in this position; in the history of English, it has disappeared, leaving behind a long vowel. Now, it is a very interesting fact that some varieties of Modern English, including the standard language, are undergoing a similar process in relationship to [l], which is now also disappearing after vowels in these varieties; thus, milk sounds a bit like miuk. This is a detail which is well worth pointing out to foreign learners of English, who tend to pronounce post-vocalic [l] far too carefully.

Apart from the actual sounds of a language – what linguists often refer to as the segments of speech, there are also the so-called suprasegmental features: stress, rhythm and intonation. What sort of useful generalizations can be made about these features?

In the case of word stress, the languages of the world can be divided into two groups according to whether the stress is always placed on the same syllable in words or not. In French, for example, words are always stressed on the last syllable; on the other hand, in English, Spanish and Catalan, the position of the stress is variable. But, whereas, Spanish and Catalan have a written accent on irregularly stressed words, so that we can stress them correctly, even if we do not know them, English has no such graphic aid. Nevertheless, it can be said that English generally has the stress nearer the beginning of its words than in Spanish. Compare English geography, history, university, regular, supermarket with Spanish geografía, historia, universidad, regular, supermercado.



Different stress patterns and syllable length give rise to different rhythms. The peculiarity of English rhythm is that syllable length varies and the strong beats in a sentence come at regular intervals. In Spanish, however, all syllables are approximately the same length, which means that the strong beats in a sentence will come at irregular intervals.

The question of intonation is too complicated to discuss here, but it is worth mentioning that some languages, like Chinese and Vietnamese, make use of different tones to distinguish words which are otherwise identical.

Phonetic training to learn to perceive and reproduce individual sounds can be a bit artificial because sounds are not usually pronounced out of context, but you have to learn to walk before you can run and, in any case, pronunciation drills need not, indeed should not, be limited the whole time to individual sounds and words. The main thing to remember is that basically we all have the same vocal apparatus and no oral gymnastics is required to pronounce correctly. In fact, excessive facial contortions and straining of the muscles will have the negative effect of distorting sounds. The key factor in good reproduction is clear perception.

## PASTIMES

### Would You Make a Good Language Teacher?

Guadalupe Burgos Sánchez

---

1. At work you'd rather:

- a. work with people
- b. work with machines
- c. work alone

2. Imagine you are very good at something (at fixing cars, for example). Would you mind explaining to somebody who needs your help how to resolve his/her problem?

- a. Yes
- b. No

3. If no, why?

- a. because I like helping people
- b. because I would like other people know what I know
- c. because I like teaching subjects I am good at
- d. I have no reasons

4. Of the list below, which qualities do you think are the most important if you want to be a teacher? (Mark them in order of preference.) To be:

- |                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| a. patient        | j. strong-willed  |
| b. generous       | k. happy          |
| c. fair           | l. creative       |
| d. optimistic     | m. amusing        |
| e. nervous        | n. active         |
| f. hard-working   | o. flexible       |
| g. careful        | p. uncompromising |
| h. quick-tempered | q. honest         |
| i. extroverted    | r. serious        |

- s. knowing the subject very well
- t. being able to explain the subject fluently and clearly
- u. being able to use different teaching materials

5. How many languages can you speak?...

6. How many of them could you teach to a friend if necessary?....

7. Do you like music?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

8. Can you remember a melody, song, or tune:

- a. easily
- b. quite easily
- c. it depends on the song
- d. with difficulty
- e. I can't remember a melody at all

9. Define yourself!

Generous	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Mean
Hard-working	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Lazy
Careful	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Reckless
Optimistic	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Pessimistic
Light-hearted	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Serious
Relaxed	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Nervous
Extroverted	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Introverted
Polite	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Impolite
Talkative	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Taciturn
Strong-willed	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Easily-led
Flexible	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Uncompromising
Honest	3 2 1 0 1 2 3	Dishonest

10. Do you like reading?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

11. If yes, what kind of book?

- a. poetry
- b. comedy
- c. adventure
- d. horror
- e. mystery
- f. travel
- g. novels
- h. biographies
- i. essays
- j. any kind if good

12. Are you interested in the culture of other countries?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

13. If yes, why?

- a. Because if you know other cultures you can enrich your own.
- b. To travel.
- c. I like human subject.
- d. I don't know.

14. Do you find meeting people?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

15. If yes, why?

- a. To make more friends
- b. In order to travel
- c. To enrich myself
- d. To learn other languages

16. Would you travel to another country just in order to improve a practice or learn a language?

- a. Yes.
- b. It depends on the country.
- c. No. I'd like to travel but not just in order to improve a foreign language
- d. Not at all.

17. What do you think it should be the relationship between the teacher and pupils in a classroom?

- a. The teacher suggests things with authority
- b. The teacher proposes and the students can give their opinions
- c. The students propose things and the teacher gives her/his opinion
- d. The students propose and the teacher is the 'facilitator' of the task (self-centered learning)

### INTERPRET YOUR SCORE

0–60: You are definitely not good at teaching or languages. But don't worry. There a lot of other different jobs you can be good at. So, try another quiz and maybe you will find out which job you would do well.

60–100: You could be a language teacher if you wanted, depending on the situation, pupils, etc. But if you want to avoid headaches and to earn more money, devote yourself to something else.

10–140: You were born to be a language teacher. What are you waiting for? Go ahead! Look for a good school and enjoy you newly discovered talent.

By: Guadalupe Burgos Sánchez

### ANSWER SCORE

1. a:score 5 points, b:2, c:0
2. a:0, b:5
3. a:2, b:3, c:5, d:1
4. 2 points for each of the following qualities: a, c, d, f, j, l, n , o, q.  
1 point for the qualities: b, q, i, k, m.
5. Two points for each language (maximum 10)
6. Two points for each language (maximum 10)
7. a:5, b:0
8. a:5, b:3, c:2, d:1, e:0
9. Add up the score you get from the left side and subtract from it the score you get from the right side
10. a:5, b:0
11. 2 points for options: f, i, j  
1 point for options: a, b, g, h
12. a:5, b:0
13. a:5, b:2, c:3, d:0
14. a:5, b:0
15. a:3, b:2, c:4, d:5
16. a:5, b:3, c:1, d:0
17. a:0, b:2, c:4, d:4

A . P . A . C .

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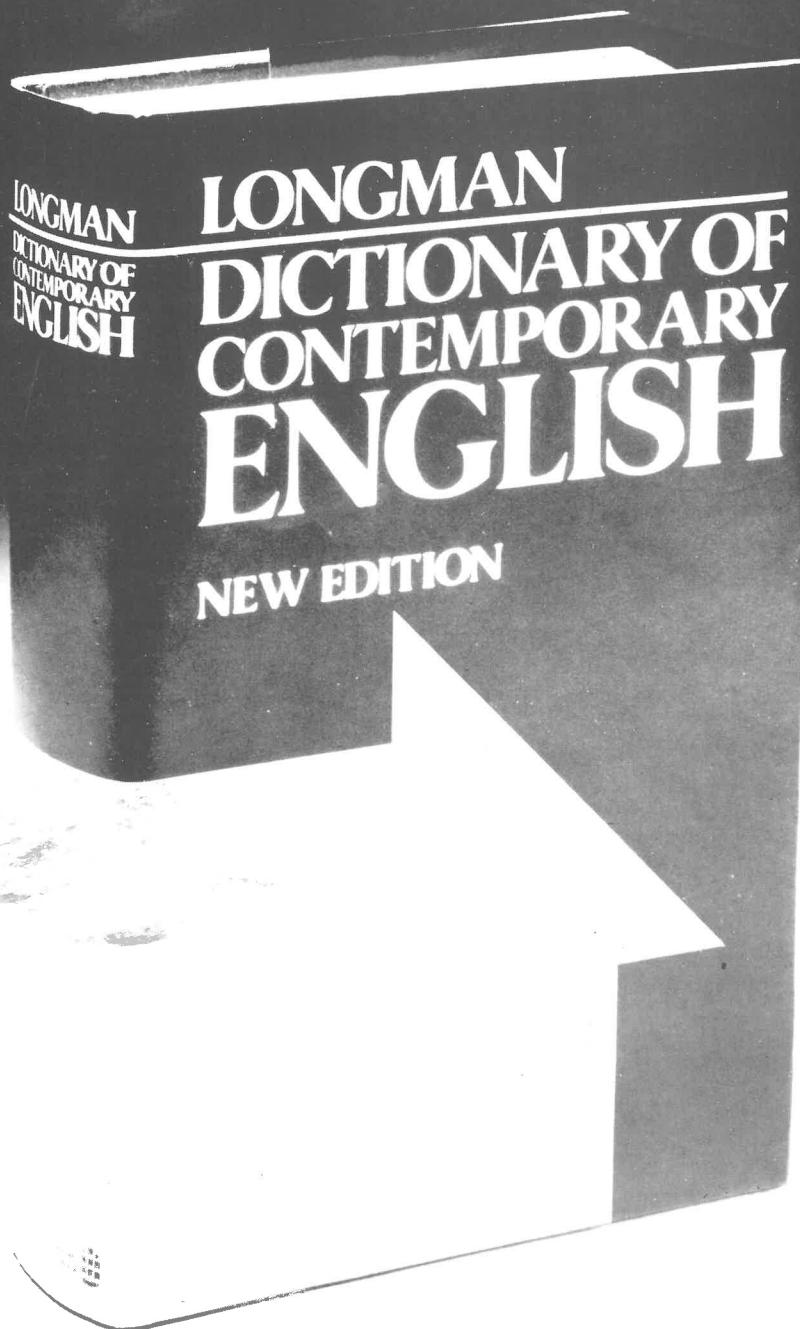
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