

ASSOCIACIÓ DE PROFESSORS D'ANGLÈS DE CATALUNYA

A P A C

of

NEWS

**Actes
ELT Convention 1998**

**SELF-ACCESS CENTRES
A SPECIAL REPORT**

By Eva González

DON'T LET THEM DRIVE YOU CRAZY !!!

By Eulalia Muñoz and Carmen Sevilla

Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten.

B.F.Skinner

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Dear APAC members,

By the time this issue of Apac of News reaches you, things will have begun to settle down again after the always gruelling initial stages of the new academic year. I hope you will enjoy reading this number; perhaps you will find some suggestions you can put to use now or in the near future.

The increasing concern with autonomy-especially since the publication of works such as Henri Holec's *Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning*-has caused the part played by both teachers and learners of foreign languages to be seen in a new light. Included in this issue you will find two articles that touch on this matter. A report featuring the views of six teachers who have designed and/or managed a self-access centre looks at the role of this learning context within the current educational framework. On the other hand, in the section devoted to the latest Apac Awards, Eulalia Muñoz and Carmen Sevilla propose an original way of treating errors systematically in class. Not only have Eulalia and Carmen managed to marry humour and imagination with often tedious and time-consuming correction tasks, but they have also succeeded in helping their students feel more responsible for their learning.

On this occasion, the plenary lecture given by Jasone Cenoz, from the University of the Basque Country, opens the 1998 proceedings section. She looks at how English's becoming the language of intra-European communication can affect daily teaching practices. Also from a theoretical perspective, Clement Laroy proposes an integrating pedagogical framework for the practice of pronunciation in the foreign language classroom. Three of the proceedings selected for this issue present some learner-centred activities that have been successfully put into practice in three different teaching contexts: M^a Luisa Pérez Ojeda's *What's in a song?* and Lourdes Montoro's *Raising the theatrical tone in a first year of English* explore the advantages of bringing art-music and drama respectively-into the classroom; *Welcome to multimedia English*, by Nuria Brichs and Dolores Permanyer, describes the enormous possibilities of multimedia when exploited effectively. Take a look at this piece even if you are not experts in the field: it is aimed at a non-specialist audience. If you haven't succeeded in overcoming your students' reluctance to enjoy writing in English, you may find some useful advice in *Making writing an enjoyable process in and out of class*, by Carmen Fernández Santás. Her contribution emphasizes the crucial role of the teacher in enhancing the learners' writing abilities. The article by Jonathan Gayther in the British Council section focuses on writing as well. Jonathan provides some tips on how to exploit standard word-processing programs so that they become 'a motivating and worthwhile option in our teaching writing'.

It only remains for me to wish you a successful 1998-1999 academic year and to encourage you to keep sending material for publication. As always, thanks to all contributors to this issue and to those who have sent articles for future editions.

Yours,

Eva González
Editor

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SELF-ACCESS CENTRES

A SPECIAL REPORT

BY EVA GONZÁLEZ

Over the last two decades specialists have emphasized the crucial role of education in helping learners become autonomous during and after the educational process. This growing concern with the development of autonomy has made both teachers and learners take on new responsibilities. While teachers are expected to help students develop strategies that reach beyond the subject they teach, learners are expected to play a more active role and to become responsible for their own learning.

There have of late proliferated self-access centres designed to cater for the needs of a wide spectrum of learners, who may use them either as a complement to regular classes with a teacher or as the only learning method. In the next few pages, six English teachers who have been directly involved in the setting up of a self-access centre talk about their experiences. Despite their different backgrounds and teaching contexts, they all agree that self-access centres should promote autonomy by offering users a chance not only to learn a language but also to learn to learn.

ESCOLA OFICIAL D'IDIOMES BARCELONA-DRASSANES

Av Drassanes s/n. 08001 Barcelona

IN OPERATION SINCE: February 1991

LANGUAGES: English, French, German, Italian, Catalan and Spanish for foreigners (Modern Greek and Russian will be incorporated in the near future.)

USERS: The centre is open to all EOI students and also to the general public.

SECTIONS: For each of the languages, the centre offers materials for practice on the four basic skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) as well as on other aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, culture, or language for special purposes. Most of these materials are classified according to the five levels of the school curriculum and are of different kinds: self-correcting worksheets (some with audio or video tapes), whole methods (particularly for zero beginners), authentic materials, language learning publications, computer software, and reference books. Learners can also watch satellite TV, join conversation groups or writing workshops, and find information about cultural events and courses abroad.

EG: What motivates learners to come to the self-access centre?

Mireia Bosch: On the whole, relatively few of them come to the centre to learn a language from scratch; rather, they come to keep up to date or brush up a language they have studied, to work on the aspects of the language in which they are interested or on the skills they have problems with, or to prepare for institutional exams.

Nearly fifty per cent of the learners are people who, for different reasons, have not enrolled as students in the general courses and attend classes elsewhere. As for EOI students, only about half of them use the centre as a complement to their classes.

EG: How can the centre cater for the needs of such an heterogeneous public?

MB: From the very beginning, we believed that a self-access facility had to be something more than just a resource centre and should offer learners not only language learning materials but also support system. With this in mind, we have constantly increased and diversified the information that we give to the people who enquire about the centre and to the learners who have already enrolled; producing leaflets and videos, or organizing information sessions and guided visits on a walkman are some of the ways we have been trying to acquaint students with the centre



and the way it works.

In order to help learners to work more efficiently, we offer them two types of support: a counselling service and 'learning to learn' materials and workshops. We find



the counselling service vital in a self-access centre, that is why we have tried to keep the standards of quality up in spite of the drastic reduction of staff hours imposed by the Departament d'Ensenyament three years ago. This reduction has made it difficult to give proper attention to a large number of

students in the limited time available counsellors have.

Basically, counsellors help learners to analyse their needs and to design personal learning plans accordingly, which involves setting objectives, finding the most adequate materials or activities and offering methodological advice. The amount of help required and the characteristics of counselling sessions vary from one learner to another: those who are less familiar with the system or those who have never studied on their own normally ask for more support—both initial and ongoing—from the counsellor; on the other hand, learners with more experience of independent learning and/or with very specific needs will simply

require some initial information and advice on the resources of the centre. Along with the counselling, we provide learners with a variety of 'learning to learn' materials (worksheets on strategies or on the different skills, pathways, advice sheets, needs analysis and planning sheets, etc) as well as workshops that we offer at the beginning of the first and second term to those who can attend.

By constantly broadening the range of services and materials we have tried to reach as many of our learners as possible, in spite of the inevitable limitations. It is far from satisfactory but we have tried to be consistent with the idea that a self-access system should offer more than just resources.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL. INSTITUT BRITÀNIC

C/ Amigó 83. 08021 Barcelona

IN OPERATION SINCE: April 1998

LANGUAGES: English

USERS: The centre is open to the general public, but only students attending classes at the Institute can borrow materials.

SECTIONS: There are three main sections: the non-fiction section, which includes literary criticism and reference works like encyclopedias and dictionaries—most of these are book-based, though there is available material on CD-Rom too; the language learning section, which is book-, CD-Rom-, cassette-, and video-based; and the authentic materials section, which includes journals, newspapers, and periodicals. The centre offers additional library and information services.

EG: *What is the pattern of use for the language learning section?*

Helen Stephenson: At the moment the pattern of use for the language learning section is for students to

come and consult things rather than to actually pursue separate lines which develop their English and I think that is the direction we have to try and help them to move in in the future. The centre is a place to come in and consult, or to come and revise what they have been doing in the course but also it is a place where they can go off in different directions and become more independent. I think we have to help them to do that. Probably at the moment they are not getting the maximum advantage of the centre; for example, they are not exploiting the multi-media (CD-Roms, the Internet) as they could do.

EG: *Are students more responsible for their own learning now?*

HS: They are more aware of the things that they can do and of the whole idea that they should be doing more for themselves. There is more which allows people to realise that they can take more responsibility for their learning: there are magazines like the Speak Up on the market and even national newspapers do English courses in a much more lively way than they did before—they produce CD-Roms, original version videos, etc. Also when people start into learning English, they very quickly hear all of the buzz words like learner-



independence, or learning strategies. Some years ago, even five years ago, people didn't have that vocabulary. Now not only teachers, but also students have it.

EG: Is self-learning organised as an extension of classroom activities at the Institute?

HS: It's not a compulsory part of any course, but it's obviously advised and the teachers do their best to make the students aware of the different facilities. We have somebody who works on what we call 'course links'; they look specifically at what people are

doing in the different general English courses and produce orientation and lists of things people would be interested in. We try to keep teachers very much up to date of what's going on at the centre but in the general courses obviously they can only make their students aware and advise. We do have courses whose half of the component is independent study—which is directed—and half of the course is in the classroom. In that case the teacher is much more involved in what the student is doing. But,



generally, the teachers in a standard course don't follow closely what their students do in the self-access area.

THE BRITISH COUNCIL. INSTITUT BRITÀNIC PER A JOVES

C/ Vendrell 1. 08022 Barcelona

IN OPERATION SINCE: October 1997

LANGUAGES: English

USERS: Students attending classes at the Institute. Parents are also allowed to borrow materials.

SECTIONS: The main division is between early years children (from 4 until 9) and juniors/seniors (until 16). Both sections are mainly book-based and include both fiction and non-fiction books. There can also be found materials produced by students, cassettes, videos, computers with CD-Rom and satellite TV.

EG: Your students are very young. Do they need more guidance from their teachers than older learners do?

Brendan Dunne: What they do at the self-access centre is an extension of what they do in class. Children are directed for if the teacher sees a specific thing that will be useful for them. Students need guidance; you can't just say to them, 'Here it is!,' because that is not really helping them to access what is there for themselves. I am usually around too; but, obviously, you don't want to interfere with what they're doing too much. It is good for them to browse and to find their own way round. We also encourage them to use the centre by bringing classes into the library. There are students that seem to have more motivation and who will take advantage of everything is

here. Now the real challenge for us is to make those who are not so motivated actually use it. Motivating them: that is a general problem everywhere in any situation.

EG: Are the two sections organised very differently?

BD: For the younger students there is no really much point in having things classified, because they like to browse and they always put books back in the wrong place. So we have a kind of freer system where they can put books back where they like (usually, there is a lot of tidying that has to go on every day). We actually try to put new books on display so that there is some kind of rotation going and they can see different things. We used to have some paper-based games, but since we had CD-Roms up and going they are not so



popular now. As for the older learners' area, the reference section includes books about language or grammar, encyclopedias and dictionaries. We also have information books on topics such as science, technology, or sports. There is a fiction section where books can be found under headings



like comics, horror, science-fiction, etc so they can go straight to the genre they are interested in. This is actually based on a survey we did before we set the library up about the kind of books that they liked.

EG: Is there any correlation between the age of students and the way they use the self-access facilities?

BD: The younger students tend to use the self-access area more for several reasons. Younger children

get through books a lot more quickly because there isn't as much text and also because their whole level of interest and motivation is much higher—they've not been ground down by the school system. Another factor is that older students have a lot more homework and they have no time to read in English, which is a very time-consuming thing; even an adapted book takes a lot of time and they don't have as much time.

ESCOLA D'IDIOMES MODERNS. UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 585, 08007 Barcelona

IN OPERATION SINCE: October 1996

LANGUAGES: English, French, Italian, German, Russian and Polish (Spanish for foreigners will eventually be incorporated).

USERS: All the members of the Universitat de Barcelona

SECTIONS: Materials in the six languages have been arranged in parallel ways. Learners can find self-correcting worksheets organized by levels of ability and skills and knowledge areas (eg. writing, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, etc); reference works such as dictionaries, encyclopedias or grammar books; abridged and non-abridged editions of literary works; periodicals; videos (films and documentaries); cassettes; and software programmes for grammar and pronunciation practice. Books and magazines can be borrowed. For English there have been devised folders with sets of worksheets on the different abilities which they can take home.



EG: Has it been easy to find adequate materials for self-study in the six languages learners can practice at the EIM centre?

Montse Català: In the centre you can find bought and teacher-produced materials. What can be found on the market has a strong relationship with the pedagogic

tradition in every language. There is a certain culture behind the teaching of a language that is reflected on the materials available. Standard coursebooks are improving, but most of them have too rigid structures that make them inadequate for use in the self-access context. Special editions for self-study have been edited for languages such as English, but other languages like Russian and Italian lack good materials, which ultimately leads the teachers of these languages to produce their own materials.

EG: Have statistics revealed any distinct patterns of use among learners?

MC: Statistically, attendance at the centres of the EIM bears a strong relationship with the different stages of the academic year. Attendance decreases dramatically

during exam periods—last year only 144 people used the centre in June—and it increases at the beginning of the academic year—604 people came in October—mostly because students are more motivated and do not have so many things to do. In terms of language preference, English is the most popular one followed by German, French, Russian and Italian.

EG: What is the role of the teachers responsible for standard courses in stimulating the use of the centre's facilities?

MC: A teacher from the EIM is made responsible for each of the languages. S/he buys, elaborates and arranges materials, but s/he is not usually around. The people who help users are university students from several faculties who work at the centre for four hours a day. Ideally, there should be a tutor for

every language who was familiar with all the materials and assessed each student's needs. As for the learners following regular courses at the EIM, a more complex infrastructure is needed in order to take them regularly to the self-access centre, because most teachers still find it easier to use one material in class. There are teachers at the language school

who use the centre as an extension of what they do in the classroom and guide their learners, but there are others who do not. Indeed some teachers may not encourage study at the self-access centre because they consider it to be a direct competitor. In that respect I think teachers, not only students, should learn to develop autonomy.



Maite Villagrasa holds a degree in English philology and since 1994 she has been working as a secondary school teacher. Her previous job at a primary school in El Poble Sec, Barcelona, became a challenging experience: only a few conflictive, unmotivated children with different levels of ability attended classes at a school which was bound to disappear in the not too distant future to become an IES. Creating materials for self-study helped her cope with such discouraging circumstances.

EG: Why did you start devising materials for self-study?

MV: For some time I had been creating self-correcting worksheets with exercises that students could do in class, for example when they finished a task earlier than their mates. Once I managed to compile a large number of original worksheets, I outlined a proposal for the creation of self-study materials and applied for a 'Llicència d'Estudis'. I thought that devoting a whole year to developing materials for self-study would give me the opportunity to organise what I had produced more systematically, to make my teaching task more motivating, and to find an alternative way of catering for the diversity in the classroom.

EG: Tell us about the process of creation of materials.

MV: Worksheets on vocabulary and grammar were the easier to

produce. I created worksheets on topics such as food, clothes, the family, etc. For each topic there were worksheets for four different levels of ability—on each worksheet there was a coloured sticker that identified its level of difficulty. At the bottom of the worksheets students could also find cross-references that established links between the activities—for example, if they had found the activity easy they would find the reference of a more difficult one on the same topic. As for the listening activities, I recorded tapes and wrote their corresponding worksheets. Tapes included songs—they loved completing song letters—or activities on the topics we had been dealing with in class. As there would not be enough cassette players, each student would bring his own walkman. Those who wanted to read at home could borrow simplified

books. To have a statistical record of their preferences, I would ask them to write the title of the book they had read, if they had liked it or not, etc on a poster we had on one of the walls of the room

Producing materials on productive skills was more difficult. There were some guided writing activities on things like how to finish a tale, or how to write a letter. Speaking activities were mostly done in the classroom, but I devised some double worksheets on topics such as the description of a house or of a person. One student had half the information and another one the other half. By asking each other questions they had to provide the full description of the person or thing.

EG: Did self-study become an alternative to ordinary classes?

MV: No, it didn't. Every week we spent two hours in the classroom and one hour in the self-access

room. Actually, self-study was a complement to what had been done in the classroom: they could revise those structures that demanded more practice or simply work on those areas they liked best. One of the things setting up the self-access area allowed me to do was to help my students develop their learning strategies; now they felt more responsible for their own learning process.

EG: *Didn't they need some guidance from you?*

MV: We devoted some initial sessions to discovering the room and also there were some posters on the walls and worksheets that described its organisation and helped them locate the materials. Although I was always available, I allowed them to find their own way round. I tried to convince them that they had to do a bit of everything—I knew I ran the risk that they spent the whole hour playing games or that they never did writing activities,

which they did not like too much—but I was not very strict.

EG: *Did you notice any change in your students' attitude towards English language learning?*

MV: Their response was very positive, and I saw they felt more motivated. By doing activities which actually fitted their level of ability they realised they could do many more things in English than they could have ever imagined.



Nick Bedson was one of the teachers who founded one of the first self-access centres in Catalunya. The centre, which is no longer in operation, was set up nine years ago in The Speakers' Corner, a private language school in Sabadell. The school being a cooperative, teachers were particularly involved in the setting up of the centre from the very beginning.

EG: *What do you think made your centre different from other centres?*

NB: What made it different from many others that I've seen was that we tried to encourage speaking. In fact two rooms were set up for groups to come in or for individuals to come in and join groups at a particular time and speak. I think one of the things that is a danger of self-access centres is that they tend to turn into libraries, with students looking at the walls and working on their own. What we tried to do was to try and get people to work together and I think we achieved that. For me that was one of the distinguishing things about our

centre: we didn't want our students to work on their own and to be isolated.

The school was like any other language school; we had regular courses with quite a lot of students. However, as it was a cooperative school, there was no management that had decided we were going to have a centre that we teachers would have to use. Perhaps that made it a little bit different too. We freed up a teacher to just work as a counsellor. The counsellor was responsible for making and presenting the materials, but all the teachers helped. It was a cooperative school, so it was a cooperative effort.

EG: *What different sections did the centre have?*

NB: We had the sections that covered the basic language skills, vocabulary, grammar, video, CALL, etc. Materials of our own were kept in plastic envelopes in baskets—which everyone seems to use now but which I'm not sure everyone used beforehand—and the other sections were basically book-based. We started off with tables facing the walls but ended up having big tables in the middle, which automatically encouraged people who were doing more mechanical exercises to work with other learners. They could borrow the worksheets and the books and magazines in the reading for

pleasure section. The borrowing was quite successful and people did tend to take books out. We previously ran a library system, like most schools, but the borrowing increased enormously once we put the library into the self-access centre.

We had computers and as with video immediately you think that they will be very successful but we found they were not that popular. They were very popular to begin with, but in fact they were not interactive. I think it is difficult to make computer activities interesting for two or three people working together. Speaking groups and listening activities were the most popular sections. We had quite a lot of regular users who only used the self-access centre and who would regularly get together and talk. To begin with, we gave them subjects to talk about but in the end we didn't give them any. The counsellor would be in and out of the room only helping them occasionally. I suppose to an extent that was an example of the success in creating autonomous learners.

After seeing the success of the self-access centre for adults, we set up a children's self-access centre which was a single small-scale room which became very popular both with teachers and with the kids. However, it was used in a totally different way, as children could only use it in classtime.

EG: Did you have any specific sections devoted to the development of learning strategies?

NB: We tried to have a learner training section and we actually ran a couple of learner training courses. But we then moved away from that and tried to put learner training aspects into other materials we had in the self-access centre. Teachers

responsible for ordinary courses would pass us their own materials, which we changed a little bit; we also used published materials and perhaps added things on for the particular element of learner training (for example at the end or in the middle of an activity learners would be asked to reflect on what they had done). The role of the teacher in promoting autonomy seems to me to be vital. Because in the school most of the teachers tried to promote autonomy I think most of the work done at the language school and the work done at the self-access centre were in harmony. On the whole we weren't pulling in one direction and teachers pulling in another one.

EG: What was the role of counsellors?

NB: Counsellors were available but wouldn't dictate what learners did. They set up programmes to help people discover what was available and help them reflect on what they wanted. To begin with, learners had an interview with the counsellor, and did a needs' test as well. Individual programmes were set out but they did not tend to last long as after two or three months learners themselves knew what they needed to work on.

EG: Isn't it very expensive to set up and maintain a centre like yours?

NB: One of the reasons why the centre was wound down was because we were spending a lot of money on it. Students were very happy with it. When we asked our students what was the thing they most liked about the school, invariably it was the self-access centre that they were most impressed with. But it was very, very expensive to run. It was a big centre with a lot of rent. We did invest a lot of

money on it (on materials, on people, etc). In the end one of the conclusions we came to was that if you are a big school it is easier to do; if you are a small language academy—and we were a successful academy—it is difficult to maintain the sort of infrastructure that we had. It cost a lot of money, though it does not have to. If we were to do it again, I am sure we would do it, but we would invest a lot of less money.

EG: Would you set up a self-access centre again?

NB: I was fortunate in not having the experience of a management setting up a course that teachers had to implement, but I think that can often happen in private language centres and can be a problem. My experience was that there were some teachers who were not a hundred per cent convinced of the effectiveness of the self-access centre, which undermined what our particular self-access centre was trying to do. I'm not sure they are necessarily as good a thing as we thought when we started out with them. My impression is that most self-access centres are what we called libraries twenty years ago. There is that question of whether the self-access centre has been set up as a homework centre—a place to do the activities you wouldn't do in the classroom—or whether it has been set up as a centre that promotes autonomy. On a personal level now I am not interested in setting up another centre; rather I am more interested in teachers in the classroom and in how our learners can become more responsible for their learning. There is no point in having a self-access centre if you haven't done the previous work of helping learners see its possibilities.

PREMI JOHN McDOWELL | 1999

BASES

El premi John McDowell, instituït conjuntament per l'Associació de Professors d'Anglès de Catalunya (APAC), la Direcció General de Política Lingüística (DGPL), l'Institut Britànic (IB), la Universitat Autònoma (UA) i la Universitat de Barcelona (UB), es proposa estimular la innovació i recerca en l'ensenyament de l'anglès com a llengua estrangera i del català per a adults com a primera o segona llengua.

Aquest premi té una periodicitat bianual.

Bases del premi

1. Destinataris

- 1.1 Professors de llengua catalana (batxillerat, formació d'adults, escoles d'idiomes, universitats,...) i de llengua anglesa (primària, secundària, formació professional, escoles d'idiomes, formació d'adults, universitats,...) que treballen habitualment a Catalunya.
- 1.2 Professors de llengua catalana que treballin fora del territori de parla catalana (universitats estrangeres i espanyoles, casals,...).

2. Tipus de treballs que poden optar al premi

- 2.1 Exposicions d'experiències pràctiques d'ensenyament de llengües.
- 2.2 Reculls de materials didàctics.
- 2.3 Treballs o projectes de recerca.

Els treballs presentats han de ser inèdits.

3. Temàtica

Sense excloure cap àrea d'interès, es prioritzaran els treballs

- transversals, és a dir, que continguin materials o tècniques aplicables tant al català com a l'anglès;
- relacionats amb el desenvolupament de l'autonomia en l'aprenentatge de llengua dins i fora de l'aula;
- relacionats amb la formació del professorat;
- transculturals i de contacte entre l'anglès i el català i el català amb altres llengües;
- relacionats amb perspectives supranacionals o europees d'ensenyament i aprenentatge de llengües,
- adaptats especialment a les necessitats del moment.

4. Presentació

Els treballs s'han de presentar mecanografiats a doble espai i per una sola cara, en paper i en suport informàtic. L'extensió mínima és de 20 fulls. Els treballs poden anar acompanyats de material audiovisual i informàtic. Cal presentar un original i dues còpies.

Els treballs s'han de presentar a la seu de l'APAC (Gran Via de

les Corts Catalanes, 606, 4t 2a, F i G. 08007 Barcelona) o a la DGPL (Carrer de Mallorca, 272, 8è. 08037 Barcelona).

5. Dates de presentació dels treballs

Data límit de lliurament dels treballs: 15 de gener de 1999.

Veredictes i lliurament dels premis: febrer de 1999.

6. Jurat

El jurat estarà format per:

- 6.1 Dos representants de l'APAC amb les funcions de presidència i secretaria i dos representants de la DGPL.
- 6.2 Un representant per a cada una de les institucions següents: IB, UA i UB.
- 6.3 Una persona per a cada un dels nivells educatius corresponents als treballs presentats. Aquestes persones seran designades a proposta de l'APAC (per als treballs en anglès) i a proposta de la DGPL (per als treballs en català).

7. Premis

Es concediran tres premis, la dotació dels quals consistirà en:

- Publicació del treball.
- Diploma acreditatiu.
- Matrícula a un dels cursos següents (o equivalent), que s'hauran d'escollir per ordre de concessió dels premis:
 - curs d'estiu del British Council a Anglaterra, viatge inclòs (Institut Britànic);
 - Màster de llengües estrangeres (Universitat de Barcelona),
 - Postgrau o Màster de llengües estrangeres (Universitat Autònoma).

Es farà una menció honorífica als accessits.

8. Publicacions

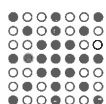
Els treballs guanyadors seran publicats en la col·lecció «COM/ Materials Didàctics» de la Direcció General de Política Lingüística del Departament de Cultura.

En cas que els treballs siguin molt extensos, se'n publicarà una versió reduïda d'acord amb els autors.

A més, s'estudiarà la possibilitat de publicar les mencions honorífiques o aquells treballs que es considerin interessants per ser difosos. (L'APAC i la DGPL es reserven el dret de publicar la resta dels treballs presentats durant el termini d'un any.)

APAC

Associació de Professors d'Anglès de Catalunya



Institut Britànic



Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament de Cultura
**Direcció General
de Política Lingüística**



UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

DON'T LET THEM DRIVE YOU CRAZY !!!

by Eulalia Muñoz and Carmen Sevilla



The authors

Eulalia Muñoz and Carmen Sevilla, both UB graduates, have been teaching English at the I.E.S. Mercè Rodoreda, l'Hospitalet, for over nine years. They won one of the 9th Apac Awards for *Don't let them drive you crazy!!!* Eulalia and Carme's contribution aims to offer teachers some useful tips that help them cope with the always cumbersome correction tasks, and help their students become more autonomous, responsible for and aware of their own learning process—especially of their acquisition of the grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language.

As can be deduced from their own words, creating classroom materials can turn to be a rewarding experience for the teacher:

"After endless hours devoted to correcting compositions riddled with errors, 'A final quiz', from Adamson and Cobb's *Active Grammar Exercises*, triggered off a hilarious and productive evening full of laughter and funny ideas. The quiz consisted of a list of grammar rules which contained each a mistake that could be easily corrected by just looking at the rule itself. We wrote our own list of essential grammar rules, but as grammar is somewhere in 'Harshland', rather than in 'Wonderland', we decided to add some humour through what we called the 'Life and Death' game. This has proved quite successful, although it demands some bitter irony and mercy from the teacher."

The positive reaction of their students is also quite encouraging, and statistics are revealing:

"Needless to say, our students still make many mistakes but it seems to us that their linguistic awareness and ability for self-correction have improved and now they actually pay more attention to their written productions. Incredibly, when asked about the effects of the activities we present on their learning process, 87% of our students thought it is useful to keep a notebook and revise their mistakes; 84% thought they had learned by correcting their own errors, and 70% thought that the 'Life and Death' game helped them improve their command of English."

Aren't you tired of spending endless hours correcting?

Aren't you even more tired of correcting the same mistakes over and over?

What we propose won't wash mistakes off completely but will encourage students to avoid them, making them aware of the necessity of revising their productions. Learning involves making mistakes but being aware of them is the first step to learn through them.

What we propose is a systematic treatment of mistakes throughout the course. This will be done by steps and different types of activities will be involved.

1. MISTAKES: AN INTEGRATING PART OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

Mistakes are unavoidable but also indispensable. We want to encourage our students to use English and we want them to learn that it is natural to make mistakes. Therefore, mistakes are welcome in the English class. They can be the starting point of our learning process.

1.1. Mother tongue and target language

We often start the course doing some kind of activity that allows us to detect our students' level. Since in

most cases we work with monolingual classes, we can use this material to select some mistakes and work on them. The use of the most common mistakes due to transfer can be quite useful.

1.2. Awareness of our particular mistakes. Keeping a record

We teachers can warn students when we know that a particular item poses problems to most learners but even though there are mistakes that are general, each learner may have a "particular weakness" and it is a good idea to pay special attention to it. We ask

our students to keep a record of their mistakes in a very simple form (see X-FILE). We will ask them to have a look at this record before handing in any written exercise and check that they are not making the same mistakes. It is a very easy way both for teachers and students to see which are the main problems and even to prepare some remedial work. If an "X-File" is full of "wrong tenses" it is obvious that the student - or the class - need more practice on that particular aspect.

1.3. How to use a dictionary

- But I was using a dictionary! - How often have you seen angry or puzzled faces pointing at an underlined word in a composition? Very often our students use dictionaries when writing a composition at home - well, sometimes they just try to be creative and "invent" a new word - but when they do use a dictionary they often read the first word they find next to the entry and write it down. The problem is that more often than not our students do not use the dictionary correctly. They are not even aware of all the information it offers them. We think that in order to develop their autonomy we should teach them how to use the different tools available to them.

Working with dictionaries is also an important part of our wider activity. A dictionary is a useful tool to avoid or to correct mistakes. This is something our students should know. Dictionary activities will be helpful from time to time. We can use simple translation exercises to see there's no one-to-one correspondence between words of two languages. We can also use simple quizzes through which students can become aware of the variety of information a dictionary can provide (word category, register, idioms, irregular verbs,...) (SEE DICTIONARY QUIZ)

2. CORRECTIONS: LET THEM MAKE THEM!

2.1. Students, not teachers, should correct their own exercises

What we propose may be a little time-consuming at first but once you get used to it you will correct as fast as before and your students will be forced to check their productions. The idea is that the teacher will only point out where the mistake is and will indicate the type of mistake by using some symbols or abbreviations that students are familiar with.

2.2. A set of symbols used systematically

The first step is to agree on a set of symbols or abbreviations that will be used by the teacher when marking written productions. Students will know that, for instance, "sp" will stand for spelling

mistake, or "W.O" for a mistake in word order. They will be told that this is what they will find when you give them their compositions back and they will have to correct all the mistakes.

The symbols may be the same for all levels or you may decide to be a bit more specific at higher levels. We provide an example of the mistakes and symbols we have chosen (SEE MISTAKES WORKSHEET).

2.3. Spot the mistake. Getting used to it before starting

It is a bit hard at the beginning to get students used to this type of correction, so they will need some practice before you collect compositions and use this system to correct them. We tell our students at the beginning of the course that this is how it will be done and then we do a variety of correction activities and games.

2.4. Using a notebook. Checking corrections

If we want our students to go over their productions and not just have a look at the mark and forget about it, when we give back marked material we should always devote some time in class to let them go through it and see if they feel they can correct all their mistakes. It is time now to help them with the problems they may have.

We also tell our students that compositions or summaries should be written in a notebook leaving a margin. Before marking a composition the teacher checks that the corrections of the previous one have been made (Don't panic! If they are written on the margin you can check them in no time).

We want our students to learn that doing this is almost as important as writing a composition so you may even tell them that if corrections are not made the following composition will not be marked. We also find it useful to encourage students to ask questions or make comments in their notebook. In this way you can answer individual questions without spending a lot of time in class. By doing this you can easily check if your students understand the types of mistakes they make.

3. THE "LIFE AND DEATH" GAME

Even though we may deal with mistakes systematically, we may find that some basic ones appear over and over again. What we propose now is a further development in this "mistake-awareness process" by focusing on very specific items. We call it the "LIFE GAME". At the beginning of the term/course we give each student a "LIFE CERTIFICATE" (SEE WORKSHEET). We tell them that whenever a basic grammar rule is broken we will cross out a "life". If they run out of lives they are dead, that is, they fail.

The first step is to give them their LIFE CERTIFICATE. Then, we will agree on some "LETHAL MISTAKES" which should not be made. Lethal mistakes will be different for all levels and you can change - or accumulate - them each term. We should select few rules since if we ask our students to revise their productions looking for any mistake we will find they'll do it in no time, whereas it will be easier for them to concentrate on two or three items.

Once they know the rules - by now they have had some practice on "spotting mistakes" - they will be told that whenever they make one of these mistakes in written exercises done AT HOME (this will not be done with exams or classroom productions) they will start losing lives.

Since when you explain the process you try to put some humour into it, students may think that you are joking. We have been doing this for some time now and you can be sure that when they see you coming to class with your "killing pen" they know the "game" is serious. They always check their compositions by asking their classmates or yourself and you often see post-script corrections.

Of course, even though you may tell your students they will fail the term if they run out of "LIVES", you don't want that to happen so you will also give them "JOKERS", that is "EXTRA-LIVES", when they do well in an activity.

Be careful when selecting JOKER activities so that not all the jokers go to A-students. Telling them beforehand you will give jokers will motivate them. You will even find that in the second term students often ask for "Joker Activities".

4. TYPES OF MISTAKES. SELECTION AND ACTIVITIES

When preparing a "lethal mistake" sheet we have all types of mistakes in mind. The teacher will decide which ones are the most suitable for that term and that level. It is good to introduce new ones once we have finished a part of the program (comparatives, the simple past,...) so that students see the need to go over previous lessons.

4.1. Grammar mistakes

We provide a sample of mistakes for the first term in COU. (SEE LETHAL MISTAKES 1) Of course this activity can be adapted to all levels. As to grammar mistakes, agreement and tenses seem to be the most popular areas among our students.

4.2. Spelling mistakes

They are probably the ones that worry us less since reading the word "nervious" seems to get on the English teacher's nerves a bit less than "he can to

play...". Nevertheless, it is obvious that certain spelling mistakes are made by most students (thursday, John, wich, ski, writting,...) so we can devote some time to them. Solving and creating crossword puzzles and puzzles (sopa de letras) can be useful activities.

4.3. Syntactic mistakes

Word order and sentence order are a source of troubles for English teachers and students. Students tend to be much more flexible than they should with syntax. We believe this is one of the areas which should be worked on at all levels.

For low levels an easy activity is to make them create sentences and later on write each part of the sentence in a coloured card. That is, the subject in a red card, the main verb in a green one, and so on. In this way they will have to analyze the sentence in terms of its constituents: Subject + AuxV + Main Verb + Object + Complement. They will get some practice on this and at the same time you will have a set of "Scrambled sentences" ready to be used with the same or another group for further practice.

Before starting with the cards you must decide if you are going to deal only with one type of sentence at a time (affirmative, negative, or interrogative) or if you are going to mix them. With low levels, if you deal with affirmative sentences first, students can easily visualize the changes that take place when we change into negative or interrogative patterns by adding new colour cards. With higher levels you can deal with complex and compound sentences.

Another activity which has proved useful is bringing readers to class. In pairs, students should copy sentences - the only rule is that they have to understand them - cut them into little pieces (1 per word) and put them in an envelope. When this is done, they pass their envelope to another classmate; after a few minutes the same is done again. The whole class will be working with a variety of "Scrambled sentences" and the teacher won't have had to spend long hours at home preparing them.

When dealing with sentence and word order we should not forget those words which don't follow the general rules: frequency adverbs, 'also', 'too', etc. Simple translation exercises can be clear enough to show the differences

4.4. Semantic mistakes

Choosing the wrong word in a dictionary or a false friend are also common mistakes. That's why we have already mentioned that dictionary activities should also be done systematically.

We have been using the "LIFE and DEATH game" at our school for several years now with COU and both students and teachers are quite satisfied with the results.

"THE X FILE" (keep a record of your mistakes)

	MISTAKES	Composition 1	Composition 2
sp	Spelling Mistake		
agr	Agreement		
ts	Wrong Tense		
w.o	Word Order		
s.o	Sentence Order		
FF	False Friend		
^	Omission of a word(s)		
w.w	Wrong Word Use a dictionary!		
pp	Wrong Preposition		
sty	Style		

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DICTIONARY QUIZ






HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT LOOKING UP WORDS IN A DICTIONARY?

Answer these questions as quickly as you can!!!

1. How do you pronounce "LEASH"? What does it mean?
2. How do you say "Esta fiesta es un muermo"?
3. What does "set sail" mean? Under which entry did you find it?
4. Does the word "firstly" have its own entry in the dictionary?
5. What does "CAL" mean?
6. What is the participle of the verb "to weep"?
7. How do you pronounce the letter "Z" in English?
8. What does "vulg" mean? Can you find two words which are classified as "vulg"?
9. What does "DIY" mean? How do you pronounce it?
10. What is a "calimocho"?
11. How many metres is a yard?
12. How do you say in English "Organización para la Liberación de Palestina"?
13. What does "there will be fireworks" mean?
14. Is "DRAGONFLY" a verb?
15. What is the comparative form of "kindly"?

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We used *The Wordsworth Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* for designing this exercise.

LIFE CERTIFICATE 15 NAME:	14 What a <i>silly</i> mistake!!!	13 ...unlucky numberunlucky day ... 
JOKER Still SAFE and SOUND!	12 Talk to your teacher. She'll have a surprise for you... 	11 You must to be more careful ...
10 Start "praying" NOW! 	9 You're entering a dangerous path ...!	8 ... sinful soul REPENT NOW!
JOKER The everlasting fire is nearer!	7 Talk to your <i>dear</i> teacher again.... 	6 Can't you feel the heat?
5 AVOID TEMPTATION	4 The wicked-one is <i>looking forward to meeting you...</i>	3 DOOMSDAY is near ...
2 Your <i>dearest</i> teacher is waiting for you.... 	JOKER Only a miracle can save you!!! By the way, do you believe in miracles?	1 R.I.P DEATH CERTIFICATE

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AVOID WRITING ACCIDENTS !!!

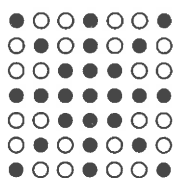
Make sure you are not breaking any of these rules when handing in written exercises. Otherwise, you may be in great trouble...

LETHAL MISTAKES 1

1. VERBS HAVE TO AGREE WITH THEIR SUBJECTS
eg:.....
2. WE USUALLY PUT ADVERBS OF FREQUENCY BEFORE THE MAIN VERB, EXCEPT WITH THE VERB "TO BE"
eg:
3. ADJECTIVES HAVE NO PLURAL FORM !!!
eg:
4. NEVER USE TWO NEGATIVES
eg:.....
5. ALL SENTENCES MUST HAVE A SUBJECT
eg:

Study these rules. They are your first term "lifejacket"!!!

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The British Council
Institut Britànic

Guided writing using WORD processing programs

By Jonathan Gayther

Assistant Director Operations. The British Council, Barcelona

We are used to hearing of the advantages that Information Technology can bring to our teaching; CD ROM, the Internet, e-mail and CALL programs are all becoming more sophisticated and potentially more powerful by the day. However, not all schools and colleges can afford the seemingly endless upgrades in hardware and software that the state-of-the art systems demand. Given these financial restrictions I wonder sometimes how relevant the latest miracle-working software is to the teacher working in the "average" language-teaching context.

While the latest language-learning software (and the hardware needed to run it) may be beyond the reach of many institutions, it is reasonably safe to assume that nearly every college nowadays has access to computers with standard word-processing (WP) programs.

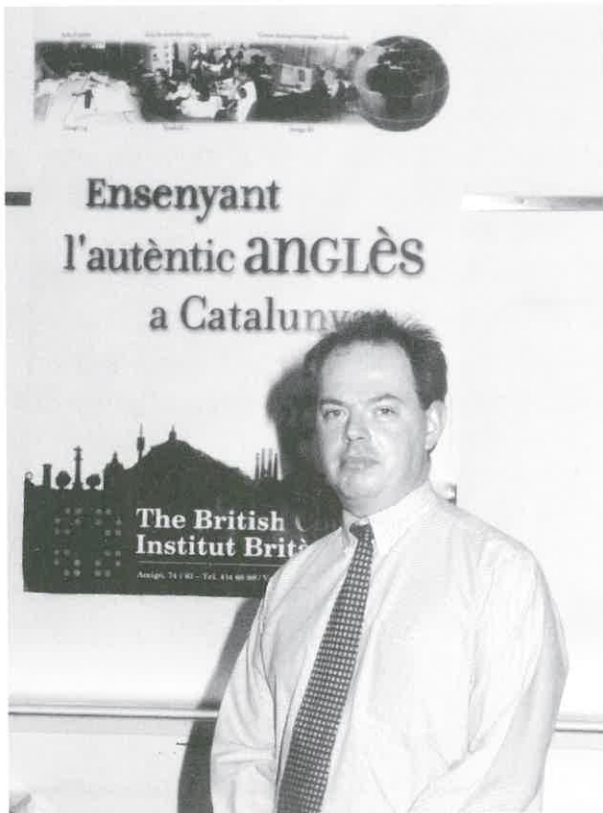
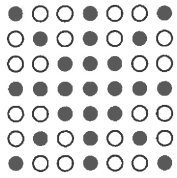
What I would like to show in this article is how the humble WP program, designed without the needs of language learners in mind, can in fact prove to be an invaluable tool in our teaching and dare I say it, potentially far more productive and meaningful for our learners than some of the tailor-made language learning software.

What do we know about WP programs? We know that they aid our production of written materials through the application of fairly standard operations such as cutting, pasting and spell-checking. We know that there are only two

or three major WP products in the PC market and that they all go about the same task of formatting, editing and producing text in more or less the same way (there will now be a brief pause for advocates of different programs to let off steam!!). Finally, we know that we can store our documents in the computer's memory, ready for instant recall and editing.

The leading WP programs that are used today are the result of years of refinement and thousands of dollars of research and development - something that cannot be said of the majority of ELT-specific programs. This means that modern WP packages have user-friendly interfaces and are often easier to work with, and simply look and "feel" better than many language-learning programs.

These features can all be exploited to help students tackle the challenges of writing.



Writing in another language is always demanding; crudely put, the aim of producing coherent and cohesive text requires comprehensive knowledge of the target language in its grammatical, lexical and syntactical features, knowledge which must furthermore be applied within the right stylistic register.

Getting students to work on their writing methodically in class can be infuriatingly difficult, especially as they seem to take every opportunity to take up their pens when you don't want them to! What's more, students will often complain that writing in class is a waste of time which would be better spent on speaking practice. However, with a bit of practice with WP, students will soon realise that writing can be enjoyable and something which can be shared as a joint task with others in class.

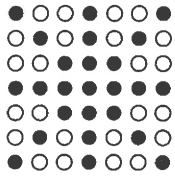
Advantages of using a WP program

- a. you can make changes as you go along
- b. correct typing errors
- c. insert and delete words
- d. change the order of sentences and paragraphs
- e. check the spelling (although this is not foolproof)
- f. easily find all the occurrences of a particular word (and replace it).
- g. automatic word count - for summary writing.

I'm not suggesting that we replace our traditional writing activities with WP-based alternatives, but that we should access WP when relevant as a motivating and worthwhile option in our teaching of writing.

Other advantages of WP

- It frees students from the mess of crossings out and corrections that typify similar work on paper.
- It allows - indeed encourages - students to experiment. They can put in a word or phrase to see how it looks in context and if they are not happy it's a simple matter to try something else.
- The screen provides a more satisfactory focus of attention for group writing so that all members can become involved in the discussion.
- In process writing activities the revision and drafting stages of a writing activity become far more attractive and motivating for the learners, who can edit and improve their work quickly and effortlessly.
- No matter how superficial it may seem, students take their own work more seriously when it appears on a computer screen: it's as if the very act of appearing on a monitor lends student-created texts some sort of external validity that handwritten notes lack.



- The final version of the text can be produced in a high quality printing and saved for future use. This is an important motivational factor for students spending long periods on the preparation of texts for “public” consumption.
- Materials can be saved as read-only files. Learners can alter texts ad infinitum without altering the master file and print out high quality versions of their work without any of the messy crossing out and corrections that spoil the appeal of handwritten work.
- Teachers can build up an easily accessible bank of materials on the hard disks of the computers they are using.

What WP skills does the student need to know?

- move around a text
- delete text
- insert text
- search and replace

At **lower levels** use cut, paste, delete and insert to allow students to play around with the building blocks of verb formation, sentence structure and vocabulary. Spelling at this level can be checked quickly with the spell-check function and it’s best to focus on specific areas for language work.

Along these lines students can

- a. change the central figure of the passage from male to female making all necessary changes;
- b. change the description of one person in a text for one of another;
- c. work on a text about the present which students are asked to change into a text about the past;
- e. fill in an incomplete dialogue or passage;
- f. change a text from first to third person, or switch all nouns from singular to plural;
- g. improve texts which have a range of spelling

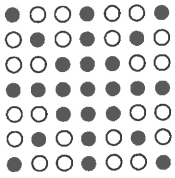
- and basic grammatical errors;
- h. sorting jumbled words and phrases into sentences; and
- i. jigsaw or rotating reading; students order a text which is displayed paragraph by paragraph on different monitors.

At **higher levels** a range of more sophisticated skills can be worked on:

- a. Texts can be edited for style: wordy texts can be trimmed and skeletal passages fleshed out. This type of practice is invaluable for Cambridge Proficiency candidates who have to summarise complex texts in the third paper of the exam.
- b. At Cambridge Advanced level students can apply their knowledge of stylistic register to render an over informal business letter more business-like.
- c. Badly planned (but otherwise well written text) can be reorganised until the students are happy with the end result - changing paragraphs is easy with the editing facilities and at each stage students can get a feel for what the latest version of the text looks like as a whole.
- d. The general tone of a text can be altered so that, for example, a very positive description of a city is replaced by a text with a very negative view of the same city.
- e. Unpunctuated texts are given punctuation and students can see how different shades of meaning can be arrived at.
- f. Two texts which are mixed up by sentence or paragraph have to be separated.

With all these activities there is great scope for producing substantial integrated skills work. Here are two examples...there are many more!

1.0 A Conversion: manipulating text and using irregular past verb forms (source: *Reward Elementary*)



1.1 Students discuss which cities they would like to visit in Europe and what they would like to do in each of them.

1.2 Listening: two Americans talk about their holiday in Europe. Students complete checking task in course books.

1.3 Computers: students study the following text and then adapt it to reflect the Americans holiday experiences.

Dear Robert

This is our third week here in Europe and we're having a great time. The people are very friendly and the weather is good – even in Britain it was sunny and warm!

We flew to London from Montreal and we spent four days visiting the city. There's so much to see and do! Unfortunately we didn't see the Queen! Mike was very disappointed!

Then we took the Eurostar to Paris and we stayed with my cousin, Angie. We did some sightseeing and we visited the Louvre and the Eiffel tower, of course. We had some wonderful food in small restaurants in the Latin Quarter. I lost my passport in the Metro so we went to the Canadian Embassy to get another.

After Paris we flew to Barcelona where it was very hot. We made friends with some local people in a bar and they showed us the city. We took a bus to a small town on the coast and we found a hotel with a beautiful view of the sea. We relaxed on the beach for two days before moving on to Italy where we are now.

2.0 Expansion: Taking risks with vocabulary

(source: *A Way with Words*, Book 3)

If you only offer the minimum amount of information when you speak or write in English, your active vocabulary will not improve very quickly because you are not creating opportunities to use and learn words. So don't take the easy way – take a few risks. For example, read the following text about an accident a woman had in her car, and then, with a partner, rewrite and expand the story so that a reader could answer all the questions below.

2.1 I had an accident yesterday when I was driving home from work. A car came out of a side street and hit the side of my car. I wasn't hurt fortunately, but my car was quite badly damaged. It was terrible.

1. What speed were the cars going?
2. Why did the other car put out of the side street?
3. Did the woman see the other car before it hit her?
4. How did she react when it hit her?
5. How did the other driver react?
What did he do?
6. Was anyone else involved?
7. Was anyone injured?
8. Did the other driver admit that it was his fault?
9. What damage was there to the cars?
10. Were there any other witnesses?
11. Did anyone contact the police?

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ENGLISH IN EUROPE

NATIVE VS. NON-NATIVE VARIETIES

By Jasone Cenoz

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English is by far the most important language of wider communication in the world and it is estimated that there are nowadays more speakers of English as a second or foreign language than native speakers of English. Today English is more widely spread than any other language has ever been and it is the official or co-official language of 63 countries. English is the most important language in the mass media, science and technology and its spread is still in progress. According to Kachru (1985), apart from the countries that have traditionally been considered the cultural and linguistic bases of English (USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) there is an outer circle of non-native varieties of English where English is used as a second language. English is spoken in the countries of the outer circle (India, Nigeria, Philippines, etc) as the result of colonization. Besides the outer circle, Kachru (1985) presents an expanding circle that includes the countries where English has no official status and is used as a language of wider communication. Some of the countries in the expanding circle are Japan, the European Union countries and Russia.

THE SPREAD OF ENGLISH IN EUROPE

Even though English has no official status in the European Union countries (except in the UK and Ireland) and the German and French linguistic communities can be considered stronger in demographic and economic terms, English is the most important language of European communication. English is the dominant language of technology, the media, business, science and entertainment. As a consequence, English is the most popular second language in the European context followed by French and German. Nevertheless, there are important differences between Northern and Southern European countries. In Scandinavia, English is starting to be used in certain major domains internally while in Southern European countries English is considered to have a 'foreign language' status because it is not used at the community level. In Eastern Europe, German was the most popular foreign language up to the end of World War II when Russian was introduced as the first foreign language in schools, with German retaining second place. The recent political changes in Eastern European countries have produced a tremendous rise of English and German and a corresponding decline of Russian. Nowadays, German is competing with English although English is becoming the preferred lingua franca of the younger generations.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF USING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The main advantage of the increasing use of English at the European level is the fact that the same language is used for intra-European and international communication but other advantages have also been pointed out.

- English has a reputation for being adaptable to development and change and it is true that the simplified morphological endings that English has help when new terms are needed. For example, it is possible to use different tenses for verbs such as 'fax' or 'e-mail' ('I e-mailed it to you') instead of the longer expressions which are necessary in other languages ('I sent you a message by electronic mail'). Natural gender also helps the learning process although English also presents disadvantages in the sound-to-spelling correspondence.
- Nowadays English is the most important language in the world and it gives access to international communication and to all branches of science and technology.
- English is becoming the symbol of national identity in some Asian and African countries. For example, many Indians prefer English to Hindi because English is a second language for all Indians while Hindi is a first language for some Indians and a second for others.

Nevertheless, the spread of English has also been criticized because it implies:

- Cultural imperialism-mainly due to the influence of the United States of America.
- Linguicism, which is defined by analogy with racism as: *ideologies, structures and practices which are used to legitimate, effectuate and reproduce an unequal division of power and resources between groups which are defined on the basis of language* (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas 1994, 78). This means that English can be the basis of an unequal division between those who speak the language and have access to international communications, science and technology and those who become 'second-class citizens' because they don't speak English.
- English is also considered a big business for the UK and the US. As Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas (1994) point out, English has trained teachers, teacher trainers, teaching materials, literature, dictionaries, multinational publishers, computer software, etc.

THE NEW SITUATION CREATED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE SPREAD OF ENGLISH IN EUROPE

As we have already seen, English is the most important language of intra-European communication and it is needed not only to communicate with native speakers but also with non-native speakers. In the past the main goal of learning English was to be able to communicate with native speakers of English (mainly British English) and to have access to their culture. Nowadays, English is the main language of communication in Europe and its use is becoming more important between non-native speakers of English because of the increasing links between European countries. Furthermore, for many Europeans English is not the second language they learn but an additional (third, fourth, fifth) language. This is the case in countries and regions with more than one language such as Belgium, Switzerland, Catalonia, Galicia, Frisia, the Basque Country or Brittany. It is also the case in communities affected by social phenomena such as immigration and therefore by the development of minority communities who need to acquire more than two languages. In fact, most countries in the European Union are in this situation and have minorities who speak a different language and learn the official language and English as a third language. Furthermore, many speakers of 'less spread' European national languages such as Swedish, Dutch or Danish acquire more than two, three or four additional languages.

The new situation created as the result of the spread of English in Europe has implications for language teaching in the following areas:

- i. The variety of English that should be used in the educational context.
- ii. Euro-English as the non-native variety of European English.
- iii. Multilingual competence.
- iv. The influence of bilingualism on third language acquisition.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING

i. Which variety of English should be taught in the European context?

In the past the most popular variety of English in Europe was Standard British English (BBC English or public school English) and the pronunciation model was 'Received Pronunciation' (RP). Textbooks only included Standard British structures and vocabulary and both specific cassettes for phonetic training and coursebook cassettes used 'RP' as the pronunciation model. Moreover, textbooks included British characters and British traditions that could show the students the British lifestyle.

Even though British English is still very popular as an educational standard in Europe, the influence of American English in the world is making itself noticed in the European context. Nowadays American English, which is spoken by 70% of native speakers of English, is becoming the most influential variety even in countries where British English has traditionally been the model. Some British people consider American English to be corrupt but it has to be accepted that American English has more influence on British English than the other way round. It is also important to point out that the RP is not the pronunciation used by the majority of British people. In fact, RP is only used by 3 to 5% of the British population and most British people speak English with traces of either a regional accent or a dialect. Several European countries have accepted the multiplicity of English and now officially use both American and British English in educational settings. On the other hand, the mixing of American and British English is becoming commonplace even among native speakers in the United Kingdom.

As Modiano (1996) observes, the variety of English spoken by European learners of English shares characteristics of British and American English because of the influence that pro-British English teachers have on them and their exposure to American English in informal contexts. The generational gap between teachers' and students' models is pointed out by Modiano in the following terms:

Moreover, students are becoming increasingly influenced by AmE. Thus, we find the absurd situation where teachers bent on promoting BrE

meet with students who recognize the value of either AmE or Mid-Atlantic and find one of those varieties of the language more appealing. While speaking the BrE which many teachers demand in the classroom, 00these pupils turn to another variety of the language in their private lives. (Modiano, 1996, 208)

Apart from the most important native varieties of English (British and American English) and other native varieties (Australian, Canadian, etc), the spread of English in the international context also has important implications for its non-native varieties. Kachru (1992) stresses the diversity of English language use as a result of this process. He observes that the use of English among non-native speakers is increasing and that in some Asian and African countries English is used as a language of intranational communication and it is influenced by languages and cultures different from those traditionally associated with the English language. In these countries English is in most cases just one of the languages spoken by a bi or multilingual speaker who is not in constant touch with native models.

Nowadays there is a large number of articles and books on the specific characteristics of different World Englishes that no longer consider English as the property of native speakers and include among others Indian English, Singaporean English, Malaysian English and Nigerian English. These non-native varieties are considered by most sociolinguists as different from Standard British or American English native varieties but not as examples of wrong English. They are varieties of English that have been adapted to non-native contexts and cultures and have been influenced by non-native languages, contexts and cultures. Kachru explains the difference between mistake and deviation:

We shall make a distinction between the terms 'mistake' and 'deviation' on linguistic and contextual levels. A 'mistake' may be unacceptable by a native speaker since it does not belong to the linguistic 'norm' of the English language; it cannot be justified with reference to the sociocultural context of a non-native variety; and it is not the result of the productive processes used in an institutionalized non-native variety of English. On the other hand a 'deviation' has the following characteristics: it is different from the norm in the sense that it is the result of the new 'un-English' linguistic and cultural setting in which the English language is used; it is the result of a productive process which marks the typical variety-specific features; and it is systemic within a variety, and not idiosyncratic. There is thus an explanation for each deviation within the context of situation. It can be shown that a large number of deviations 'deviate' only with reference to an idealized norm (Kachru, 1992, 62).

The acceptance of non-native varieties of English assumes that English is no longer a British or American property and that it belongs to all those who use the language. It also implies that English non-native speakers can adapt English to their cultural context and produce forms and expressions that are different from the norm. Even though this position is extremely interesting, it presents the problem that it is often too difficult to distinguish between the specific characteristics of a non-native variety (pronunciation, vocabulary, syntax, pragmatics) and mistakes produced by speakers of that variety or even mistakes produced by native speakers of English. Let's examine the following examples:

- (1) What you would like to it? (example given by Kachru, 1992, 63)
- (2) They are promising a clean good life for us (Times of India 12/9/84:1; Nelson 1992, 332)
- (3) More than one lakh people had been affected by the holocaust (Times of India 12/9/84:1; Nelson, 1992, 333)
- (4) The US has already supplied to Pakistan an TPS 43 high power radars... which are now being used in their ... control system (Times of India 10/7/84:1; Nelson, 1992, 332)
- (5) People are basically the same, that they tend to do something, just because everyone else is doing it and not because they fill that its right. I fill its the way people things that is so funny (Native American student. In Nelson, 1992, 334).

In example 1 and 2 the word order of Standard English is changed in Indian English and in example 2 the word 'lakh', which is an Indian word to express the number '100,000', is used. These examples could be the result of the use of English by bi-multilingual non-native speakers in a specific context and they could be considered productive uses of English if they are systemic within the variety of Indian English. Example 4 presents lack of agreement between the singular article and the plural noun. Is this a characteristic of Indian English or a mistake produced by the person who wrote the article? Example 5 has several non-standard uses of the language produced by a native speaker of English and as these uses do not correspond to a non-native variety they are considered mistakes and not deviations. These examples show that it is very difficult to draw a line between a mistake and a deviation and to establish that a specific non-standard use of English is systemic within a variety, although some characteristics of non-native Englishes have already been established (see the journal *World Englishes*).

Defendants of Standard British English consider that standard English rather than non-native Englishes should be the model to follow:

A few months ago, discussing these matters in the Philippines, I heard a British educational consultant who had worked for a year or so in Manila tell Filipino teachers that there was no reason for them to correct the English of their students if it seemed comprehensible to other Filipinos. Whether the listening teachers felt relieved or insulted I don't know, but of one thing I was sure: the advice was bad. Filipinos, like Indians, Nigerians, Malaysians, are learning English not just to speak with their own country folk but to link themselves with the wider English-using community throughout the world. It is neither liberal nor liberating to permit learners to settle for lower standards than the best, and it is a travesty of liberalism to tolerate low standards which will lock the least fortunate into the least rewarding careers (Quirk, 1990).

As David Crystal (1995) points out the new Englishes are facing two competing pressures: international intelligibility and identity. The factors that favour international intelligibility and the use of standard English are the mass media, the world of business and the Internet. The factors that favour identity and the use of non-native Englishes are the contact of English with other languages and the use of local terms that reflect the specific characteristics of different cultures.

ii. What is EuroEnglish?

EuroEnglish, also called 'Eu-English', 'European non-native English', 'Continental English' and 'European English' is the variety of English spoken by European non-native speakers of English. European English could be considered either as a deficient variety of English because of the mistakes produced by non-native speakers or as a deviation from native Englishes because Europeans use a productive variety of English linked to their own identity and distinct from other World Englishes. The second possibility poses several questions: Is there a systemic non-native European variety?; Which are the characteristics of European non-native English?; Are these characteristics different from other non-native varieties?

Unfortunately, there is very little work in this area but it has been observed (Modiano, 1996) that EuroEnglish, which he calls 'Mid-Atlantic English' is a variety that shares characteristics of British and American English and avoids prominent British or American pronunciations or culturally specific terms associated with British or American English. For example, many non-native speakers of English in Europe try to avoid what they perceive as 'exaggerated RP pronunciations' or expressions which are culturally associated with British or American English (e.g. question tags, 'Cheerio', 'Hi guys, how are you doing?') Other specific characteristics of Euro-English can be

It has to be accepted that the number of European non-native speakers of English is increasing and that English is becoming the most common language for intra-European communication. It is also true that there is a switch from British to American English and it is likely that the English used in Europe will be influenced both by British and American English.

expected at the discourse and pragmatic levels because these levels are more likely to include the culturally distinct features that distinguish Europeans from other non-native speakers of English. For example, it has been found that European non-native speakers of English present a level of directness when formulating requests that is half way between the 'directness' of American speakers and the 'indirectness' of the British (Cenoz & Valencia, 1996). More studies are necessary to find out if the way European non-native speakers formulate requests is unique and different from the way other non-native speakers utter requests.

In sum, more research is needed in order to find out if Euro-English has some specific characteristics and even though at first sight we can think that the influence of different European languages and cultures will be stronger than the common characteristics shared by European non-native speakers of English it is possible that we European non-native speakers share some characteristics that distinguish us from non-native speakers from Asian, South American or African countries. In sum, it is too early to state the characteristics of Euro-English but it has to be accepted that the number of European non-native speakers of English is increasing and that English is becoming the most common language for intra-European communication. It is also true that there is a switch from British to American English and it is likely that the English used in Europe will be influenced both by British and American English.

iii. What is multilingual competence?

Communicative competence is generally regarded by most contemporary educators as an essential goal of second language acquisition. The concept of communicative competence was originally proposed by Hymes (1972), who emphasized the importance of the ability to use language effectively and appropriately in social context. Most current models of communicative competence have expanded the original concept to include a number of different components, such as linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic (or actional), discourse, and strategic competence (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995).

Multilingual speakers tend to use different languages in different situations for different purposes. Therefore, while they may need all the components of communicative competence in total, they do not necessarily and often do not need to develop all competences to the same extent in each language.

The goal of acquiring a second (third, fourth) language has traditionally been to achieve native-like competence in each of these areas. But the idea that second language competence is comparable to monolingual competence has been seriously challenged in recent years. Grosjean (1992), Cook (1992,1993) and others have criticized what they call 'monolingual prejudice' or 'the monolingual view of bilingualism' according to which the proficiency that second language learners should aim for is 'native-like', where 'native-like' is defined in terms of monolingual language proficiency. Bilinguals, in and outside school, are usually evaluated according to their 'monolingual' competence in their non-native languages. However, a perfectly balanced bilingual or multilingual person is exceptional. Thus, since second language learners seldom acquire completely native-like monolingual competence and rarely become balanced bilinguals, it is not uncommon to talk about failure in second language acquisition.

In comparison to this 'fractional' view of an idealized form of bilingualism, Grosjean (1992) has proposed a holistic view. Bilinguals seldom have balanced proficiency because they have developed communicative competences in two languages according to the specific contexts in which they learn

to use them. The language competence of bilinguals should not be regarded simply as the sum of two monolingual competences, but rather should be judged in conjunction with the users' total linguistic repertoire. Cook (1992) has proposed the notion of 'multicompetence' to designate a unique form of language competence that is not necessarily comparable to that of monolinguals. According to Cook (1993), second language users should not be viewed as imitation monolinguals in a second language, but rather they should be seen as speakers that possess unique forms of competence, or competences, in their own right. Jessner (1997) also adopts a holistic view of bilingualism and emphasizes the fact that multilingual competence is dynamic rather than static.

These alternative views of bilingualism are particularly interesting when applied to multilingualism and multilingual acquisition. If we go beyond bilingualism, we are even less likely to find balanced multilinguals because the multilingual speaker has a larger linguistic repertoire than monolinguals but usually the same range of situations in which to use that repertoire. Thus, multilingual speakers will have more specific distributions of functions and uses for each of their languages and, therefore, they should not be measured against the yardstick of a monolingual speaker who uses the same language in all contexts. This perspective has important implications for multilingual education as it challenges 'ideal native competence' as the only goal for language learners. Multilingual speakers tend to use different languages in different situations for different purposes. Therefore, while they may need all the components of communicative competence in total, they do not necessarily and often do not need to develop all competences to the same extent in each language.

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iv. Is there a relationship between bilingualism and the acquisition of English as a third language?

Overall, the findings from these studies indicate that bilingualism favours the acquisition of third languages (see Bild & Swain, 1989; Cenoz 1992; Lasagabaster, 1997). For example, researchers have found that in French immersion in Canada third language learners have advantages in comparison to second language learners (see Bild & Swain, 1989). These findings have also been confirmed in other settings such as the US or the Basque Country.

These findings are compatible with the 'developmental interdependence hypothesis' (see Cummins, 1981) that proposes that some type of transfer can take place among the languages known by the learner. Multilingual learners are more 'expert' learners and they also have more than one linguistic code at their disposal. For this reason they have at their disposal a wider variety of processing strategies and higher developed metalinguistic awareness (Cenoz & Genesee, 1998).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The new situation created as a result of the spread of English in the European context has several educational implications:

1. English is the most important language of intra European and international communication and the most important access code to science and technology. Therefore, English is one of the most important areas in our studies and our students have to achieve a level of competence in English which is good enough to maintain a basic communication with other speakers.

2. We cannot expect our students to achieve ideal native-like competence and we should not consider them as deficient if they don't achieve this type of competence. We have to bear in mind that English is one of the languages in their linguistic repertoire and that multilingual competence is not the sum of monolingual competences.

3. We have to provide the means for students to benefit from their knowledge of other languages and for positive linguistic transfer to take place. It is difficult to give specific 'recipes' here but the integration of different languages in the curriculum and the development of learning strategies can be important steps in that direction.

4. Each teacher should make decisions about the specific English model to be taught in the classroom but we all should be aware of the fact that the situation has changed and British English is no longer the only model to be taught. Students should be exposed to different varieties of English through textbooks, audio and video materials and the teacher should use the variety he/she prefers and be tolerant towards other varieties.

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APPROACHING PRONUNCIATION EDUCATIVELY

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INTRODUCTION

Are you frustrated by the lack of progress in your learners' pronunciation? Do they produce a good immediate repetition when they hear the model you provide for a word, but appear to have lost this ability to pronounce the word correctly five minutes or any time later? Does knowing the phonemic transcription not help either? Do they go on stressing wrongly and using unsuitable intonation? Are they difficult to understand or does their delivery sound aggressive or otherwise inappropriate as a result? Have you tried all sorts of games and used the resources provided by articulatory phonetics? To little or no avail at all - although there is no sign that they are physically unable to pronounce accurately. In short, are you discouraged because they seem not to improve, and keep making the same errors in spite of all your and their efforts? Then it might be worth trying to work on the heart and the mind of your learners.

PRONUNCIATION IS AFFECTIVELY LOADED

Indeed, learning is never a neutral experience. Pronunciation in particular is potentially probably the most affectively loaded experience of all in learning a language. There are numerous reasons for this. I would like to mention a few.

Pronunciation is the first aspect of our mother tongue we are exposed to (even before birth), and so directly links us with our parents and our mother in particular. It is possibly the deepest and most directly striking sign of regional and social belonging and group conformity. On the personal level, anyone hearing someone speak has an immediate affective and aesthetic reaction to the voice and the way the person speaks. When a foreign language is spoken this response is easily extended from the speaker we are hearing to the whole language spoken.

LANGUAGE AS SOCIAL BELONGING

As we grow older and our awareness of the world outside takes a more personal and more social dimension, we develop a personal as well as social sense of belonging to some groups - and of not belonging to other groups. We become 'me' and 'us', while the speakers of foreign languages become 'them'. Those who teach us foreign languages also become 'them'. 'They' have a history that makes them 'different' from 'me' and 'us'. This is a very important - maybe the most important single reason why young children achieve native like pronunciation when they learn a foreign language. They do not yet make such a sharp or deep distinction between themselves, people and peoples. Their hearts and their heads are still available without too many reservations.

Integration in society and the world may lead learners deep down not to want to sound English or American, because of a variety of reasons, prejudices and stereotypes of which I would like to mention a few I have come across such as, 'the English can't cook' and 'are in many other ways strange, unfathomable and basically eccentric' (which is hardly better than being a soccer hooligan). As such they should not be taken seriously. As for the Americans, they are 'imperialists', 'know alls', 'naively wrong', and 'they can't open their mouths'. 'Have you seen their face when they speak? They mumble rather than speak and they don't shake hands.' If in addition the study of the language is imposed some further problems are brought about.

RESISTANCE TO LEARNING

Freedom of choice and 'mental candour' are always important dimensions in the attitude towards learning a language and in eventual success. When learners decide they want to study a language, they are more receptive and learn better than when a syllabus or an authority imposes the study

Anyone hearing someone speak has an immediate affective and aesthetic reaction to the voice and the way the person speaks. When a foreign language is spoken this response is easily extended from the speaker we are hearing to the whole language spoken.

of that language. In some cases this feeling of compulsion may originate from the choice of the variant of English that is proposed in school. This is often a bone of contention with teenager learners. When they listen to pop songs, they often do not understand. When they understand, it does not sound like what they are taught is supposed to sound. It also sounds more attractive in the mouth of the pop singer than in the teacher's mouth or on the tape used in class.

In other instances the compulsion is social or political and may spread across the whole age spectrum. In eastern Europe in the past Russian was the object of such resistance, but such resistance can simply be due to the political, economic or military power that is felt to go with a language such as English.

The many forms that such resistance can take have always surprised me, but one of the most direct and striking ones is probably the adoption of a strong foreign accent, thus saying to the native speakers 'I am not one of you'; or conveying to people with their own language and culture 'I am not one of them: I have been obliged to study this language under duress'; 'see how wonderfully bad I am.' In Great Britain itself, this is how the Scots and the Welsh set themselves off in relation with 'the English'. However, this is not the complete story yet, other affective problems find their origin in the learner's vision of herself or himself as a learner: this too may hamper further learning by sapping confidence.

LEARNER CONFIDENCE

Our confidence as learners is also the result of our life experience and we may come to believe that we are not gifted for language learning. We may have grown convinced that there is nothing we can do about it. This happens because we are persuaded we are simply not good at learning languages and that a good English pronunciation is something for those who are innately good at languages! This lack of confidence can be focused on English pronunciation. Learners may feel that they can never tell how a word has to be pronounced because they perceive that English spelling is erratic. It seems mystifying that anyone can actually manage to pronounce it correctly. There are many more possible reasons why learners feel they are unable to acquire a good pronunciation such as their age and previous lack of success.

DEALING WITH THE LEARNER'S HEART AND MIND

All of these reasons - and the list is in no way exhaustive - may appear to have little to do with the actual production of speech. They are examples of the invisible hands that can choke learners and lead them to falter again and again. As a consequence, as long as this is not tackled, accumulations of exercises, even if they are rendered amusing or communicative, will not help. As when learning to swim, what goes on in the head and heart of the learners is the most important aspect. Changing someone's heart and mind and building up their confidence, improving their self-image, getting them to come to terms with studying a language they think they have good reasons to refuse to learn takes time and patience. Becoming aware of the complexity of the task can lift a lot of frustration for the learner as well as for the teacher. The task is challenging and difficult but we cannot bypass it if we want to succeed. I would like to suggest some general strategies to cope with this problem.

CLASS STRATEGIES

First we need to *find out* how our learners feel about pronouncing English and what lies at the root of their beliefs. This can be done through oral or written activities, warmers, grammar practice, function learning, listening comprehension in which some aspect of the points raised above is built in. This fits in with present thinking on learner education and provides many opportunities to make learning functional and personal. The discussions that follow provide interesting oral practice.

All the time it is essential to adopt a non-judgemental stance (putting learners down, laughing at them, contradicting them gently, even with very rational arguments, is usually counter-productive). This will create a class atmosphere where trying and experimenting are not threatening. By experimenting, they are more

Pronouncing English - or any language - well is not just a matter of breathing out while positioning organs in appropriate ways. As in all human endeavours there is first of all an intentionality, a will, in short, a human being who does something.

likely to find ways out of their difficulties instead of obsessively making the same errors. Learners need to be encouraged to express their reservations or negative feelings about learning English. We must trust that listening to or reading about the variety of reactions towards the language, people and culture will lead them to think and mature.

Propose choices to your learners. Choices in the kind of speaker they wish to be (native, near native, very efficient foreigner, good communicator, etc) and choices in the variety of language they want to use. Point out that they have to be logical, though: to do business you need to speak like a businessman, not like a pop star.

If the problem is one of confidence there is no point in telling them they should not be afraid. Just try telling someone who is afraid of water that their fear is irrational, ungrounded and unnecessary because the natural thing is to float, not to sink ..! Rather, provide learners with plenty of opportunities to indirectly experience English in a new unexpected way. Get them to open their ears, minds and hearts. Rely on the group dynamics. Learners will progress through what happens in carefully prepared activities that develop group dynamics and encourage or develop learner and personal confidence. Meeting native speakers can defuse fears and trigger the mechanism that will open up the learners.

In any case, do not expect instant improvement; be attentive, persevere, trust and hope the moment will come when they will be able to speak as they would like to; just like someone suddenly forgets about the fear of drowning - and can swim! If your learners feel that you believe in them there is a good chance they will start having more faith in their own abilities.

As teachers what we do often bears fruit when the learners have left us. Teachers sow seeds and life causes them to sprout and brings them to fruition! We must accept that we initiate processes whose outcome we do not see.

CONCLUSION

I have tried to show that pronouncing English - or any language - well is not just a matter of breathing out while positioning organs in appropriate ways. As in all human endeavours there is first of all an intentionality, a will, in short a human being who does something. This means that teaching the pronunciation of a language cannot be limited to providing information about the phonology of the language. It cannot be limited to providing a good model either. While the teacher cannot turn the learner into a perfect speaker, she or he can and should be a partner in the adventure that learning a language is. A dynamic relationship between the teacher, the learners and the learning group to make the learners aware of their real wishes and fears will help to approach the target language positively. When we take the heart and mind of learners into account, we simply put learning in a broader educative perspective.

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Making writing an enjoyable process in and out of class

By Carmen Fernández Santás

I.E.S. Antonio Fraguas. Santiago de Compostela

Writing has often been associated with exams and testing. In fact, it is still the skill widely used for these purposes and very often writing in the classroom has no communicative purpose; its basic aim is to reinforce vocabulary or grammar patterns, and to pass exams. This means that for many students writing does not seem to be an enjoyable experience. There is no doubt that grammar and vocabulary are important and writing can help to reinforce and ultimately acquire them. However, we cannot assume that by asking students to put in writing what was practised orally they will develop their writing skills and their ability to communicate; they will simply reinforce some specific grammar patterns. As we all know, communicative competence comprises other areas of knowledge and skill. To develop these other areas learners need appropriate guidance and motivating real-life tasks which encourage them to write for meaning, to express their views, their opinions, and their feelings in an appropriate way considering purpose and audience.

Writing is a productive skill which is difficult to develop and master even in our own language. Some students may be innately gifted and eventually become good writers regardless of what they are asked to write in class (mainly because they are good readers), but many of them are unlikely to produce a coherent piece of writing unless they are taught and trained to do so. However, producing a coherent piece of writing in a foreign language involves harder work due to language constraints. It is not just producing something grammatically correct; it means producing something meaningful for our potential reader, who is not precisely the teacher. We, teachers, have an important role to play but not exactly through spotting and correcting language mistakes; our help can be

invaluable in terms of motivation and involvement, and also in the processes of generating ideas, managing feedback, raising awareness of purpose and possible audience and so on.

This workshop started with some activities to raise awareness of the importance of the teacher's role. We agree that learners should not only write for their teacher and to pass exams. Their classmates from the same or from a different class, students from other schools around or abroad can play the role of readers and give informal, but very useful, feedback. After some training and after getting a bit familiar with giving feedback, they can pose interesting and helpful questions on interest, general organisation, clarity and so on. It was discussed that, for this reason, asking students to write an essay to be handed in the next day may be counterproductive. Even though we assured them that it was just intended to help them improve their writing skills, we would somehow be encouraging learners to write the first thing which came to their mind and submit their first draft. Even if they were very responsible and wanted to get information from other sources and feedback from peers, they wouldn't be able to do so due to time constraints.

Some participants showed interest in having some of the transparencies and the materials used during the session and all I could do was to promise to send a copy to APAC of NEWS. Now, in retrospect, I realise that to comply with my word I have to abridge my explanations. I will therefore include the promised materials in the APPENDIXES and I will simply state the aim and, where necessary, either a brief comment or the procedure for those who may read this for the first time and for those attending the session who wish to refresh their memory.

APPENDIX 1 THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

Aim: to value the importance of our role as teachers who can enhance or hinder a child's innate ability and attitudes.

This piece of writing reflects how we, teachers, can sometimes hinder our learners' potential

creativity by assigning tasks which are not related to their prior experiences and current expectations. Initially this 12-year-old learner was naturally involved in writing for meaning but he ended up writing just to please his teacher.

Once upon a time there was a 12-year old boy who loved writing. He wrote messages, letters, short articles, film reviews, stories... He loved going to school. He would always volunteer to write something for the school magazine. Suddenly he was worried, his parents were given a new job and they had to move house. He would be attending a new school the next academic year. He would have new classmates and new teachers.

The first day the school started he was really panicking. But when the language teacher came in, he felt relaxed. She looked friendly. He greeted them and then she said:

'Today you are going to write something for me'

'Great' the boy thought. I can write a letter, or better, I'll write a message, yes a message in a bottle...and he started to write very fast. He was just telling his new teacher about himself. But the teacher said: 'Hold on a minute, I still haven't told you what I want you to write about. I want you to tell me what you did during the last summer holidays...'

The boy liked the idea of the message in a bottle telling his teacher about himself and his previous school, but he didn't say anything. He hadn't spent an exciting summer but he immediately started to write. He was writing a letter for his teacher. He also loved writing letters and he wanted to tell her about his previous school magazine. He had spent the summer planning and thinking about what to write in the next issues. He had been discussing ideas with friends and he had also visited a few libraries. But when he was concentrated on his plans, the teacher said: 'hold on a minute, I still haven't told you what kind of text I want you to write. I want you to write a 500-word essay'. The boy liked his letter, but he didn't say anything. He started writing his 500-word essay.

The following year his parents had to move to a new city. And the boy had to go to a new school there. The first teacher he met was the teacher of English. She also looked friendly. She greeted them and then she said:

Today you are going to write something for me.

The teacher walked around and noticed that the 12-year old boy was not writing anything. 'Don't you like writing?' She asked. 'Well, you didn't say what I should write about' the boy replied. 'You can write about anything you like', she answered. 'And any kind of text?' the boy enquired. 'Of course', the teacher said, 'how would I otherwise get to know you'. The boy didn't say a word. He put pen to paper and started to write

What did he write?

*an essay on
what I did last summer holidays*

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Adapted from BUCKELIN, H (1992) *Creatividad*. Editorial Labor. Barcelona

APPENDIX 2 WRITING: AN OVERVIEW

Aim: to reflect on the distinctive features of writing. As the mind map indicates, there are five basic questions to be answered:

1. Why should we write?

What is the purpose of writing? The answer to this question will inspire and also condition our written work. If we write to learn, for instance, vocabulary, then simply copying it on our notebook in some kind of order will do. However, if we have to write a complaint letter then the procedure is different. We will have to bear in mind the established conventions for this text type. We will probably have to take notes on some key standard expressions to open and close the letter, and on how to organise the paragraphs. Additionally, this text type requires giving information, arguing, persuading and expressing our opinion.

2. What are the differences between spoken and written language?

Basically, spoken language cannot be planned; it is produced under the pressure of time and of our interlocutor. Therefore, redundancies, repetitions, fillers and many time-saving devices are common. However, written language can and should be planned and edited; this means that we have to be concise to transmit our message clearly and bear in mind the purpose and the potential reader of our text. Speaking is often compared to walking; the majority of people will acquire these skills naturally by constant exposure, even if they don't go to school. However, writing is like swimming; both need to be taught and learned consciously. Of course, we are talking about a first language; needless to say, writing in a foreign language requires harder work, but

it is worthwhile as it can also improve our writing skills in our mother tongue.

3. What kind of texts can students write in class?

Fairly enough, most achievement texts are usually written; however, we should give learners the chance of writing different text types which will be helpful for them in real life. Their age, level, interest, and needs will obviously tell us what text type can be chosen for each situation.

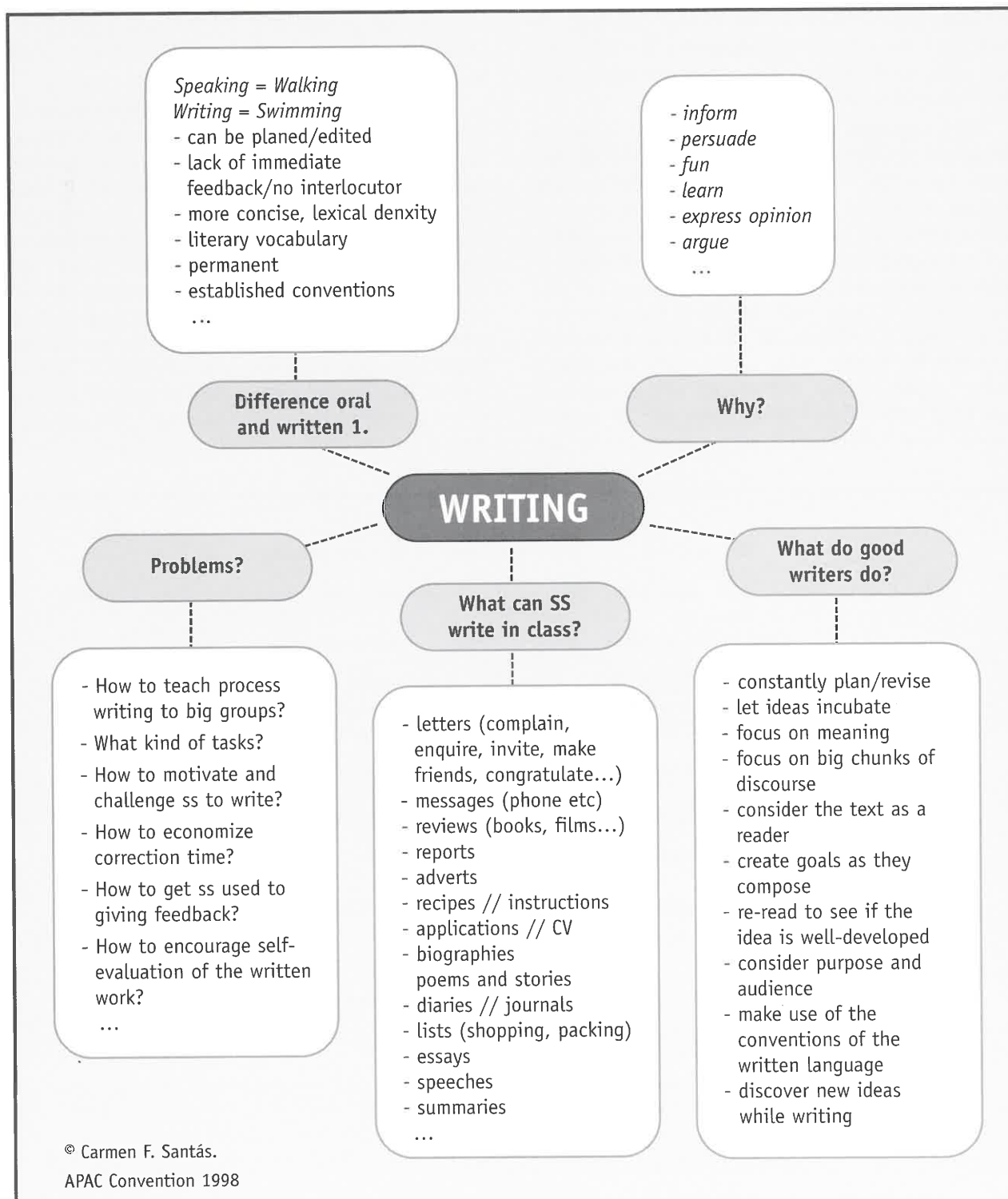
4. What do good writers do?

Johnson said 'what is written without effort is

generally read without pleasure'. As research has shown, good writers are good planners and focus on meaning. They focus on accuracy only when they are satisfied with their message and their paragraph organisation.

5. How can we teach writing, what are the main problems?

Teaching writing to big heterogeneous groups may, in principle sound difficult and not feasible, but in fact it is not. The appendixes below will hopefully answer some of the problems worrying teachers willing to implement a process approach.



APPENDIX 3 PROCESS WRITING: SOME BASIC STEPS

Aim: to outline some basic steps to be taken when introducing process writing in the classroom.

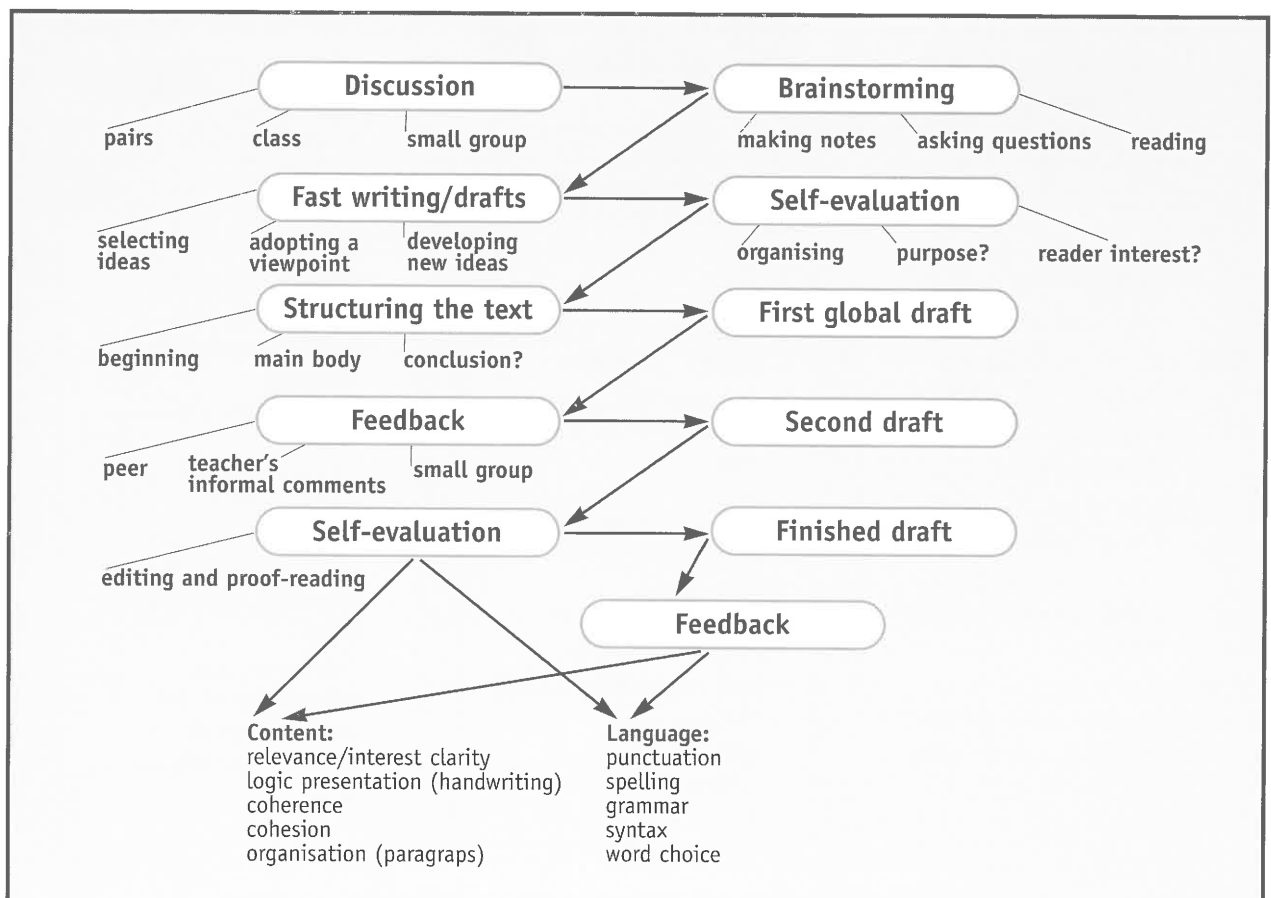
In a process approach to writing there are some key steps to be taken prior to focusing on accuracy. Initially, there should be some kind of discussion (in pairs, small groups, or with the whole class) about the writing task. At this initial stage it is important to brainstorm ideas on interesting things we can write about. It can be done orally through elicitation or by posing questions. Learners can also be encouraged to get ideas from different written sources and they can take notes on established conventions for a specific text type, some helpful expressions and vocabulary, interesting ideas and so on.

Then they start writing their first drafts, selecting ideas, and developing new ones as they write. At this stage the writer must consider the reader and the purpose of his/her piece of writing: 'Is the piece of writing interesting to read?; Why?; What is its purpose?; Am I conveying my ideas clearly?' These are the kind of questions which will help the writer structure the text and write a first global draft. And this is a good moment to get informal feedback, but not necessarily from the overwhelmed teacher who cannot read everybody's drafts; classmates can and should read others' work and make informal comments which can be equally helpful. These comments will tell the writer whether the

message is being clearly expressed, which the most important ideas are, what is confusing and so on.

Learners should be encouraged to have their work read by as many classmates as possible: the more feedback they get, the better their final work will be. With the feedback given, the writer starts a new draft. Self-evaluation here is very important, the writer must reread his/her work paying attention both to content and language. Once the writer is totally satisfied and cannot find any other way of improving his/her work, the final draft is submitted. The feedback given by the teacher should focus not only on accuracy but on other elements related to the general content.

This process may sound too time-consuming to be implemented in the classroom. But I would like to suggest that in the long run it does work. Learners realise that good writing requires effort and at least they realise that one cannot expect to produce a good piece of writing if it is done in no time. Getting them to produce a good piece of work a term or a year will always be better than getting them to produce none at all. With just one good writing task where the process of writing is brought into the classroom, we will be helping our students realise that writing is a cyclical process that implies drafting and re-drafting till one gets a satisfactory end product considering the potential readers and the purpose of one's piece of work.



APPENDIX 4 TECHNIQUES AND STRATEGIES USED BY TEACHERS

Aim: to arouse awareness of some effective teaching practices.

The four teachers who are not helping their students are: Luis (no time given for getting ideas and drafting); Ana (what is difficult to do in class will be extremely discouraging to do alone at home; writing associated to boredom); Pilar (only reinforces

grammar and vocabulary but not the other skills needed to be a competent communicator; writing is only testing; it is not meaning oriented); Dolores (if learners systematically have their work corrected by the teacher, they won't try it on their own and they will assume it is the teacher's job to correct it).

Which teachers are helping students develop their writing skills? Why?

"I always tell my students to bear in mind the purpose of what they are writing, who the potential reader is, how to attract the reader's attention..." Gloria

"When I ask my students to write an essay, I always tell them to hand it in the next day, otherwise they forget doing their homework" Luis

"When I find activities in the coursebook which I don't like or which look a bit difficult to do in class, I ask my students to do them for homework" Ana

"I always ask my students to write down all the activities which we have been doing orally, in that way they prove how much they are learning" Pilar

"Before students start to write, we always brainstorm ideas and there are always creative students who give very good suggestions. That helps the other students who may not know how to get started" Pablo

"I always tell my students to revise their spelling, their grammar, and their syntax before submitting their work, but it's useless. In the end I have to spend hours correcting their mistakes" Dolores

"Before students start to write, there are a few minutes for discussion. We pool ideas together about what can be included and where to get further information or sample models. Then we do some fast writing and students exchange their work. They jot down comments to help their partners improve their work" Hector

"When students hand in their work, I often give it back to other students and ask them to jot down any comments or suggestions to improve it. If I see that the suggestions are interesting, I ask the author to re-write it bearing in mind the suggestions given by others" Teresa

"When I assess students' written work I don't often correct the language mistakes. I simply indicate where there is a mistake, give them some clue about what kind of mistake it is, and write down comments related to organisation, content, purpose, etc. I often ask students to re-write it and improve it considering the feedback given" Marta

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APPENDIX 5 HOW TO RESPOND TO STUDENTS' WRITING

Aim: to look for effective alternatives to give feedback. Two examples of how to give feedback to our students (A and B) are included here. To save time and not to increase our workload, what I find very helpful and effective is to choose a draft from a standard student (neither the best nor the poorest); jot down questions related to both/or form and meaning; then make copies and give one to each student. Due to space constraints I cannot include students' final work here but all of them have substantially improved both the form and meaning of the drafts given.

A) This is just an example of a letter giving personal information. The students were given an advert each from other school partners (from a different group) and they had to respond to it (this is an easy way to

broaden the audience and to get them to focus on meaning). In this case they had previously read a model letter, which is why the information here is reasonably organised (I've typed it for reasons of clarity but with all the mistakes, such as it was handed in). Therefore the questions included are aimed at improving accuracy. Obviously, learners should be told that each question is intended to help them correct one of the grammar mistakes.

B) This starts with an example of a book review written in class. They had been previously taught some vocabulary and easy chunks: *characters, hero/heroine, the climax comes when, it is written by...* In terms of accuracy, the review can be considered to be acceptable as the grammar mistakes do not hinder comprehension.

However, in terms of coherence and organisation, it is quite poor. Therefore, in this case learners are posed questions to encourage self-correction of their English, and then they are given some help to organise their information in coherent paragraphs. Further questions are raised to make them think and provide more

detailed information. These questions force them to check the semantic map below where they are provided key input they will need to expand in their piece of work. It could be verified that with this help some students wrote a page and a half, and the slowest ones wrote at least half a page.

A Answering an advert and giving personal information about oneself

First, second, and third are just ordinal numbers, aren't they?

Why do you like travelling by car? What about travelling on foot?

It's a pity you only like pretty women, what about clever and sensitive women?

Are you sure you are 1,75 tall? I've got a seventeen-year-old friend whose height is 1,65!

Why could you and your friend arrange to meet one evening? Could you arrange to meet one morning at school?

Why would you be very pleased to meet this person?

Dear T.A.S.

I saw your advertisement in the English class. I would very pleased to meeting you. First, let me tell you something about myself. I'm a Spanish boy who likes the travels in car, because is something very good to meet interesting people.

In my free time, I like go to the cinema, go out with my friends and playing many sports. I like the pretty womans and I like to have fun with theirs.

I'm 17 year old. I'm about 1,75 high and I have brown eyes with dark hair.

Perhaps we could arrange to meet us one evening. You can call me on my work number: 696 969

I'm looking forward to meet you soon

Yours sincerely

Zola

Why are you looking forward to meeting that person?

What is good to meet interesting people? Travelling, perhaps?

You say you like playing sports, what else do you like doing?

Do you have fun with them or with their friends?

I know you are 17 years old, but are you a seventeen-year-old man or woman?

I've got lots of students who have got brown eyes and brown hair, what a coincidence!

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B Writing a book review

BORN TO RUN

A book called Born to Run. It is written by Alan Mc Lean. It is about a girl called Sara. She loves run and her boy-friend is called Eddie but she hasn't time to be with he. The story takes place in Cambridge. The story begins with Bill, her coatch, and Sara when she was running. There is narrative and a lot of dialogue. The heroine is Sara. the main characters are Sara, Bill and Eddie. The climax comes when Sara won the race. (written by a 14 year old student)

Pay attention to these questions to help you correct your English:

1. You say that Sara loves running, but what else does she like? Does she love going to school, doing her homework, going to the disco?
2. You say that Sara doesn't have spare time to be with her boyfriend, Eddie. Why doesn't she have time to be with him?
3. Who is Bill? Is he Sara's coach?

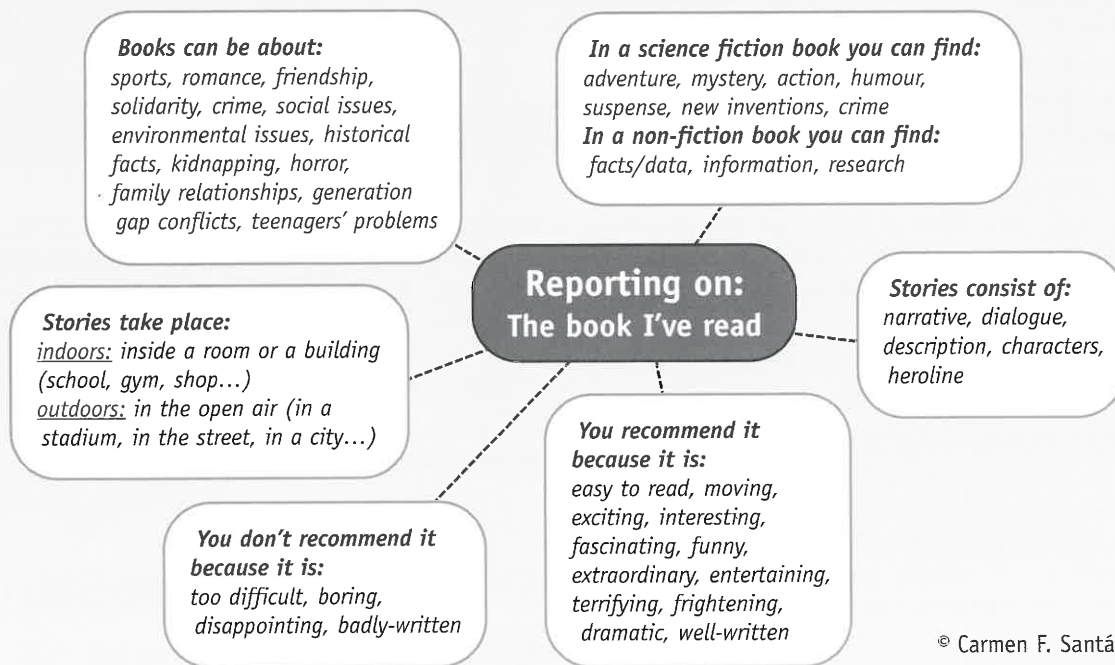
Pay attention to these headings and expressions to help you improve the organisation of your report.

General information: facts a book called /entitled... it is written by... it is about/ it deals with...	Plot/story The story begins with... The climax comes when... In the end....
Characters the main characters are.. the hero/heroine is...	Personal opinion The reason I enjoyed it is that... I recommend it because...
Setting The story is set in... It takes place in...	

Try to answer these questions when you rewrite your report.

Get help from the mind-map below

1. Why are you writing about 'a book called Born to run'? Was it the last book you read? Was it a book you enjoyed reading?
2. You say it is about a girl called Sara, but what is the main topic/theme?
3. You explain that the story takes place in Cambridge, but where in Cambridge, is it indoors or outdoors, where? Give more detailed information.
4. You say that there is narrative but, how much is there? A lot, a little, too much, some?
5. You explain that the heroine is Sara? Why is she the heroine? Can you give more information about her and the other main characters? What are they like? How old are they? What do they do?
6. You say that the climax comes when Sara won the race, but who did she beat? Did you want Sara to be the winner? Why?
7. I don't know whether you liked *Born to run* or not, Can you tell me your opinion? Do you recommend it? Why?



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WHAT'S IN A SONG ?

EXPLORING ITS POSSIBILITIES FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING



By María Luisa Pérez Ojeda

Songs are popular among students—especially songs in English. This workshop aimed to arouse our consciousness of the manifold nature of songs, and to suggest how we teachers can adapt them to be used in the classroom context. For this task, a variety of elements can be taken for learning targets, like aspects of grammar or phonetics, the lexical component, cultural ingredients or just present-day hot issues for discussion and debate. We can approach songs from many points of view, and any song can potentially be used at any level; we just have to pay attention to what we ask from our students, that is, the objectives we set.

RATIONALE FOR USING SONGS

Why should we use songs in the language classroom? Some of the answers are very intuitive, some come as conclusions from a study I carried out among FP, ESO and COU students at the IES Carles Vallbona, in Granollers. The following are among the reasons they proposed:

Music is around us: on tv, film soundtracks, the top 40 on the radio, cd's played at home or in bars, etc. The average secondary student listens to music in English, according to my study, between 8 and 9 hours a week.

Motivation: songs are entertaining and they give an out-of-the-routine touch to the class session.

Students' interests: songs usually talk about love, a topic to which teenagers are especially sensitive. And even though they usually do not listen to songs for their content (they do not understand them!), we can always use present song hits because our students will recognize the tunes and will relate more easily to them.

Storage: listening to songs and relating words to a melody makes us remember things better. Don't you still remember words from the first songs you learned in a L2? I do: God bless you merry gentlemen...

Culture: they provide an authentic cultural background that we can conveniently use to expand our students' knowledge of the target culture— from explaining minor points like the differences in the time distribution of the day to discussing historical or political events.

All four skills: we practise listening, reading, writing (gaps, compositions) and speaking if we include pair work and group discussion.

Communication: singing means communicating ideas and feelings, and our students and ourselves are nothing but the other end of the process, the receivers and interpreters of the messages. These feelings and ideas provoke further communication needs among our students (although not always in English, unless we see to it).

Relaxation: use music after an exam session or to tone down stress at the end of a class or an academic term.

WHICH ONES SHOULD WE USE? SONG TYPES

Now that we have developed some reasons for using songs the next obvious question is which ones we should use. This will depend on a number of factors and on the criteria we follow.

CRITERIA & FACTORS

We can choose, for example, songs that are to our **tastes** and end up bringing to class songs by Cat Stevens, Bob Dylan, the Indigo Girls, etc. However eager we are to share our musical youth discoveries with our students, we have to be prepared to find a wall of incomprehension and even rejection on their part if they do not know or have previously heard the songs or think the bands are not on their wave.

The alternative is, of course, to try to match your **students' tastes**. But how do you find out what songs they like? It's not so difficult to do it. Strategies you can follow are: a) asking them indirectly; b) looking at the latest hit parade in any fashionable music publication or at those in 'El País de las tentaciones' any Friday; c) distribute a questionnaire and ask them directly. Then you can write a list with their favorites and you will have a data base for your classroom performances. I did it for the above mentioned research and came out with the following list (I include only the top 10):

STUDENTS' HIT PARADE

VOTES	SONG	GROUP
7	"Devil Came to Me"	Dover (Madrid)
5	"As Long as You Love Me"	Backstreet Boys (US)
5	"Barbie Girl"	Aqua (Sweden)
4	"Don't Speak"	No Doubt
4	"Serenade"	Dover
3	"Always"	Bon Jovi
3	"Candle in the Wind"	Elton John (UK)
3	"Imagine"	John Lennon (UK)
3	"Only when I sleep"	The Corrs
3	"With or Without You"	U2

The list goes on and on, but it is interesting that the favorite group singing in English, Dover, is actually from Spain (though their accent is not that bad). Also on that list you can find many classics, from The Beatles to Elton John, mixed with top 40 songs like the Titanic Soundtrack sung by Celine Dion—popular both among boys and girls—or The Backstreet Boys's "Everybody"—well received by girls but not so much by guys.

A third criteria or factor is the **time and effort** we want to invest. Yes, it does involve a lot of energy, because you have to: 1) find the lyrics, 2) tape/borrow the song, 3) type the lyrics, and 4) design learning activities. Getting the lyrics can sometimes be the most discouraging of the adventures, whether you try to transcribe them by repeatedly listening to the tape or get a friend/student to find them for you. Of course, if you have a computer and Internet connection you can go to www.lyrics.ch (for details consult Dudeney, see Bibliography) and you will most probably find them there, having nothing else to do than downloading them into a word-processing program.

All right, you may say, but, what are the **TYPES** of songs we can use? The answer is any type. You can use folk music, that is, those songs that have become the legacy of centuries, as the anonymous "Greensleeves". You may want to use songs from theater plays like "Willow Song" from Shakespeare's *Othello* to do research on or to introduce language from the past. You may turn to classics like The Beatles' "Yesterday" to teach the past tense or to present-day hits to get your students' attention. You may even use regional songs to work with different non-standard accents, or the good and simple nursery rhymes for practising rhythm and pronunciation. Anything will do. You just have to adapt it according to proficiency levels or intended objectives.

SOME TECHNIQUES FOR WORKING WITH SONGS

We are getting to the how of the process. What things can we do with the pieces, what activities can we design? In her useful classroom resource book *Five Minute Activities*, Penny Ur outlines some of the things we can do with songs. Let us here review those she develops and present some more. Actually, the basic scheme is usually this: preparation, listening, reading and singing.

PREPARATION. The preparation stage includes the selection of your song, its taping or learning and the typing of a handout or transparency with its words to be passed out to the students.

PRE-LISTENING. These are some of the things you can do to prepare your pupils for the listening:

- perform a brainstorming activity about some key idea;
- write important words for the song's meaning on the board;
- ask students to copy them;
- ask students to guess what the song's content is;
- introduce the song's topic through drawings or a text;
- ask students to look up difficult words in the dictionary; or
- present difficult words yourself.

LISTENING. It is important that during the listening students are kept active, that they have some clear goal (eg. to fill in some gaps with missing words, to underline or change things). These are some things they can do:

- mark or tick the words from the pre-listening activity;
- choose words or expressions they would like to learn;
- fill in words (every 10th word or so with a gap (Ur:78));
- correct words (errors);
- put the lines in the correct order;
- associate the story with a sequence of pictures; or
- draw a picture or a line, and then explain it to your partner.

Usually the mechanics include playing the song, following the words and singing afterwards.

FOLLOW-UP: It is also important to do some kind of activity after the listening, which can help expand acquired vocabulary, clarify some semantic point or just be used as some extra practice. These are some suggestions:

- look at meaning;
- play the song again some other time and sing/learn it;
- give you opinion about the song's topic;
- do some crosswords;
- do some composition writing;
- mime the story told;
- translate the song;
- look for rhymes;
- outline mind maps or semantic fields;
- do role-plays, dialogues;
- change/give a title;
- invent a different ending; or
- write a similar song.

WHAT ELEMENTS CAN WE WORK ON?

The final aspect in the elaboration of song activities is the topic we want to study through using them.

Grammar is not everything, though it has traditionally been the main target. As has been mentioned above, we can use "Yesterday" for practising or introducing the simple past tense; with less advanced classes we can use Titanic's soundtrack love theme "My Heart Will Go On" and leave out all pronouns. We can in the same way work on **speech functions**, like asking for and giving information, (e.g. 'Where is a restaurant? There is one at the market', (translation from Kind's 'Wo ist hier ein Restaurant?', see bibliography)). Pronunciation is also a good study target, since songs make use of rhymes and regular rhythm; there are many traditional tunes and nursery rhymes like "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" that can be selected for this purpose. Furthermore, the differences between **oral and written** styles can be exemplified with songs like Backstreet Boys' "Everybody", which includes a large number of contracted elements of the type 'wanna' or 'gotta'. These elements illustrate not only the differences between American and British variants, but also the quicker and looser way of present-day oral diction.

Another popular element is the **lexical component**; thus word recognition or, more rarely, the acquisition of new items are practised. Actually, what is normally done is to use songs to give real or expanded contexts to items with which students are already familiar. In this sense, a double track is opened: that of recognition of already known words, and that of the **semantic component** which is involved in the expansion of application contexts for the item. Also this last semantic component is

conspicuous in the making of mind maps or relational semantic fields. Let's take an example. The Cranberries' "Zombie", a song about violence in Northern Ireland, can be exploited in several ways. You could select two groups of words: one dealing with violence, and another for the people that suffer from its consequences. We would thus obtain a *violence* field containing 'bomb', 'guns', 'tanks', etc., and an *affected* field including 'child', 'mother' or 'family'. At a higher level, this composition can help us introduce the topic of terrorism, or, if you wish, of tricky political issues, and thus promote discussion and work on elements related to **cultural understanding**, such as the situation in the Ulster.

To close up, like many other songs, Suzanne Vega's "Luka" can be exploited at different levels and in different ways. Her clear diction in songs and her relatively easy vocabulary makes her a good choice for classroom work. But her music not only has easy recognizable words and melodic tunes, it has a lot of content. We can make use of this song for discussing **present-day hot issues**. In fact, "Luka" is about domestic violence. In it a woman talks about her being battered and not even daring to speak about it with anyone. This is something that has been on the news up to very recently in Spain and it is something that will unfortunately be on the news now and then, because this problem does not seem to have an end.

A QUICK EXAMPLE: "EVERYBODY"

I have used Backstreet Boys' "Everybody" to review contractions of the type 'I'm', 'we're', and to introduce some others like 'gotta' or 'gonna'. It has helped me explain the topic of fast speech and the phenomena that it involves. I have prepared the song with gaps precisely where contractions are found for the students to fill them in. This activity has been preceded by a brainstorming/presentation of contractions on the blackboard. This is how the song looked like (the underlined items were the missing words):

BACKSTREET BOYS

"EVERYBODY (BACKSTREET'S BACK)"

[Topic to study: contractions, reduction]

Everybody

Rock your body

Everybody

Rock your body right

Backstreet's back alright

Oh my god we're back again

Brothers, sisters, everybody sing

I'm gonna bring the flavor, show you how

I've got a gotta question for ya

Better answer now

Pre-chorus:

Am I original?

(Yeah)

Am I the only one?

(Yeah)
 Am I sexual?
 (Yeah)
 Am I everything you need?
 You better rock your body now

Chorus:

Now throw you hands up in the air
 And wave 'em around like you just don't care
 If you wanna party let me hear you yell
 'Cause we've got it goin' on again

Pre-chorus

Chorus

So everybody, everywhere
Don't be afraid, don't have no fear
Gonna tell the world, make it understand
 As long as there'll be music we'll be coming back again

The contractions are better left to be seen on the board after their presentation, so that students can look at them and use them to complete the sentences. Otherwise the activity may turn too difficult for them due to the fast nature of the speech sample. As a follow-up, I used some pictures from knock-knock books for children (Rosenbloom; Segal) (see Appendix) to explain the changes that take place at the margins of words when they come into contact with other words in the spoken chain (connected speech assimilations and vowel reduction). The pictures used come from children's

books. They are short dialogues in which somebody knocks at the door and another person says 'who's there?' Then the first one (always some monster or another) tries to kid the one behind the door by saying a false name: 'Ivan' pronounced /'aivn/ Person B says 'Ivan' who?' This name then forms part of the final sentence that the monster will say as a joke and in which the name is inserted into a meaningful phonetic context: 'IVAN appetite for stuffed, green lizard!'—equaling 'I've an appetite for stuffed, green lizard'. These pictures are funny and very instructive.

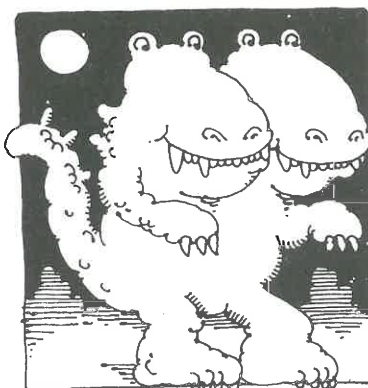
CONCLUSION

Songs are motivating for students; they give you the opportunity to connect with your students interests and to have a more relaxed day. There are many types of songs you can use and many techniques you can put into practice (apart from the well-known fill-in-the-gaps). Also, the elements under study can vary from grammatical points (including morphology and syntax) to political or cultural issues. Only one thing should be remembered: any song is okay; just set your goals and make your activities fit your students' level. Then everything should be fine. And don't forget to enjoy the experience!

APPENDIX

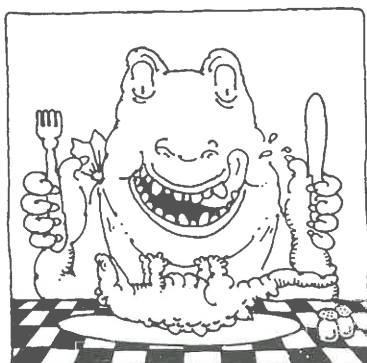
1

**Knock, knock.
 Who's there?
 DAWN.
 DAWN who?
 DAWN tell the secret of
 the werewolf!**



2

**Knock, knock.
 Who's there?
 NOAH.
 NOAH who?
 NOAH anybody who needs
 another head?**



3

**Knock, knock.
 Who's there?
 IVAN.
 IVAN who?
 IVAN appetite for stuffed,
 green lizard!**



4

**Knock, knock.
 Who's there?
 SADIE.
 SADIE who?
 SADIE you know which
 fruit a vampire like best?
 Neck-tarines!**



5

Who's there?
Little old lady.
Little old lady who?
I didn't know you could yodel.



6

Who's there?
Mara.
Mara who?
"Mara, Mara,
on the wall..."

7

Who's there?
Pasture.
Pasture who?
Pasture bedtime, isn't it?

8

Who's there?
Ozzie.
Ozzie who?
Ozzie you later.

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SONGS:

- "Everybody", by Backstreet Boys"
- "Greensleeves" , 16th century anonyme.
- "Luka", by Suzanne Vega
- "My Heart Will Go On", by Celine Dion, Titanic's soundtrack.
- "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" (nursery rhyme)
- "Willow Song" in Shakespeare's Othello
- "Wo ist hier ein Restaurant?" In Uwe Kind's Eine Kleine Deutschmusik.
- "Yesterday", by the Beatles
- "Zombie", by The Cranberries.

Welcome to Multimedia English

By Núria Brichs and Dolors Permanyer
IES "Manolo Hugué" (Caldes de Montbui)

Multimedia: the use of CD-roms in the English classroom.
This workshop, given at APAC ELT Convention 1998, was aimed at telling newcomers to the world of multimedia about the advantages and possibilities of using CD-roms and other multimedia applications in the English Classroom (at secondary school level).

The workshop was divided into two parts. The first one focused on giving answers to common questions about multimedia and ELT CD-roms. After giving the definitions of the basic terms (multimedia, hypertext, hypermedia, etc), simple questions like **what** is needed to work with multimedia, **what** can be done with it, **how**, **where** and **when** to do it were outlined. The second part was a bit more practical. With the intention of answering a final question, we offered a list of reasons **why** multimedia and CD-roms should be used in the English classroom. Together with those explanations, some CD-roms in English and the tasks purposely written for their use and for the practice of different language skills were presented and commented on.

A. WH QUESTIONS ABOUT MULTIMEDIA

1. WHAT is needed

Although the answer to this question seems obvious, many teachers do not use this facility because they do not know how to start. Ok, then, go to the computers room or to the language laboratory and see if the computers have got the following:

- a CD-Rom drive
- a sound card
- speakers, headphones and a microphone
- some software:
 - CD-roms:
 - referential: dictionaries, encyclopaedias, etc
 - language work and practice
 - a word processor for the storage and manipulation of the information taken from the CD-roms (sounds and images can also be included in the word processor files, approaching the effects of multimedia).

2. WHICH material: ELT and non-ELT CD-roms

There is a wide selection of CD-roms on the market which can be used in the English classroom. Some of them have purposely been designed for English language learners, while others are just referential CD-Roms in English. Both types are of valuable use in the English classroom. The following list includes the CDs we use in our classes. It should not be taken as a comprehensive list, but merely as an orientation or starting point.

Language practice

- Echolanguages Labo
- English in Touch
- Learn to Speak English
- The Grammar Rom
- Triple Play Plus

Referential CD-Roms in English

- Encarta
- Bookshelf
- Cinemania
- Dangerous Creatures
- History of the World
- The Way Things Work
- Ancient Lands
- Encyclopedia of Nature
- Encyclopedia of Science

3. WHEN and WHERE to use ELT CD-roms

Another problem arises when teachers decide to make students use a CD-rom to learn English. Where? When? What can be done with them?

The first question seems easy to answer. You can either go to the **computers lab** (make sure it is free at the time you want to go) or to the **language laboratory** if there is at least one computer which supports multimedia.

The second question is a bit more complicated. When can one take 35 students to use a CD-rom to learn English? Probably never, unless there are 20 or more computers in the computer lab and the teacher's capacity of assistance is much over the means. A good alternative to this problem is to take your students there in smaller groups ("hoses B" or "desdoblaments") or to organize optional/elective English credits where students will use the computers individually, in pairs or in groups to either practise the English language skills, or learn more about a topic (eg. animals, history, music, etc) while they complete simple tasks or do a project. Students do not have to work with the same CD-rom at the same time. They can do **different tasks** with different Cds and work at their own pace.

4. HOW to help students benefit from the use of CD-roms

There is no point in making the students spend a session looking at a CD-rom. Probably they will not learn a single word in English. Teachers have to prepare tasks according to the students' level of ability, needs and capacity; the tasks must be integrated into the curriculum of the subject. The worksheets should also contain clear **instructions** to help students work as independently as possible, not only when learning English or other subjects, but also when using the computer. We believe the design of the worksheet is the most important thing for the success of a session/s with CD-roms.

B. 4 REASONS WHY MULTIMEDIA SHOULD BE USED IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

1. Multimedial

Because students work with multimedia.

Students can do different tasks if they have **input** from different multimedia sources. With **texts** they can read. With **sound** they can listen. With **images** they can observe, compare or imagine and later on talk or write about what they have seen. With **animations** and **video** they can also listen, speak, write, learn vocabulary and, above all, think of what they are learning.

2. Interest for reading

Because multimedia helps to foster students' interest for reading.

The information comes in a more **attractive** way for the teenage students. The combination of text, images, sounds and video takes the student to a world that is very near-and dear-to them (television, videogames, music, etc) and so **motivates** them to read.

Students read **authentic** English, which becomes easier to understand with the help of the other media (images, video, sounds). They put into practice different **reading strategies** (eg. guessing, scanning, skimming, reading for gist, summarizing, etc) which help them to take advantage of their reading. With multimedia and hypertext their reading is **interactive**, which means that they must make decisions, answer questions and so become a more **active** and conscious part of the whole process of learning.

3. Cross-curricular

Because by using different CD-roms students learn a lot about other subjects.

While reading and listening—and later on speaking and writing—in English students learn and/or revise different aspects of their curriculum, ranging from literature, history and geography to science and nature or music. They also learn and practise computer skills, which are so necessary for their coming future.

4. New educational system

Because by making students work with CD-roms and other multimedia applications like the Internet we give an answer to some of the main demands of the "reforma".

We can cater for **mixed-ability** classrooms (students do tasks according to their level of ability), promote **learner autonomy** (students learn to work independently and to find the answers to their problems), encourage **collaborative work** (students work in pairs, share their keyboards, and participate in projects with students from other schools and from other countries), and develop **research or project work** (students look for information, summarize it and write essays and projects).

C. SOME EXAMPLES

Next you will find two examples of multimedia activities. The first one consists of step-by-step instructions to create **talking exercises** so that you can start practising multimedia, even if you do not have access to a CD-rom. The tasks will be as varied and creative as you can make them. The second activity has been designed for the CD-Rom "**The Way Things Work**" and it has been put into practice in class with great success.

1. Talking exercises

Requirements:

- word processor (Write, for example, although any other will do)
- sound card
- microphone
- speakers

Open Write, Edit, Embed Object and choose Sound from the list. When you accept, the Sound Recorder comes up. Click on the microphone and record a sound, word or sentence (be careful, though, because it may take up to 1Mb of disk space easily). You can listen to it and re-record it if necessary. When you close the program, it asks you to update the document. Say Yes, and a microphone icon will appear on the Write document. And this is it! When you double-click on it, you will hear your recording. Now you simply have to write the accompanying exercise, and be ready to impress your students! This activity works best with fill-in-the-blanks exercises, in which the kids do the exercise, and then use the embedded sound for self-correction. It is also useful for dictations and pronunciation tasks.

2. Working with the CD: The Way Things Work"

Requirements:

- The Way Things Work
- CD-rom drive 4x
- 8Mb of available disk space
- sound card
- speakers

THE WAY THINGS WORK

level: 2on cycle of ESO

aims: - practise reading, writing and listening in English.

- learn the basics of a computer machine.

procedure: run the CD-rom "The Way Things Work" and follow the instructions.

1. Click on the different elements of the workshop. Read and write what the following do.

- 1- trumpet
- 2- camera
- 3- telephone
- 4- light bulb
- 5- spider

2. Go to 'Machines'. Click on 'P', 'OK'. Click on 'Personal Computer'. Read and answer the following questions:

- What are the basic components of a personal computer?
- Name some peripherals
- What is a modem?
- How many classes of printers are there?
- What kind of device is a CD-Rom drive?
- What's another name for a Visual Display Unit?
- What happens when you click on the loudspeakers?

Now, click on 'System Unit', read and find the answer:

- What are the components of a microprocessor?
- In what other machines do we find a microprocessor?
- What's the meaning of 'RAM'?
- What do we use RAM chips for?
- What's the meaning of 'ROM'?

- What is the function of the ROM chips?
- What does the CPU do?

3- Click on 'Principles of Science'. Click on 'Computers'. Read and do the following :

- Define a computer.
- Play the animation, listen and fill in the blanks:

The heart of a _____ is inside the _____ unit, and is called the Central Processing Unit, or _____. This is a _____ chip, which controls the other parts of the computer and performs all the computer's _____. In order to work, the CPU needs _____ sets of instructions. Firstly, it needs the _____ System, which tells the CPU how to _____ up, how to _____ the disk drivers and how to _____ your software. Secondly, the CPU needs a piece of _____, or an _____ program, to enable it to perform specific _____. Applications are stored on the computer's _____ disk or on _____ disk. While in use, an application is kept in _____ memory, called Random Access Memory, or _____. As you use the computer, the CPU receives your _____ through an input device, such as a _____, it interprets these commands and uses its operating _____ and the application _____ to carry them out, using RAM as _____ space for its calculations. The _____ is converted back into a format you can _____, for example, words and _____ in your _____ Display Unit.

- How do you make a computer work? Write 3 or 4 sentences. Use the connectors: first, then, later, finally....
- Click on 'Software'. What happens when you click on the mammoth?

4. Click on 'History'. You can move forwards or backwards in time by clicking on the red arrows. Read and find the information to complete the following chart:

computer components	name of inventor	date of invention
disk drive		
	Jack Kilby	
		1968
	Marcian Hoff	
		1975
laser printer		
	IBM	

5. Click on 'Inventors'. Find the inventor and answer the following questions:

- Who did Jack Kilby work for?
- What consequence brought about the invention of the silicon chip?
- Who did Douglas Englebart work for after the war?
- Who were the first to use the mouse?

Raising the Theatrical Tone

in a First Year of English



Would you like to have more active classes? Bringing reality into the classroom may be it: get your students to know each other through magic and a real scavenger hunt; ask them to parade in a fashion show; make them feel necessary when giving and following directions; go to a restaurant, etc.

But how? You may wonder. Well, as I just said, through reality, that is, by bringing real life into the classroom, and having students learn by doing, by performing what the syllabus is introducing, and, if possible, by having a memorable time.

This is a summary of different possibilities for 4 different lessons which are a classic in a first year of English:

1. At the restaurant

Order a meal (file 5; p. 59)

At Tom's Diner (file 8; p. 98)

Can men cook? (file 9; p. 108-109)

Procedures:

a. Warmer

b. Controlled Practice

By Lourdes Montoro

c. Follow-up: Roleplay at a real restaurant. Once students have gone through the unit, the teacher starts to roleplay a more open dialogue with a student. New sentences may be introduced, such as:

"I'd like a table for one"

"Would you like a smoking or a non-smoking area?" etc.

A menu is provided to the imaginary customer. He/she will start ordering. But the waiter/waitress will not have any of the dishes which are listed. Sentences such as the following may be used:

"We can't offer you a tomato salad; we forgot to buy tomatoes at the market this morning. Sorry."

"I'm sorry. We have no ice-cream. The power went out last night. So the ice-cream is all melted"

"I'm sorry to trouble you again, but there is no chicken broth. We ran out of it". (...)

The customer and the whole class must have caught all the teacher's attention by now, and they are very much within the situation. The teacher may propose to recommend something. Or sometimes, students naturally happen to ask for assistance to the waiter/waitress. Sentences such as these can be heard:

"Is there anything you could recommend?"

"Could I recommend something to you?"

When given the chance, the waiter/waitress recommends cake. He/she may say something like:

"There may be some cake left. Let me go to the kitchen and check."

The teacher goes towards his/her table, looks around, and goes back to wait on the customer again. He/she gives an answer:

"Yes, there is."

The student orders what is available. The teacher also recommends a drink to him/her (it can be a chocolate milk shake.) The teacher repeats the same procedure and goes back to the imaginary kitchen. This time, however, he/she brings back a real cake, which has been hidden on the chair. Needless to say, he/she also brings the chocolate milk shake. The teacher goes on with the situation, as if nothing extraordinary had happened; so, he/she serves the cake, and the drink as well. Students usually can't believe their eyes. The teacher lets the student enjoy the food and drink, while finishing off the roleplay; other sentences may be added:

"How do you like it?"
"Is everything all right?" (...)
"Do you accept credit cards?"
"Have a nice day!"
"You too"

After the roleplay, the teacher asks students if they would like to rehearse a similar situation. If so, which is always the case - they do not want to miss on the fun part -, they are given two or three minutes to memorize the new sentences, and to picture the whole situation in their minds. The teacher should pronounce the new sentences again, so that students know exactly how to say them, and learn them correctly.

Materials: a student desk in the center of the class (the students are usually in a circle), cake, chocolate milk shake, cups, napkins, plates, knife, photocopied menus, tape-recorder, background music...

2. Yesterday

(file 7; p. 74-81) Also combined with simple present: (file 5, pp. 52-57)

Procedures

a. Warmer: Magic and trust for breaking the ice the first day of class.

The class is divided in two groups. The teacher gives each student a slip of paper, which can be either cream or white colored, but both colors must be represented in the classroom. They write something special on them (Important: tell them that whatever they write will be shared at some point). The teacher collects the slips (He/she is not supposed to touch them and lets the students hand them in). After this, the teacher goes up to the front, and asks for 2 volunteers, one representing white and another one standing for cream. The teacher provides each representative with a tube of glitter and a magic wand (same or different color). The teacher tells them that at that point they are welcome to sprinkle as much glitter in the box as they think their class needs for success.

Needless to say, students will be totally surprised, and will ask why. Just be convinced and convincing about it, and say once more that it is for the class' sake, that you cannot say any more, and that they will find out about it later on during the year. The same thing will apply to the usage of the magic wands and the magical touches, which the representatives will need to give to the box. Just then, the teacher gets the box from the students, puts it aside, and continues with the class, as if nothing had happened. (Linked with Follow-up)

b. Controlled Practice.

c. Follow-up: Scavenger Hunt: "Find someone who".

One day, the teacher goes to class with the box used for the warmer. The box is empty. He/she shows it to the class in amazement, and tells them that the slips of paper were gone when he/she went into the staff room. He/she adds that next to the box he/she found a pile of sheets of paper which he/she has brought to the

classroom. He/she shows them, and asks students if they want to have a look. Hopefully, they will be intrigued and accept the proposal. Each of the cream and white-colored sheets starts like this: "Find someone who...". Of course, the students will recognize what they wrote on their first day of class, and will be eager to find out who wrote the rest. They will stand up and ask around.

Materials: 2 magic wands (silver and gold colored), silver and gold glitter, cream slips of paper, white slips of paper, and a transparent box.

3. Directions

Asking for directions (file 7; p. 85)

Procedures

a. Warmer: story-telling

The teacher tells students that her/his car just broke before entering school. Some sentences may be

"I tried to start it again to park it better, but it would not move. It was dead."

"Do you know if there is any metro station nearby?"

"How can I get to a bus stop? Is there any in the area?"

"Can you tell me how to get to...?"

It is very important that the teacher plays his/her role correctly. He/she should sound as if he/she needed help. Well, students will not know much about the English expressions which are used in this situation, but they will probably be familiar with the surroundings. The teacher will provide them with the vocabulary and sentences, as they need it:

"Oh, I understand. You mean: "Turn right. Go on straight..."

The teacher may also ask questions to make sure that she really understands how to get to the place he is supposed to:

"Is there a hospital on that corner?"

"And the station is opposite the park. Isn't it?"

Students take notes while the teacher elicits verbal information. By now students are mentally within the situation. The teacher may proceed with the unit as usual.

b. Controlled Practice

c. Follow-up: After the lesson is finished, the teacher asks students if they would like to do a different but very interesting activity. The teacher may also add that it will take place all over the school. Students should be intrigued by now. Once they accept, the teacher shows them some multi-colored blindfolds. Wow! Yes, they will be blindfolded, and walk around the school building, upstairs and downstairs, in and out of the rooms: the cafeteria, the empty classrooms, the halls, the library, the toilets. There are some norms for the pairwork activity which must clearly pointed out:

1. They cannot hold hands, but must watch over each other all the time.
2. The teacher will be outside as well, leading them with hand motions to give hints (routes) if necessary.

3. When they go into rooms or new areas, the blindfolded will be asked to identify where they are: "Where are we now?"

"Good!"

"Do you think we are in the library?" etc.

4. At a certain point, pairs will switch roles, and the situation will be repeated. The final meeting point is the classroom.

In order to be able to give directions correctly, new expressions will be practiced before starting the activity:

"Go upstairs/downstairs. There are twelve steps. Count them"

"There is a door on the right. Open it, please"

"Keep going straight. Slowly."

Students memorize the new sentences. They may ask for expressions they want to use. The teacher helps them. After this, they have to memorize them all. They start when they feel comfortable and ready to do so.

Once the activity is over, the teacher may ask students how they felt while being blindfolded. A different atmosphere is created through the talk. It goes beyond the learning of English, and helps make the class more open to other things, while contributing to a better class group.

Materials: Colorful blindfolds, tape-recorder, and back-ground music.

4. Fashion

Present simple or continuous? (file 8; p. 92-93)

Buying Clothes (File 9; p. 110)

Procedures:

a. Warmer: Somehow the teacher manages to put a box which contains a beautiful old fashioned paper doll on somebody's desk. No students can see how he/she does it. When the teacher starts the class, he/she notices the toy, and asks the student to show it to the class, while adding other questions:

"Wow! Is that a present? It's beautiful! Can you show it to us?"

Of course, the student will say that it is not his/hers. And the teacher will have to say something like:

"Oh, come on! Show it to us. We'd like to see it"

It is important the teacher chooses the right student for that situation. The student will understand it is important to cooperate and will start looking at the doll. The teacher may begin reviewing questions, and putting the student's imagination into work, while involving the whole class too:

"What's her name?"

"How old is she?"

"Does she have any brothers or sisters?" (...)

"Oh, she is very wealthy". Look at that dress! You could put it on her. Yeah. Why don't you? (...)

"Oh! Now she's wearing a turquoise blue spring dress. It is very long. She is also carrying a small bag, and holding a bouquet of flowers".

The student will keep on dressing the paper doll; and the class and the teacher will try to picture this new class character in the historical time she belongs to, her country of origin, etc.

After this, the teacher proceeds with the unit in the book.

b. Controlled Practice

c. Follow-up: Just upon finishing the lesson, the students are given some homework for next day; they need to meet in small groups, and arrange to bring different kinds of clothes - whatever they want to wear, carry and/or hold, so as to speak-. They are told that the final practice will be a real fashion show. They may bring their own music, if they would like, otherwise the teacher will provide it. Students are given the last 5 minutes of the class to get organized for next day. They are also told that they may bring their cameras.

Next day when their outfits are in class, the teacher explains how they are going to do the show:

. First they need to write down their descriptions:

"And here is ..."

"X is wearing a long dark blue bathrobe"

"He/she is also wearing blue flip flops"

"He/she is holding a pair of goggles in his/her left hand".

"He/she is also carrying a fuchsia sportsbag".

. The teacher will correct the sentences, and have the students repeat them.

. The students will memorize the main structures of the sentences, and the new vocabulary, if any; they may use very short notes if necessary.

. The fashion show procedure is as follows: Per groups the first student parades while the second one describes what he/she is wearing; the second one describes the third one, and so on. The first student will be the one ending the presentation of his/her group. He/she may have to say something like:

"And this is all for the Summer collection. Thank you!"

When they are all ready, the first group goes to the toilet set for this activity. Only chairs are arranged in two groups, leaving a hallway kind of space in between, which will be the stage in the show. The audience must take some notes about the show, as if they were potential customers or professionals in the business. They may take pictures, and certainly clap when they feel like doing so.

Materials: paper doll, microphone, tape-recorder, background music, overhead projector (it may be used as a spotlight on the hallway), cameras, and outfits.

REFERENCES

OXENDEN, C. & SELIGSON, P. (1996) *English File*. Oxford: O.U.P., Teacher's Book, Student's Book, & Workbook)

APAC ELT CONVENTION 1998

SPEECH, WRITING AND THE ENGLISH TEACHER. MINI COURSE

Ronald Carter

By M^a Carmen Gomiz

This year the APAC ELT Conference has taken a step forward: two new nine-hour courses were run in parallel with the ordinary afternoon sessions. One of them was 'Speech, Writing and the English Teacher', by Professor Ronald Carter, from Nottingham University.

As soon as I learnt about the course, I registered for two main reasons: first, I thought it would be much better to concentrate on one topic for several hours as it would obviously be dealt with in more detail than in just a single session. I had often found that a ninety-minute talk—unless it came up to your expectations—left you with a sense of frustration because certain aspects you were genuinely interested in were just hinted at or mentioned briefly. Therefore, the idea of being able to choose one topic and sticking to it sounded both appealing and promising—incidentally, all participants believed that after attending a mini-course in which a topic would be explored in depth we should be granted a certificate, which APAC finally agreed to issue. Secondly, I knew that Professor Carter works with Michael McCarthy, whose talk at one of the previous editions of the APAC Conference I enjoyed tremendously. Their work on discourse analysis is, I believe, very attractive, and I had been looking forward to hearing more on it since.

In the afternoon of the first session, I was surprised to see that hardly any of the collaborators knew about the course or the place where it was to be held; however, it was even more surprising to find that only a few people attended the session. I thought this really awkward, and so did the speaker, judging from the expression on his face. As there were only a small number of us, we all introduced ourselves and told one another about our respective teaching situations. Most of us were teaching either secondary-school or adult learners, and what we expected from the course was that it gave us the opportunity to look at

written and spoken, formal and informal examples of today's English, and at some practical ways of using them. On the first day, after deciding on what we would focus on during the following two sessions, we were exposed to a lot of informal expressions that native speakers use these days and were shown a list of the 'top' one hundred words and phrases used in today's spoken English—'just' being among the most popular ones.

The next sessions were devoted to analysing the use of puns in advertisements, comparing the rhetorical devices in the speeches given by a number of politicians at different times in history, and working with poems, which allowed us to see that it is certainly easy to anticipate the words that are going to be used in a given context if you know which words collocate with the ones you already have. The use of collocations, alongside with register, are two issues that I consider to be of the utmost importance. We teachers need to be aware of, and help our students understand, the ways in which words combine with each other. Likewise, we must try and sharpen our students' awareness of the linguistic choices that can be made depending on whether a formal, semi-formal, or informal register is required. These are neglected areas which, I think, deserve to be ranked more highly on our list of priorities.

In conclusion, despite being an in-service teacher with several years' experience and although much of the information was not new to me, I was quite satisfied to get it first-hand from such an acclaimed linguist as Ronald Carter and to have the opportunity to discuss some of the queries I had always had about usage. All in all, this proved a refreshing and interesting course, which I liked to combine with a selection of shorter sessions in the morning. I hope next year we will be given this option again.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO APAC OF NEWS

Our APAC colleagues need you. Use our bulletin for sharing your thoughts, your experiences, and for letting everybody know about the activities you, your colleagues, or anybody else organize in the area where you live.

All contributions are welcome. They are read and then given a priority order. However, if you want your article, classroom activity, report, letter to the editor, etc to be printed in APAC of NEWS as soon as possible, these instructions can accelerate the process.

If you own a computer or have access to it:

- Send a copy of your contribution on an ordinary 3.5" floppy disk.

PCs. Recommended wordprocessing formats: WordPerfect or ASCII for PC compatibles.

If you are using a different program, like Framework, Word, Microsoft Works, etc, please save the document in standard ASCII format (all modern wordprocessors include this option). Include also the original document indicating which WP program you have used.

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- Send a clearly typed copy.

Reminder: Always use a new ribbon (if we are lucky we will be able to scanner the text and avoid endless typing and correction hours).

Include a photograph of you (size: DNI/passport). This is not a condition, but may help give our bulletin a more personal and human dimension. Let us launch you to fame!

Contributions are accepted in English, Catalan, and Spanish. If you feel inclined to use a different language, please include an abstract (about 20 lines) in one of these languages. Contributions are usually accepted. If for any reasons one were not appropriate for our bulletin, we would communicate it to the author and, if possible, suggest alternatives.

Send your masterpieces, letters to the editor, communications, ideas, or modest suggestions to:

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REVIEWS

EXAM CLASSES

Peter May

Oxford University Press, 1996. 165 pages.

By Joan M^a Díez Clivillé

This is a resourcebook for teachers whose students are preparing for a public examination (e.g. First Certificate, Proficiency or TOEFL). It caters for all levels of ability and includes a great number of tasks on grammar and the four skills.

English has become a lingua franca in our world (just take a look at the Internet!) and there are many institutions worldwide taking advantage—and making money—from the fact that millions of people everywhere who are doing their best (aren't they?) to master Shakespeare's tongue need official recognition for academic or professional reasons.

Exam Classes can be used to supplement both standard coursebooks and skills books and will make your lessons motivating and varied. The activities included are arranged into six chapters. The first one, 'Strategies', focuses on learners and aims to raise their awareness of exam questions and materials, to foster their independence, and to help them tackle with exam papers. It provides them with confidence-building techniques that will improve their language performance both in ordinary classroom and examination contexts. The other chapters look at parts of exams or examination papers.

Whatever you think of official exams, the book provides you with a handful of easy-to-use ideas (all with accompanying teaching notes) meant to improve your students' language skills. *Exam Classes* is a handy little book that will prove useful if you are looking for 'something interesting' to do.

TEACHING ENGLISH IN SPAIN

Jenny Johnson

Printed by Tj International: Combined Book Services. 406 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1XR, England. Tel (44)01732 357755
Fax (44)01732 770219

By Neus Figueras

This book is a sort of travel guide that can become a very helpful tool for those who want to teach English in Spain. It is divided into three parts: finding work in Spain, living in Spain and teaching the Spanish. Parts 1 and 2 contain those tips that make living abroad less difficult and part 3 is a very good digest of down-to-earth methodological principles that are so useful for any novice teacher of English.

The author, Jenny Johnson, has been teaching and living in Spain for almost 20 years and her experience shows in the book. She knows where to go, what to do and how to do it, and has been generous enough to write it so that others can benefit from her experience.

Reading the book is a pleasure; like good travel guides, it is entertaining and easy to read, though it shares the qualities and limitations of that type of publication: it is accurate on facts but rather subjective on attitudes. Those visiting Spain after reading the book will no doubt have to complement and contrast what the author says with their own views and opinions.

If you want to contribute to this section, APAC of News gives you two options:

a- You can review one of the titles available in our office, which you can borrow during our regular office hours. (Monday to Friday 16.00 to 20.00)

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CONCURS APAC

APAC CONVOCA EL 10^È CONCURS PER A PROFESSORS I ALUMNES DE LLENGUA ANGLESA DE TOTS ELS NIVELLS EDUCATIUS (PRIMÀRIA, SECUNDÀRIA, ESCOLES D'IDIOMES I ALUMNES DEL CICLE SUPERIOR D'UNIVERSITAT).

PODEN OPTAR A PREMI

- A Treballs presentats pels alumnes (video, revista, projecte, còmic, etc.)
Tres premis
Dos accèssits
- B Exposicions d'experiències pràctiques d'ensenyament de llengua anglesa
Un premi
Un accèssit
- C Treballs o projectes de recerca
Un premi
Un accèssit

BASES GENERALS

1. Tots els treballs presentats hauran d'ésser en anglès. En el cas de la modalitat B, el treballs, a més de presentar-se impresos, hauran d'incloure: a) una còpia en suport informàtic, b) 2-3 pàgines de material fotocopiabile per al seu ús directe a classe; c) un límit de 8 fulls mida DIN-A4 mecanografiats a un màxim de doble espai amb la corresponent descripció teòrica.
2. Tots els treballs s'enviaran per correu ordinari a:
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3. Tots els treballs es presentaran en sobre o paquet tancat. Dins es farà constar:
 - . Nom, adreça, telèfon i nivell educatiu del concursant.
 - . Curs (en el cas d'alumnes), escola i nom del professor/a.
 - . Modalitat en la que es participa.
4. El termini de presentació finalitza el dia 30 de desembre de 1998.
5. Els premis es lliuraran en el marc de l'APAC-ELT Convention 1999.
6. El jurat estarà format per cinc socis d'APAC.
7. APAC es reserva el dret de publicar totalment o parcialment els treballs presentats en el butlletí de l'associació APAC of NEWS.
8. Els premis i accèssits de les modalitats A i C i l'accèssit de la modalitat B consistiran en lots de material didàctic. El premi de la modalitat B consistirà en un curs d'anglès per a professors a la Gran Bretanya de 2 setmanes (70 hores) de durada. El viatge d'anada i tornada a la Gran Bretanya serà a càrrec del professor premiat.
9. La participació en aquest concurs implica l'acceptació d'aquestes bases. La decisió del jurat és inapel·lable.

APAC ELT CONVENTION 1999

OUR WAY OR THEIR WAY?

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