



INTERVIEWS

Ana Aguilar interviews Joana Sancho.

CONTRIBUTIONS

What is learner autonomy? How can it be fostered?
by Dimitrios Thanasoulas.

ELT 2003

EFL in the XXI century: an
intercultural approach.
by Margarita Ravera.

Translation in the Classroom. Why not?
by Belén Satorres and Annabel Closa.

Poetry is fantastic. Have a go!
by Cecília Reñé.

BOOK REVIEWS

Mentor Course. A book for
trainer-trainers.

Macmillan English Dictionary
for Advanced Learners.



This is the 49th issue of APAC and there are articles which combine theory, practice and debate. A good recipe to start the new academic year.

To start with Dimitrios Thanasoulas explores how we can foster learner autonomy in an active way, making decisions, adapting materials, resources and methods to the learners' needs.

From the contributions to our APAC-ELT Convention 2003, we have some interesting articles and an interview.

Margarita Ravera deals with intercultural communication in a systematic way. She shows us some practical activities using Internet with different students levels.

Ana Aguilar interviews Joana Sancho, a well-known university professor and researcher, who explains her viewpoint of using computers effectively through projects in the classroom.

Belén Satorres and Annabel Closa demonstrate that translation strategies may be useful and motivating if they are linked to the four skills.

Cecília Reñé talks about possible ways of working creatively with poems in the primary school.

Elisenda Masgrau and Xavier Ponce employ ads to appeal to people with different interests and to make our lessons more creative, relevant and fun.

This year's roundtable is also summarised. It was called *Quality, professionalism and ethics in language providers* and debated these important points. The roundtable was attended by 100 people on Saturday morning, which was a clear example of professionalism and dedication. It is worth reading our summary if you could not come.

Our Pick from the web, a section coordinated by Anna Yagüe, presents a website with resources for teachers with examples of humorous materials which –among many other things– can be found on a great page by Carla Beard.

Finally there are two book reviews: Ana Aguilar reviews *Mentor Courses*, a useful reference book for inspectors, advisors and those involved in teacher development and Josep Sala reviews *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, a fresh approach to describing the meaning of complex words with the basic vocabulary of English.

S	Editorial	1
---	-----------	---

	A letter from the president	2
--	-----------------------------	---

T	Contributions to APAC	3
---	-----------------------	---

	What is Learner Autonomy and how can it be fostered? <i>by Dimitrios Thanasoulas</i>	
--	--	--

	ELT Convention	16
--	----------------	----

Z	EFL in the XXI century: an Intercultural Communication Approach. <i>by Margarita Ravera</i>	
---	---	--

	Translation in the Classroom. Why not? <i>by Belén Satorres i Annabel Closa</i>	
--	---	--

W	Poetry is fantastic. Have a Go! <i>by Cecília Reñé i Reñé</i>	
---	---	--

	The Land of Dreams: Using Advertisements in the EFL Classroom. <i>by Elisenda Masgrau</i>	
--	---	--

T	APAC's Round Table	42
---	--------------------	----

	Interviews	50
--	------------	----

	Ana Aguilar interviews Joana Sancho	
--	-------------------------------------	--

Z	Our pick from the web	57
---	-----------------------	----

	Web English Teacher	
--	---------------------	--

	Our web	63
--	---------	----

O	Teacher's Useful Links	
---	------------------------	--

	Book Review	65
--	-------------	----

	Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners. <i>Reviewed by Josep Sala</i>	
--	---	--

	Mentor Courses. A Resource Book for Trainer-Trainers. <i>Reviewed by Ana Aguilar</i>	
--	--	--

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Friends,

Efforts have been devoted in the past couple of years in keeping APAC's spirit and its main signs of identity while giving new vigour to our potentialities. The setting up of a website was our first challenge and it has proved a most efficient tool in the workings of our organization in many directions. Our endemically weak administrative support is now more solid thanks to the devoted and professional care of our new secretary, Paqui Lorite, in the office. The publication of our quaterly magazine has also improved in various ways and we have managed to engross our Monograph series with sound academic research from colleagues. And our 2004 APAC-ELT Convention will be perceived, we hope, as a new sign of renewal and growth. For one thing, after so many years using the Universitat de Barcelona as our venue, we are moving to the new buildings of Universitat Pompeu Fabra at their Ciutadella campus, just beside the Villa Olímpica. Adapting the conference to the new site will have some important consequences for the Convention proceedings with Thursday afternoon and Friday wholly devoted to plenary sessions, while workshops will take place on Saturday. We expect you'll enjoy new facilities, like a couple of self-service restaurants which are allocated in the building and a very spacious area devoted to publishers for the display of their latest materials. The conference motto is "English in the Forum", a reminder, among other things, of Barcelona's big event in 2004 which has its main sites close to our new venue. This year's convention will be honoured with an opening lecture by one of the most distinguished linguist of all times, professor David Crystal, whose vast work in the field is, no doubt, familiar to you all.

Do I sound candidly optimistic? Am I under the effects of WTS (wishful thinking syndrome)? Probably so. But, then, APAC being what it is -a voluntary organization whose only raison d'être is the militant support of its members- can only survive with great doses of "optimism of the will". So, take some and join us in our new ventures.

One last reminder: now that the two public theatres in Barcelona (Teatre Nacional and Teatre Lliure) are about to open their season don't forget that as APAC members you are entitled to interesting discounts with both of them.

With best wishes,

Miquel Berga

President

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Revista Núm 49 - Setembre 2003

D.L. B-41180-1988
ISSN 1137-1528

What is Learner Autonomy and how can it be fostered?

AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE HAVE BECOME IMPORTANT WORDS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF LANGUAGE LEARNING. THERE ARE DEGREES OF AUTONOMY AND IT IS NOT AN ABSOLUTE CONCEPT. LEARNERS COME INTO THE LEARNING SITUATION WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO PLAN, MONITOR AND EVALUATE THEIR LEARNING, OR TO MAKE DECISIONS ON CONTENT OR OBJECTIVES. NEVERTHELESS, LEARNER AUTONOMY IS AN IDEAL THAT CAN BE REALISED. IF WE WANT TO ATTAIN THIS IDEAL, THE TEACHER WILL HAVE TO ADAPT RESOURCES, MATERIALS, AND METHODS TO THE LEARNERS' NEEDS AND EVEN ABANDON ALL THIS IF IT NEED BE. AND THEY WILL HAVE TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT OTHER FACTORS. ALL THIS TAKES A LONG TIME TO DEVELOP.

by **Dimitrios Thanasoulas**

Over the last two decades, the concepts of learner autonomy and independence have gained momentum, the former becoming a 'buzz-word' within the context of language learning (Little, 1991: 2). It is a truism that one of the most important spin-offs of more communicatively-oriented language learning and teaching has been the premium placed on the role of the learner in the language learning process (see Wenden, 1998: xi). It goes without saying, of course, that this shift of locus of responsibility from teachers to learners does not exist in a vacuum, but is the result of a concatenation of changes to the curriculum itself towards a more learner-centred kind of learning. What is more, this reshaping, so to speak, of teacher and learner roles has been conducive to a radical change in the age-old distribution of power and authority that used to plague the traditional classroom.

Cast in a new perspective and regarded as having the 'capacity for detachment, critical

reflection, decision-making, and independent action' (Little, 1991: 4), learners, autonomous learners, that is, are expected to assume greater responsibility for, and take charge of, their own learning. However, learner autonomy does not mean that the teacher becomes redundant, abdicating his / her control over what is transpiring in the language learning process. In the present study, it will be shown that learner autonomy is a perennial dynamic process amenable to 'educational interventions' (Candy, 1991), rather than a static product, a state,

Autonomous learners, are expected to assume greater responsibility for, and take charge of, their own learning.

which is reached once and for all. Besides, what permeates this study is the belief that 'in order to help learners to assume greater control over their own learning it is important to help them to become aware of

and identify the strategies that they already use or could potentially use' (Holmes & Ramos, 1991, cited in James & Garrett, 1991: 198). At any rate, individual learners differ in their learning habits, interests, needs, and motivation, and develop varying degrees of independence throughout their lives (Tumposky, 1982).

DIMITRIOS THANASOULAS STUDIED ENGLISH LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS AT ATHENS UNIVERSITY AND THEN DID AN MA IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS AT SUSSEX UNIVERSITY. AFTER THAT, HE EARNED AN MBA FROM MOORELAND UNIVERSITY AND IS CURRENTLY FINISHING THE SECOND YEAR OF HIS PHD STUDIES IN EDUCATION AT NOTTINGHAM UNIVERSITY. HIS ACADEMIC INTERESTS INCLUDE FOSTERING CULTURAL AWARENESS AND LEARNER AUTONOMY, AS WELL AS SUCH ISSUES AS LANGUAGE AND IDEOLOGY, CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, PRAGMATICS, SOCIOLINGUISTICS, AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION. HE HAS WRITTEN NUMEROUS ARTICLES ABOUT SEVERAL TEACHING ISSUES ON THE WEB.

1. WHAT IS AUTONOMY?

For a definition of autonomy, we might quote Holec (1981: 3, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 1) who describes it as 'the ability to take charge of one's learning'. On a general note, the term autonomy has come to be used in at least five ways (see Benson & Voller, 1997: 2):

- a) for situations in which learners study entirely on their own;
- b) for a set of skills which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- c) for an inborn capacity which is suppressed by institutional education;
- d) for the exercise of learners' responsibility for their own learning;
- e) for the right of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

It is noteworthy that autonomy can be thought of in terms of a departure from education as a social process, as well as in terms of redistribution of power attending the construction of knowledge and the roles of the participants in the learning process. The relevant literature is riddled with innumerable definitions of autonomy and other synonyms for it, such as 'independence' (Sheerin, 1991), 'language awareness' (Lier, 1996; James & Garrett, 1991), 'self-direction' (Candy, 1991), 'andragogy' (Knowles, 1980; 1983a) etc., which testifies to the importance attached to it by scholars. Let us review some of these definitions and try to gain insights into what learner autonomy means and consists of.

As has been intimated so far, the term autonomy has sparked considerable controversy, inasmuch as linguists and educationalists have failed to reach a consensus as to what autonomy really is. For example, in David Little's terms, learner autonomy is 'essentially a matter of the learner's

psychological relation to the process and content of learning...a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action' (Little, 1991: 4). It is not something done to learners; therefore, it is far from being another teaching method (ibid.). In the same vein, Leni Dam (1990, cited in Gathercole, 1990: 16), drawing upon Holec (1983), defines autonomy in terms of the learner's willingness and capacity to control or oversee her own learning. More specifically, she, like Holec, holds that someone qualifies as an autonomous learner when he independently chooses aims and purposes and sets goals; chooses materials, methods and tasks; exercises choice and purpose in organising and carrying out the chosen tasks; and chooses criteria for evaluation.

To all intents and purposes, the autonomous learner takes a (pro-) active role in the learning process, generating ideas and availing himself of learning opportunities, rather than simply reacting

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to various stimuli of the teacher (Boud, 1988; Kohonen, 1992; Knowles, 1975). As we shall see, this line of reasoning operates within, and is congruent with, the theory of constructivism. For Rathbone (1971: 100, 104, cited in Candy, 1991: 271), the autonomous learner is

a self-activated maker of meaning, an active agent in his own learning process. He is not one to whom things merely happen; he is the one who, by his own volition, causes things to happen. Learning is seen as the result of his own self-initiated interaction with the world.

Within such a conception, learning is not simply a matter of rote memorisation; 'it is a constructive process that involves actively seeking meaning from (or even imposing meaning on) events' (Candy, 1991: 271).

Such "inventories" of characteristics evinced by the putative autonomous learner abound, and some would say that they amount to nothing more than a romantic ideal which does not square with reality. This stands to reason, for most of the characteristics imputed to the "autonomous learner" encapsulate a wide range of attributes not commonly associated with learners. For instance, Benn (1976, cited in Candy, 1991: 102) likens the autonomous learner to one '[w]hose life has a consistency that derives from a coherent set of beliefs, values, and principles...[and who engages in a] still-continuing process of criticism and re-evaluation', while Rousseau ([1762] 1911, cited in Candy, 1991: 102) regards the autonomous learner as someone who 'is obedient to a law that he prescribes to himself'. Within the context of education, though, there seem to be seven main attributes characterising autonomous learners (see Omaggio, 1978, cited in Wenden, 1998: 41-42):

- 1) Autonomous learners have insights into their learning styles and strategies;
- 2) take an active approach to the learning task at hand;
- 3) are willing to take risks, i.e., to communicate in the target language at all costs;
- 4) are good guessers;
- 5) attend to form as well as to content, that is, place importance on accuracy as well as appropriacy;
- 6) develop the target language into a separate reference system and are willing to revise and reject hypotheses and rules that do not apply; and
- 7) have a tolerant and outgoing approach to the target language.

Here, some comments with respect to the preceding list are called for. The points briefly touched upon above are necessary but not sufficient conditions for the development of learner autonomy, and many more factors such as learner needs, motivation, learning strategies, and language awareness have to be taken into consideration. For example, the first point hinges upon a metalanguage that learners have to

master in order to be regarded as autonomous, while points 4) and 7) pertain to learner motivation. In view of this, an attempt will be made, in subsequent sections, to shed some light on some of the parameters affecting, and interfering with, learners' self-image as well as their capacity and will to learn. It is of consequence to note that autonomy is a process, not a product. One does not become autonomous; one only works towards autonomy. One corollary of viewing autonomy in this way is the belief that there are some things to be achieved by the learner, as well as some ways of achieving these things, and that autonomy 'is learned at least partly through educational experiences [and interventions]' (Candy, 1991: 115). But prior to sifting through the literature and discussing learning strategies, motivation, and attitudes entertained by learners, it would be pertinent to cast learner autonomy in relation to dominant philosophical approaches to learning. The assumption is that what is dubbed as learner autonomy and the extent to which it is a permissible and viable educational goal are all too often 'based on [and thus constrained by] particular conceptions of the constitution of knowledge itself' (Benson, 1997, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 20).

Note that autonomy is a process, not a product.

2. LEARNER AUTONOMY AND DOMINANT PHILOSOPHIES OF LEARNING

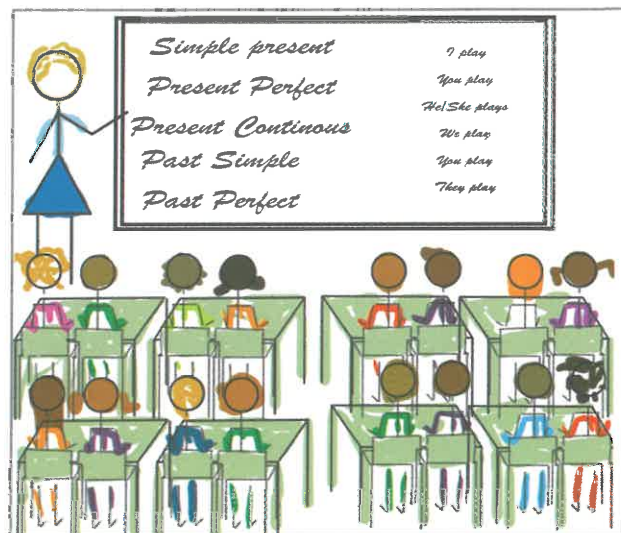
In this section, three dominant approaches to knowledge and learning will be briefly discussed, with a view to examining how each of them connects up with learner autonomy. Positivism, which reigned supreme in the twentieth century, is premised upon the assumption that knowledge reflects objective reality. Therefore, if teachers can be said to hold this "objective reality," learning can only 'consist...in the transmission of knowledge from one individual to another' (Benson & Voller, 1997: 20). Congruent with this view, of course, is the maintenance and enhancement of the "traditional classroom," where teachers are the purveyors of knowledge and wielders of power, and learners are seen as 'container[s] to be filled with the knowledge held by teachers' (ibid.). On the other hand, positivism

also lends support to the widespread notion that knowledge is attained by dint of the 'hypothesis-testing' model, and that it is more effectively acquired when 'it is discovered rather than taught' (ibid.) (my italics). It takes little perspicacity to realise that positivism is incongruent with, and even runs counter to, the development of learner autonomy, as the latter refers to a gradual but radical divorce from conventions and restrictions and is inextricably related to self-direction and self-evaluation.

Constructivism is an elusive concept and, within applied linguistics, is strongly associated with Halliday (1979, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 21). As Candy (1991: 254) observes, '[o]ne of the central tenets of constructivism is that individuals try to give meaning to, or construe, the perplexing maelstrom of events and ideas in which they find themselves caught up'. In contrast to positivism, constructivism posits the view that, rather than internalising or discovering objective knowledge (whatever that might mean), individuals reorganise and restructure their experience. In Candy's terms (Candy, 1991: 270), constructivism 'leads directly to the proposition that knowledge cannot be taught but only learned (that is, constructed)', because knowledge is something 'built up by the learner' (von Glasersfeld & Smock, 1974: xvi, cited in Candy, 1991: 270). By the same token, language learning does not involve internalising sets of rules, structures and forms; each learner brings her own experience and world knowledge to bear on the target language or task at hand. Apparently, constructivism supports, and extends to cover, psychological versions of autonomy that appertain to learners' behaviour, attitudes, motivation, and self-concept (see Benson & Voller, 1997: 23). As a result, constructivist approaches encourage and promote self-directed learning as a necessary condition for learner autonomy.

Finally, critical theory, an approach within the humanities and language studies, shares with constructivism the view that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered or learned.

Moreover, it argues that knowledge does not reflect reality, but rather comprises 'competing ideological versions of that reality expressing the interests of different social groups' (Benson & Voller, 1997: 22). Within this approach, learning concerns issues of power



and ideology and is seen as a process of interaction with social context, which can bring about social change. What is more, linguistic forms are bound up with the social meanings they convey, in so far as language is power, and vice versa. Certainly, learner autonomy assumes a more social and political character within critical theory. As learners become aware of the social context in which their learning is embedded and the constraints the latter implies, they gradually become independent, dispel myths, disabuse themselves of preconceived ideas, and can be thought of as 'authors of their own worlds' (ibid.: 53).

3. CONDITIONS FOR LEARNER AUTONOMY

The concern of the present study has so far been with outlining the general characteristics of autonomy. At this juncture, it should be reiterated that autonomy is not an article of faith, a product ready made for use or merely a personal quality or trait. Rather, it should be clarified that autonomous learning is achieved when certain conditions obtain: cognitive and metacognitive strategies on the part of the learner, motivation, attitudes, and knowledge

about language learning, i.e., a kind of meta-language. To acknowledge, however, that learners have to follow certain paths to attain autonomy is tantamount to asserting that there has to be a teacher on whom it will be incumbent to show the way. In other words, autonomous learning is by no means "teacherless learning." As Sheerin (1997, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 63) succinctly puts it, '[t]eachers...have a crucial role to play in launching learners into self-access and in lending them a regular helping hand to *stay afloat*' (my italics).

Probably, giving students a "helping hand" may put paid to learner autonomy, and this is mainly because teachers are ill-prepared or reluctant to 'wean [students]...away from teacher dependence' (Sheerin, 1997, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 63). After all, 'it is not easy for teachers to change their role from purveyor of information to counsellor and manager of learning resources...And it is not easy for teachers to let learners solve problems for themselves' (Little, 1990, cited in Gathercole, 1990: 11). Such a transition from teacher-control to learner-control is fraught with difficulties but it is mainly in relation to the former (no matter how unpalatable this may sound) that the latter finds its expression. At any rate, learner-control—which is ancillary to autonomy—is not a single, unitary concept, but rather a continuum along which various instructional situations may be placed' (Candy, 1991: 205). It is to these 'instructional situations' that we will turn in the next section. In this section, it is of utmost importance to gain insights into the strategies learners use in grappling with the object of enquiry, i.e., the target language, as well as their motivation and attitude towards language learning in general. A question germane to the discussion is, what does it mean to be an autonomous-learner in a language learning environment?

3.1- Learning strategies

A central research project on learning strategies is the one surveyed in O'Malley and

Chamot (1990). According to them, learning strategies are 'the special thoughts or behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information' (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990: 1, cited in Cook, 1993: 113)—a definition in keeping with the one provided in Wenden (1998: 18): 'Learning strategies are mental steps or operations that learners use to learn a new language and to regulate their efforts to do so'. To a greater or lesser degree, the strategies and learning styles that someone adopts 'may partly reflect personal preference rather than innate endowment' (Skehan, 1998: 237). We will only briefly discuss some of the main learning strategies, refraining from mentioning communication or compensatory strategies (see Cook, 1993 for more details).

3.1.1- Cognitive strategies

According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990: 44), cognitive strategies 'operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning'. Learners may use any or all of the following cognitive strategies (see Cook, 1993: 114-115):

- a) *repetition*, when imitating others' speech;
- b) *resourcing*, i.e., having recourse to dictionaries and other materials;
- c) *translation*, that is, using their mother tongue as a basis for understanding and / or producing the target language;
- d) *note-taking*;
- e) *deduction*, i.e., conscious application of L2 rules;
- f) *contextualisation*, when embedding a word or phrase in a meaningful sequence;
- g) *transfer*, that is, using knowledge acquired in the L1 to remember and understand facts and sequences in the L2;
- h) *inferencing*, when matching an unfamiliar word against available information (a new word etc);

**A transition from
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i) *question for clarification*, when asking the teacher to explain, etc.

There are many more cognitive strategies in the relevant literature. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) recognise 16.

3.1.2- Metacognitive strategies

According to Wenden (1998: 34), 'metacognitive knowledge includes all facts learners acquire about their own cognitive processes as they are applied and used to gain knowledge and acquire skills in varied situations'. In a sense, metacognitive strategies are skills used for planning, monitoring, and evaluating the learning activity; 'they are strategies about learning rather than learning strategies themselves' (Cook, 1993: 114). Let us see some of these strategies:

- a) directed attention, when deciding in advance to concentrate on general aspects of a task;
- b) selective attention, paying attention to specific aspects of a task;
- c) self-monitoring, i.e., checking one's performance as one speaks;
- d) self-evaluation, i.e., appraising one's performance in relation to one's own standards;
- e) self-reinforcement, rewarding oneself for success.

At the *planning* stage, also known as *pre-planning* (see Wenden, 1998: 27), learners identify their objectives and determine how they will achieve them. Planning, however, may also go on while a task is being performed. This is called *planning-in-action*. Here, learners may change their objectives and reconsider the ways in which they will go about achieving them. At the monitoring stage, language learners act as 'participant observers or overseers of their language learning' (ibid.), asking themselves, "How am I doing? Am I having difficulties with this task?",

Self-esteem and desire to learn are deemed to be the most crucial factors in the learner's ability to overcome occasional setbacks.

and so on. Finally, when learners *evaluate*, they do so in terms of the *outcome* of their attempt to use a certain strategy. According to Wenden (1998: 28), evaluating involves three steps: 1) learners examine the outcome of their attempts to learn; 2) they access the criteria they will use to judge it; and 3) they apply it.

3.2- Learner attitudes and motivation

Language learning is not merely a cognitive task. Learners do not only reflect on their learning in terms of the language input to which they are exposed, or the optimal strategies they need in order to achieve the goals they set. Rather, the success of a learning activity is, to some extent, contingent upon learners' stance towards the world and the learning activity in particular, their sense of self, and their desire to learn (see Benson & Voller, 1997: 134-136). As Candy (1991: 295-296) says, 'the *how* and the *what* of learning are intimately interwoven... The overall approach a learner adopts will significantly influence the shape of his or her learning outcomes' (my italics). In other words, language learning—as well as learning, in general—has also an *affective* component. 'Meeting and interiorising the grammar of a foreign language is not simply an intelligent, cognitive act. It is a highly affective one too...' (Rinvolucri,

1984: 5, cited in James & Garrett, 1991: 13). Gardner and MacIntyre (1993: 1, cited in Graham, 1997: 92) define 'affective variables' as the 'emotionally relevant characteristics of the individual that influence how she / he will respond to any situa-

tion'. Other scholars, such as Shumann (1978) and Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) attach less importance to learners' emotions, claiming that 'social and psychological factors' give a more suitable description for students' reactions to the learning process. Amongst the social and affective variables at work, self-esteem and desire to learn are deemed to be the

most crucial factors 'in the learner's ability to overcome occasional setbacks or minor mistakes in the process of learning a second [or foreign] language' (Tarone & Yule, 1989: 139). In this light, it is necessary to shed some light on learner attitudes and motivation.

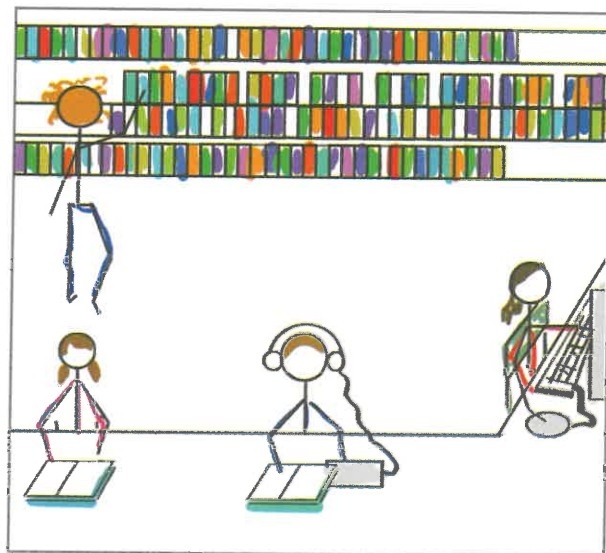
Wenden (1998: 52) defines attitudes as 'learned motivations, valued beliefs, evaluations, what one believes is acceptable, or responses oriented towards approaching or avoiding'. For her, two kinds of attitudes are crucial: attitudes learners hold about their *role* in the learning process, and their *capability* as learners (ibid.: 53). In a sense, attitudes are a form of metacognitive knowledge. At any rate, 'learner beliefs about their role and capability as learners will be shaped and maintained...by other beliefs they hold about themselves as learners' (ibid.: 54). For example, if learners believe that certain personality types cannot learn a foreign language and they believe that they are that type of person, then they will think that they are fighting a "losing battle," as far as learning the foreign language is concerned. Furthermore, if learners labour under the misconception that learning is successful only within the context of the "traditional classroom," where the teacher directs, instructs, and manages the learning activity, and students must follow in the teacher's footsteps, they are likely to be impervious or resistant to learner-centred strategies aiming at autonomy, and success is likely to be undermined.

In a way, attitudes are 'part of one's perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living [or the culture of the target language]' (Brown, 1987: 126), and it seems clear that positive attitudes are conducive to increased motivation, while negative attitudes have the opposite effect. But let us examine the role of motivation.

Although the term 'motivation' is frequently used in educational contexts, there is little agreement among experts as to its exact meaning. What most scholars seem to agree on, though, is that

motivation is 'one of the key factors that influence the rate and success of second / foreign language (L2) learning. Motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process' (Dornyei, 1998: 117). According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993: 3), motivation is comprised of three components: 'desire to achieve a goal, effort extended in this direction, and satisfaction with the task'.

It is manifest that in language learning, people are motivated in different ways and to different degrees. Some learners like doing grammar and memorising; others want to speak and role-play; others prefer reading and writing, while avoiding speaking. Furthermore, since '[the learning of a foreign language] involves an alteration in self-image, the adoption of new social and cultural behaviours and ways of being, and therefore has



a significant impact on the social nature of the learner' (Williams, 1994: 77, cited in Dornyei, 1998: 122), an important distinction should be made between *instrumental* and *integrative* motivation. Learners with an instrumental orientation view the foreign language as a means of finding a good job or pursuing a lucrative career; in other words, the target language acts as a 'monetary incentive' (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993: 3). On the other hand, learners with an integrative orientation are interested in the culture of the target language; they want to acquaint themself

ves with the target community and become integral parts of it. Of course, this approach to motivation has certain limitations (see Cookes and Schmidt, 1991, cited in Lier, 1996: 104-105), but an in-depth analysis is not within the purview of this study. The bottom line is that motivation is 'a central mediator in the prediction of language achievement' (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993: 3), as various studies have shown (see Kraemer, 1990; Machnick and Wolfe, 1982; et al.).

3.3- Self-esteem

Closely related to attitudes and motivation is the concept of self-esteem, that is, the evaluation the learner makes of herself with regard to the target language or learning in general. '[S]elf-esteem is a personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds towards himself' (Coopersmith, 1967: 4-5, cited in Brown, 1987: 101-102). If the learner has a 'robust sense of self', to quote Breen and Mann (1997, cited in Benson & Voller, 1997: 134), his relationship to himself as a learner is unlikely to be marred by any negative assessments by the teacher. Conversely, a lack of self-esteem is likely to lead to negative attitudes towards his capability as a learner, and to 'a deterioration in cognitive performance', thus confirming his view of himself as incapable of learning (Diener and Dweck, 1978, 1980, cited in Wenden, 1998: 57).

Now that we have examined some of the factors that may enhance, or even militate against, the learner's willingness to take charge of her own learning and her confidence in her ability as a learner, it is of consequence to consider possible ways of promoting learner autonomy. To say, though, that learner autonomy can be fostered is not to reduce it to a set of skills that need to be acquired. Rather, it is taken to mean that the teacher and the learner can work towards autonomy by creating a friendly atmosphere characterised by 'low threat, unconditional positive regard, honest and open feedback, respect for the

ideas and opinions of others, approval of self-improvement as a goal, collaboration rather than competition' (Candy, 1991: 337). In the next section, some general guidelines for promoting learner autonomy will be given, on the assumption that the latter does not mean leaving learners to their own devices or learning in isolation.

4. HOW CAN LEARNER AUTONOMY BE PROMOTED?

To posit ways of fostering learner autonomy is certainly to posit ways of fostering *teacher* autonomy, as '[t]eachers' autonomy permeates into [learners'] autonomy' (Johnson, Pardesi and Paine, 1990, cited in Gathercole, 1990: 51). Nevertheless, our main focus will be on what the learner can do in order to attain a considerable degree of autonomy, even though the success of the learner is, to a great extent, determined—alas! vitiated—by the educational system and the requisite role of the teacher.

4.1- Self-reports

According to Wenden (1998: 79-95), a good way of collecting information on how students go about a learning task and helping them become aware of their own strategies is to assign a task and have them report what they are thinking *while* they are performing it. This self-report is called *introspective*, as learners are asked to introspect on their learning. In this case, 'the [introspective] self-report is a verbalization of one's stream of consciousness' (Wenden, 1998: 81). Introspective reports are assumed to provide information on the strategies learners are using at the time of the report. However, this method suffers from one limitation: '[t]he concentration put on thinking aloud might detract from [learners'] ability to do the task efficiently' (ibid.: 83), thus rendering the outcome of the report spurious and tentative.

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Another type of self-report is what has been dubbed as *retrospective* self-report, since learners are asked to think back or retrospect on their learning. Retrospective self-reports are quite open ended, in that there is no limit put on what students say in response to a question or statement that points to a topic in a general way. There are two kinds of retrospective self-reports: *semi-structured interviews* and *structured questionnaires*. A semi-structured interview may focus on a specific skill with a view to extracting information about learners' feelings towards particular skills (reading, listening, etc.), problems encountered, techniques resorted to in order to tackle these problems, and learners' views on optimal strategies or ways of acquiring specific skills or dealing with learning tasks. A structured questionnaire seeks the same information but in a different way: by dint of explicit questions and statements, and then asking learners to *agree* or *disagree*, write *true* or *false*, and so forth.

It could be argued that self-reports can be a means of raising awareness of learners' strategies and the need for constant evaluation of techniques, goals, and outcomes. As Wenden (1998: 90) observes, 'without awareness [learners] will remain trapped in their old patterns of beliefs and behaviors and never be fully autonomous'.

2- Diaries and evaluation sheets

Perhaps one of the principal goals of education is to alter learners' beliefs about themselves by showing them that their putative failures or shortcomings can be ascribed to a lack of effective strategies rather than to a lack of potential. After all, according to Vygotsky (1978), learning is an internalised form of a formerly social activity, and 'a learner can realise [his] potential interactively—through the guidance of supportive other persons such as parents, teachers, and peers' (Wenden, 1998: 17). Herein lies the role of diaries and evaluation sheets, which offer students the possibility to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning, identifying any problems they run into and suggesting solutions. Let us have a look at the following diaries based on authentic student accounts of their language learning:

A.

Dear Diary,

These first few days have been terrible. I studied English for eight years...just think, eight years, but I only learned a lot of grammar. I can't speak a word. I don't dare. I can't express myself in the right way, so I am afraid to speak.

The other day I started watching TV, so I could get accustomed to the sound. I don't understand TV news very well...only a few words. I can't get the main point. In school it's easy to understand, but I can't understand the people in the stores.

What can I do?

Yours Truly,

Impatient

(from Wenden, 1998: 102)

B.

Dear Diary,

I read the New York Times every day. Every day I learn many new expressions—a lot of vocabulary. But I can't use this vocabulary in conversation. The same thing happens with what I learn at school. I can't use it when I want to talk to Americans or even with my own Spanish friends.

I need some help.

Yours Truly,

Confused

(from Wenden, 1998: 102)

Alongside diaries, students can also benefit from putting pen to paper and writing on their expectations of a course at the beginning of term, and then filling in evaluation sheets, or reporting on the outcomes of a course, at the end of term. These activities are bound to help learners put things into perspective and manage their learning more effectively. Let us consider two such reports:

1.

What do I want to do this year?

"I want to speak more English and I'd like to spell better than I do now. I would like to work with another boy or girl who is willing to speak English with me and

make some activities in English. Materials: Challenge to think and cross-words.

I would like to get a more varied language and I would like to be better at spelling, especially the words used in everyday situations. How: I will prepare 'two minutes' talk' for every lesson, I will write down new words five times and practise pronouncing them. I will get someone or myself to correct it. I will read at least two books—difficult ones—and make book-reviews."

(Beginning of term—4th year of English
[from Dam, 1990, cited in Gathercole, 1990: 30])

2.

What do you feel you know now that you didn't know before?

"I think that we have grown better at planning our own time. We know more about what we need to do and how to go about it. We try all the time to extend our vocabulary and to get an active language. Evaluation also helped us. It is like going through things again."

(End of term—4th year of English
[from Dam, 1990, cited in Gathercole, 1990: 32])

So far, one of the assumptions underlying this discussion on learner autonomy has been that the teacher has not relinquished his "authority"; rather, that he has committed himself to providing the learners with the opportunity to experiment, make hypotheses, and improvise, in their attempt to master the target language and, along with it, to learn how to learn in their own, individual, *holistic* way (see Papaconstantinou, 1997). It may be the case that learner autonomy is best achieved when, among other things, the teacher acts as a *facilitator* of learning, a *counsellor*, and as a *resource* (see Voller, 1997, cited in Benson and Voller, 1997: 99-106). In other words, when she lies somewhere along a continuum between what Barnes (1976, cited in Benson

and Voller, 1997: 99) calls *transmission* and *interpretation* teachers. As Wright (1987: 62, cited in Benson and Voller, 1997: 100) notes,

Learner autonomy is best achieved when, among other things, the teacher acts as a facilitator of learning, a counsellor, and as a resource.

Transmission teachers believe in subject disciplines and boundaries between them, in content, in standards of performance laid down by these disciplines that can be objectively evaluated...that learners will find it hard to meet the standards; ***interpretation*** teachers believe that knowledge is the ability to organize thoughts, interpret and act on facts; that learners are intrinsically interested and naturally inclined to explore their worlds...that learners already know a great deal and have the ability to refashion that knowledge.

The interpretation teacher respects learners' need and is 'more likely to follow a *fraternal-permissive* model' (emphasis added) (Stevick, 1976: 91-93 cited in Benson and Voller, 1997: 100). It is with this type of teacher that the role of persuasive communication is most congruent.

4.3- Persuasive communication as a means of altering learner beliefs and attitudes

Inasmuch as the success of learning and the extent to which learners tap into their potential resources in order to overcome difficulties and achieve autonomy are determined by such factors as learners' motivation, their desire to learn, and the beliefs they hold about themselves as learners and learning per se, it is manifest that changing some negative beliefs and attitudes is bound to facilitate learning. 'Attitude change [is assumed to] be brought about through exposure to a persuasive communication [between the teacher and the learners]' (Wenden, 1998: 126). According to the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of attitude change developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986, cited in Wenden, 1998: 126), there are several ways of bringing about this change; however, our concern will only be with persuasive

sive communication.

A persuasive communication is a discussion presenting information and arguments to change a learner's evaluation of a topic, situation, task, and so on. These arguments could be either explicit or implicit, especially when the topic is deemed of importance. If, for instance, a deeply ingrained fear or belief precludes the learner from engaging in the learning process, persuasive communication purports to help bring these acts to light and identify the causes that underlie them. It should be noted, though, that no arguments to influence students' views are given. Rather, the communication comprises acts that show what learners can do to attain autonomy and that learners who do so are successful (see Wenden, 1998: 126). This approach is based on the assumption that when learners are faced with convincing information about a situation, 'they can be led to re-examine existing evaluations they hold about it and revise or change them completely' (ibid.: 127).

CONCLUSION

This study is far from comprehensive, as we have only skimmed the surface of the subject and the puzzle called learner autonomy. Many more pieces are missing. For instance, no mention has been made of the role of the curriculum in promoting learner autonomy, despite the debate on the relationship between classroom practice and neurological encoding (Littlejohn, 1997, cited in Benson and Voller, 1997: 181-182). At any rate, the main point of departure for this study has been the notion that there are degrees of learner autonomy and that it is not an absolute concept. It would be nothing short of ludicrous to assert that learners come into the learning situation with the knowledge and skills to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning, or to make decisions about content or objectives. Nevertheless, learner autonomy is an ideal, so to speak, that can, and should, be realised, if we want self-sufficient learners and citizens capable of evaluating every situation they find themselves in and drawing a line at any inconsistencies or shortcomings in institutions and society at large. Certainly, though, autonomous learning is not akin to unbridled learning." There has to be a teacher

who will adapt resources, materials, and methods to the learners' needs and even abandon all this if need be. Learner autonomy consists in becoming aware of, and identifying, one's strategies, needs, and goals as a learner, and having the opportunity to reconsider and refashion approaches and procedures for optimal learning. But even if learner autonomy is amenable to educational interventions, it should be recognised that it 'takes a long time to develop, and...simply removing the barriers to a person's ability to think and behave in certain ways may not allow him or her to break away from old habits or old ways of thinking' (Candy, 1991: 124). As Holyoake (1892, vol. 1, p. 4) succinctly put it, '[k]nowledge lies everywhere to hand for those who observe and think'.

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EFL in the XXI century: an Intercultural Communication Approach

THIS ARTICLE WILL ADDRESS THE CHALLENGE OF TRAINING OUR LEARNERS TO COPE WITH REAL COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH BY DEALING WITH INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN A SYSTEMATIC WAY. SOME PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES USING INTERNET WITH ELEMENTARY AS WELL AS POST INTERMEDIATE LEARNERS WILL ILLUSTRATE THE APPROACH.

by Margarita Ravera

When our learners try to communicate with native or other speakers of English they usually encounter difficulties we had not prepared them to face in the EFL class. Why is it so? What did we miss?

In the past years in Catalonia the FL has been taught mostly either through grammar or through task-based approaches that helped learners to develop a communicative language competence. Nevertheless very few of us have guided and trained our learners to actually use English to communicate with people from non-Spanish speaking communities through interviews, exchanges, or pen pal programs; even fewer have helped them develop strategies to communicate cross-culturally, such as negotiation to solve misunderstanding, or informed their learners about patterns of behavior they will encounter, such as in proxemics or table manners, or made them aware of their own ethnocentrism.

Most teachers are aware that such cultural differences exist, that they affect communication but they do not teach them. The reasons are quite obvious: we have been trained through literary studies, history and grammar, or language acquisition; besides,

our programs do not include a detailed account of cultural contents; moreover, our textbooks do not go beyond the so called "Frankenstein approach" (Omaggio, 1993): a red bus from here, a kilt from there, a Hollywood picture from here and a baseball player from there; or the "By-the-Way" approach: sporadic lectures or readings or bits of behavior selected indiscriminately to emphasize sharp differences.

In this article we claim that if non-verbal, cultural dimensions account for up to 70% of communication, then we need to reformulate objectives for the teaching of EFL that will enable learners to cope with real intercultural communication. Some foreign language learning such as Italian or Japanese may concentrate in training for communicating

Few of us have guided and trained our learners to actually use English to communicate with people from non-Spanish speaking communities

with a single country language and more or less single culture, while teaching English will imply teaching to communicate with all the world people who may be using English as an international language. The emphasis will be general communication skills and

cultural awareness that will prepare learners to cope with cultural diversity rather than a single country orientation, although the study of one culture could very well help develop general strategies.

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I am going to make an attempt to define objectives for an approach for training learners for intercultural communication, although I am aware that I may still be missing some fundamental components.

For the time being, I believe we ought to include **three distinct components**- according to MacLaren 1998 from Habermas, although the author did not have in mind foreign language pedagogy, but rather critical education. The three components would be practical, technical and emancipatory or empowering knowledge.

1. Practical knowledge will help develop intercultural communication strategies including such behavioral abilities as the capacity to react appropriately in a social situation, appropriate use of non-verbal language, and oral communication skills. I believe in Spain communication is perceived as a means for *maintaining a social relationship*, it is *process rather than outcome* oriented, and cannot easily be compartmentalized into sender, message, channel, receiver. It presumes that each partner is engaged in an ongoing process, and that the relationship is in flux. *Tangible outcomes* in terms of opponents defeated, or achievement are not the primary purpose of communication as in the US or Italy. Moreover, interaction is

strongly context based rather than based on just words (see c. in technical knowledge), eye contact, facial and hands gesture, are as relevant as words themselves. With such an orientation, the adjustments that are naturally made in interaction between non-native speakers by US or Scandinavian speakers, have to be the

object of extensive training in the case of Spanish speakers.

Some of the oral strategies may include:

a. Use of explicit or implicit language.

Learners need to become aware that when we communicate with people from our community we take for granted we share information that does not need to be made explicit. For example, when one of our students says "I go to the Institute. I am doing ESO and in the evening I go to the EOI" they are not aware that "go the Institute" is a colloquial expression used by students that study there, instead of "going to secondary school", that "ESO" and "EOI" are abbreviations and that neither term could possibly be understood by a person not living in the community. When we speak to a person who does not live in our community, we need to learn to avoid using words or expressions that cannot be understood. If we use them, we need to learn to make them explicit. "I am a secondary school student, we call that "ESO", Educació Secundaria Obligatoria, which means compulsory secondary education from 12 to 15".

b. Public speaking skills will help them develop audience awareness and the use of outcome oriented communication. Most Catalan (and Spanish) speakers are seldom trained at school to develop public speaking skills and are extraordinarily reluctant (or shy) to speak for a purpose.

c. Becoming aware that misunderstanding may occur and what may cause it, including non verbal communication, patterns of social interaction, and cultural dimensions. In interaction with non-native speakers, particularly if they belong to backgrounds that are different from ours, misunderstanding often arises, so that we constantly need to make sure if



we are understanding and being understood, and learn to identify if misunderstanding will interfere with communication.

d. Finally we ought to train learners to **negotiate meanings to repair misunderstanding and communication breakdown by using intercultural communication strategies, including the capacity to negotiate an area where all participants in the interaction will feel comfortable.**

Nevertheless, *strategies cannot be taught without the cultural or technical knowledge* that makes them necessary. We cannot, for example, know that we need to be careful when using greetings at a first time intercultural meeting if no one has taught us that different cultures have different conception of physical distance (getting too close or staying too separate may cause misunderstanding), that kissing is not viewed in the same way in different cultures, that age or gender may require special treatment in different cultures.

2. Technical knowledge ought to include such things as:

a. Knowledge about the world history, geography and the arts. Content immersion programs for all level students at school and in other language programs (such as adult language schools) should help learners develop content knowledge that is sometimes the cause of intercultural misunderstanding. We all tend to believe our nation and our history is important enough for everyone to know the basics such as the names of our main cities, important historical facts, well known artists, but also popular folk songs, dances or foods. Popular "culture" and fine "Culture" knowledge and appreciation about all countries ought to be part of all language programs.

b. Knowledge about non-verbal components in communication which would include:

Chronemics Different cultures have a different perception of time. At one end of the spectrum we have monochronic cultures at

At the beginning of the learning process, we are teaching our learners how to become good tourists.

other end we have polychronic cultures.

Monochronic cultures tend to view time as sequential, to do one thing at a time, to see time as a commodity. They value punctua-

lity. Polychronic cultures tend to do more than one thing at a time, view time as governed by context. So waiting time will be experimented differently from different cultures, and logistics and organization can be seen as very different from different perspectives.

Proxemics The way in which we perceive personal space and crowding varies from culture to culture. Japanese keep a greater distance than Anglo-Americans who keep further apart than Spanish people who require more personal space than Moroccans.

Oculistics Looks do not mean the same in all cultures, so that avoiding the look of strangers is polite in the US, while it is rude to avoid looking into someone's eyes when talking to them.

Kinesics Gesture, body movements, facial expressions constitute different languages as people travel from culture to culture. Greek people nod to mean no, for example.

Haptics Personal contact or tactile communication represents a major source of diversity. Touching someone while talking may be rather common in Spain, but very embarrassing for Japanese.

Vocalics Includes pitch, tones, and other non verbal elements of the voice, that vary greatly from culture to culture.

Olfatics Body odour, the feel and the smell of breath are viewed differently in different cultures.

Physical appearance from way of dressing to body shape and beauty are culturally based.

Macro (climates, mountains, space available, determine certain ways of living) and micro environments (housing, furniture, colours...) generate profound differences between cultures. (Andersen, 1999)

c. Awareness and understanding of cultural dimensions tendencies (Andersen, 1999) that explain world views and orientations towards such things as interpersonal relations, values, world views

Individualism or collectivism Certain cultures tend to value being different from the group, while others tend to value being similar to others.

High versus low context There are societies where information is verbally or non-verbally codified and dependent upon context, so that things do not mean the same depending on where the communication takes place.

Immediacy orientation Some cultures tend to stay closer, touch more than others.

Power distance Access to power in many societies is determined by inherited privileges, rather than by merit. They are more or less democratic.

Uncertainty orientation Has to do with the capacity to accept what is new or different.

Gender orientation relates with feminine or masculine values such being aggressive or friendly or value quality of life rather than gain.

d. Patterns of social interaction that vary in different contexts and social settings such as: first time meeting, table manners, family relations, etc. (Omaggio, 1993).

3. Empowering or emancipatory knowledge (in Giroux **directive knowledge**). The kind of knowledge that helps learner over-

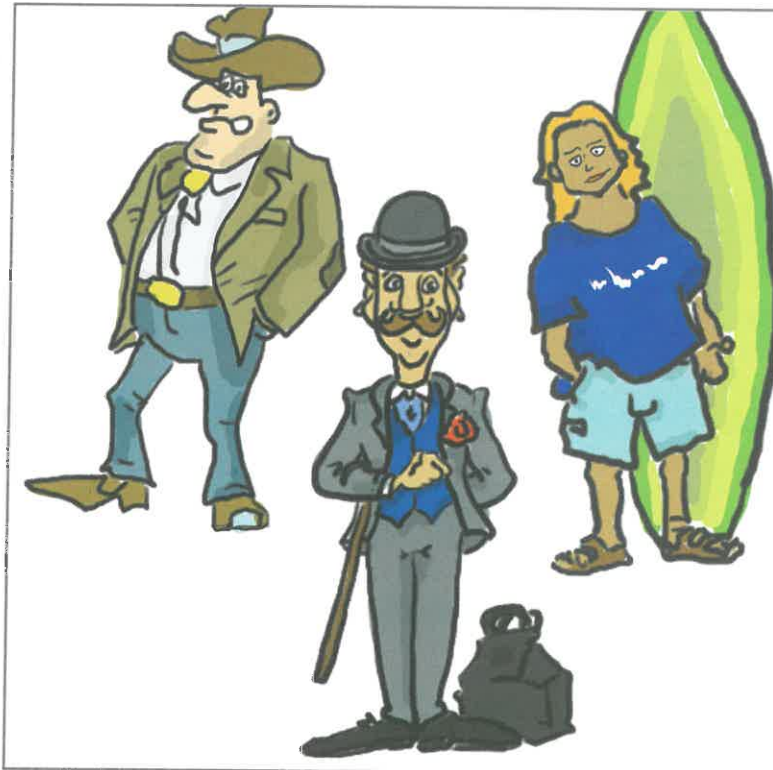
come prejudice, ethnocentrism, racisms, ageism, sexism, and will allow us to really participate in the world as citizens of the world capable of transforming it.

a. Empathy and curiosity towards other cultures. At the beginning of the learning process, we are

teaching our learners how to become good tourists. We help them to discover diversity and become interested rather than afraid of it.

b. Awareness of our own cultural conditioning.

Progressively we need to become aware that we see the world through a lens that makes us look at "the other" as "not normal" or dangerous. As we do, we start being capable of really understanding other



people.

c. Evaluate stereotype adopting the insider's point of view. We also need to learn to evaluate stereotype, which is most of the time a collection of negative traits of a groups as seen by another group. Though stereotype we tend to see everybody belonging to a group as having the same traits (all Americans are aggressive, all Spanish people are proud, etc). By becoming capable of doing cultural research we can learn to look at the world from "the other" point of view.

d. Create a space for mutual understanding. Finally we need to learn to meet people from other cultures and be able to establish an area where all participants can collaborate. Intercultural communication takes place when people from two cultures are capable of creating a third culture which is neither of the two, and where both can interact and feel comfortable.

Example of a task used in the culture oriented EFL class (most situations are real). The task was used to discuss with a group of Spanish teachers who were teaching in the US.

SOLVE THE PROBLEMS

Answer the questions. Discuss them with your partner.

1. Aaron always stands up and volunteers to answer teacher's questions. He also often volunteers arguments that challenge teacher's opinions. His new teacher, Isabel, does not like his ways. She decides to talk about the problem in class. She announces that students should not try to attract her attention, and should not speak unless invited to. Aaron, stands up and says politely she should show more respect for student's rights. Isabel gets really angry this time and sends a note to Aaron parents.

What happened?

2. Angel loves kids, on his first days in his kinder multiethnic class he shows them his affectionate feelings by patting on their shoulders or head, by kissing them and holding them in his arms. A few days later the principal calls him to say several Chinese origin parents have called to show their concern about his way of treating children.

What did Angel do wrong?

3. The school principal gives all the teachers the school norms and reminds them they are supposed to apply them in their class. One of the norms says that parents whose children did not do their homework should be informed by a short note. Ana Maria throws the norms into her folder and forgets about them. She has excellent relations with students and does not really worry about norms.

Why did she react that way?

Could she get in trouble?

4. Alejandra walks into the classroom and hands in some photocopies to her students. She will explain

later what to do with them. Jim, one of the students, looks uncomfortable, what should he do with that? Alejandra makes a sign to indicate that she will explain later and continues talking about something else. Jim repeats the question, interrupting Alejandra. He looks uncomfortable and Alejandra is annoyed.

What went wrong?

5. Caria talks about her students to their former teacher. She is being told that Jasmine is a very ambitious girl. She, of course, does not like that, but is surprised because the teacher's tone used to talk about Jasmine is a positive one.

Where is the misunderstanding?

6. Andrés is looking for a job to work in a school and has his first meeting with the principal. Fortunately she is quite good looking. He looks right into her eyes and shows very friendly manners. Of course he uses "tu" to address her. He is quite satisfied when he walks out of the building. From her friendly although somehow distant ways he infers she liked him. So he is very surprised to find out he did not get the job.

What happened?

Key:

1. Aaron is used to trying to express his own opinions (individualism) and to argue with the teacher (power distance) Isabel has opposite views. Students should not try to be different or oppose teacher's views.

2. Patting on someone's head may be perceived as humiliating particularly by Asian cultures. Teachers do not touch children (immediacy orientation)

3. Ana Maria comes from a context oriented culture that tends to view each situation as unique. Norms apply only if there is conflict.

4 Alejandra communicates through gesture to her students (context based) Jim cannot read her gesture (non-context based). Moreover he is accustomed to doing one thing after the other. Alejandra can handle more than one thing at a time (chronemics)

5 Ambition is a virtue in an individualistic society.

6 Andrés tries to create a communication flow (small talk necessary even in work contexts) and to flirt with the principal (she is a woman after all). The principal felt harassed by his manners. Because he is a male he feels he can treat her as his equal (gender) He has used manners that cannot be used in a non-intimate context (immediacy orientation)

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Translation in the Classroom. Why not?

TRANSLATION AS A METHOD TO LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE MAY APPARENTLY SEEM OBSOLETE. STEMMING FROM A THEORETICAL BACKGROUND, OUR ARTICLE PRESENTS PRACTICAL TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES TO DO IN THE CLASSROOM. WE WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE TEACHERS TO USE TRANSLATION AS A TOOL NOT ONLY TO REFLECT UPON STUDENTS' OWN LANGUAGES BUT ALSO TO LEARN A FOREIGN ONE. THEREFORE, WHY SHOULD NOT TRANSLATION STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES BE LINKED TO LISTENING, READING, SPEAKING AND WRITING?

by Belén Satorres i Annabel Closa

Within the context of language teaching, we should ask ourselves this question: what do we understand for translation? It is essential to distinguish between how translation was traditionally seen and how translation is viewed nowadays.

Translation is traditionally associated to the Grammar-translation method. This method derived from the way Latin and Greek were taught and consisted of studying grammatical structures, word and sentence equivalence and syntax. When using this method two skills were basically involved: reading and writing. Moreover, it was teacher-centred and thus students' attitude was passive. Finally, it has to be taken into account that diversity of translations was not generally accepted and error was not considered as part of the process of learning. However, it is fair to admit that most of us have learned English through this method and it is fair to admit as well that certain techniques are useful.

Nowadays, translation is seen as another efficient tool for language learning linked to the four skills if it is carried out within a communi-

cative learning activity. Translation has to be put into practice in a meaningful context to the students, through which grammar and vocabulary are learnt during the learning process.

And what do translation activities involve? They are student-centred, diversity of translations are accepted as long as they convey the approximate meaning, the students' attitude is active and error is considered as part of the natural process of learning.

Translation has to be put into practice in a meaningful context

Translation is such a wide resource in the field of language learning that even some theorists have launched the following question: *Could translation be seen as a "fifth" skill?* What are your thoughts about this?

Bearing all these concepts above stated in mind, and in order to have a successful translation activity, we have come to the following conclusion: any translation activity should be *communicative* in the sense that it sounds natural in the target language and *meaningful* in the sense that has meaning to the students, i.e. meaningful learning.

ANNABEL CLOSA PÉREZ, AN ENGLISH TEACHER AT IES EL MORELL (TARRAGONA). AFTER HER MA IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES: TEXTUAL TRANSLATION ANALYSIS, SHE HAS BEEN USING TRANSLATION AS A TOOL TO TEACH ENGLISH AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

BELÉN SATORRES NIETO IS AN ENGLISH TEACHER AT ESCOLÀPIES LA IMMACULADA (EL MASNOU). AFTER HER MA IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES: TEXTUAL TRANSLATION ANALYSIS, SHE HAS BEEN USING TRANSLATION AS A TOOL TO TEACH ENGLISH AT ESO.

Before getting into some translation activities, it is necessary to clarify the terms that Mona Baker states in one of her books : the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach. Any teacher teaching translation or using translation in the classroom should take them into account.

In a bottom-up approach one starts translating from the bottom, i.e. understanding individual forms of meaning such as words and scales upwards understanding the meaning of each form; then upwards understanding a text as a meaning unit. Once the whole text is already understood, one relates this text to its context of culture. (See Figure 1).

In the top-down approach, one starts from the top, i.e. understanding a text within its context of culture, despite not knowing many specific structural aspects of the language. The next step downwards is understanding the structures of the language, then downwards again understanding phrases and finally understanding words and expressions. (See Figure 2).

Both bottom-up and top-down approaches are valid in their own way, so the teacher may follow one or the other depending on what she or he wants to focus on during the translation process. In the case of university students we suggest the top-down approach as the most appropriate one. It implies a greater effort on the part of the translator and a wider knowledge and culture of the field.

In the case of secondary students, we suggest the bottom-up approach for pedagogical reasons as we are not forming professionals and the students have no previous training in linguistics. This approach implies less effort on the part of the students and less knowledge of the field one is translating. We have followed the bottom-up approach to carry out the activities below.

The bottom-up approach

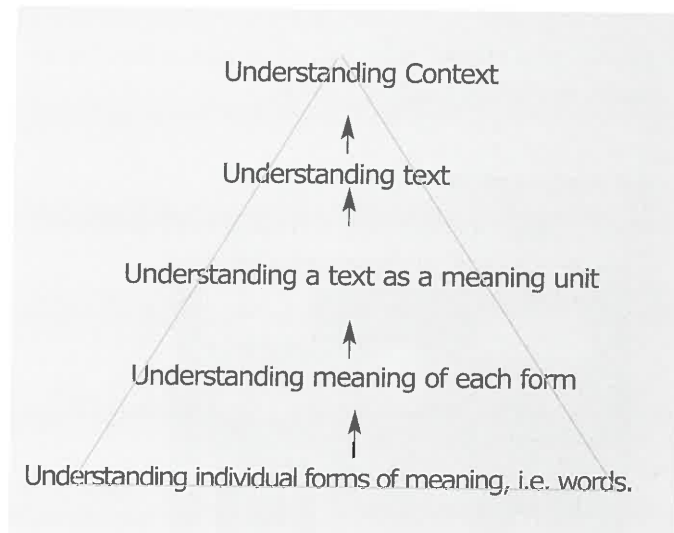


Figure 1

The top-down approach

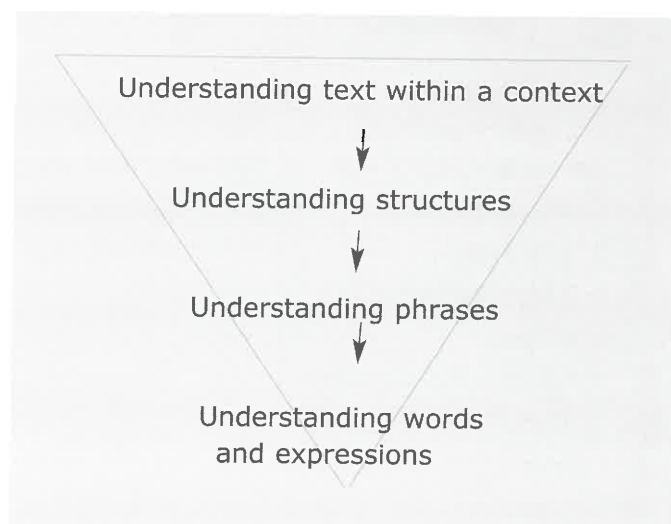


Figure 2

ACTIVITIES

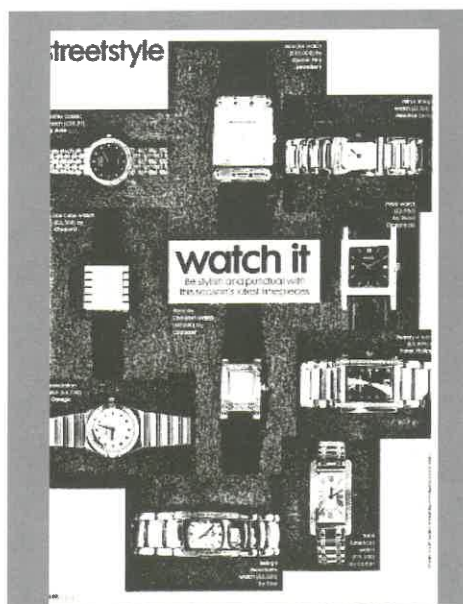
An advertisement, some proverbs and a recipe: these are the three different activities that we propose in which translation is a tool to learn the language.

As you can see below, each activity is presented with a chart stating the following: the objectives, the suggested moment to do the activity, the skills involved, the previous input needed, the procedure to follow and the timing. Each professional can adapt any of these items to the needs of his or her students.

Under the chart, part of the original text is presented with its corresponding translation or translations made by ESO students.

Advertisements

How would you translate this advertisement?



Apparently, this is not a very difficult translation activity but it requires creativity. It was done by ESO students after a unit dealing with items of clothing. As you will see in the chart, the purpose was to be creative with language when searching for the same effect in L1.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>Previous input</u>	<u>Procedure</u>	<u>Timing</u>
1. To make students play with words in order to look for an equivalent effect. 2. To be creative. 3. To enjoy themselves with language. 4. To work with real language. 5. To reflect upon L1 and L2.	As a warm-up/follow-up before/after a unit about clothes or any other topic that you are working on.	Writing.	Search for the same effect in the target language as in the source language.	1. Translate the text from L2 to L1 in pairs/groups. 2. Group-class interaction to look for the "best" ad.	1 or 2 sessions

The students came across a linguistic feature in the source language: a homonym. This implies that the same phonemes convey two different meanings. In this case, the use of the homonym "watch" causes a play on words, a pun. This pun, together with the visual imagery, produces an attractive effect aimed at consumers. But what happens in the target language?

This homonym does not exist in Catalan or Spanish, because there is one word for the verb: "mirar" (for both, languages) and another noun: "reloj" (Sp.) and "rellotge" (Cat.)

At this point, the students reflected upon the word "watch" so as to choose between translating it as a noun or as a verb. The teacher's role here was to advise them that the lack of homonymy in the target causes an obvious translation loss. As the role given to students was the one of publicists, the strategy that we suggested was to compensate this translation loss by searching for a similar effect in the target language as in the source language. Consequently, these were some of the students' suggestions:

"Míralos"

"Qué relojes!"

"Guaita'ls"

"Relotges"

"Mira'ls"

Which one do you think matches the original best?

Would you choose the noun or the verb?

Have you thought of the number of syllables of each case?

What about the phonetic features?

The students final translation was:

"GUAITA'LS", as they came to the conclusion that this was the closest translation to the original one in terms of number of syllables, phonemes and effect. We do know that a professional publicist / translator may keep the play on words or may even produce a catchier translation. However, when performing this task, our objective was that the students reflected upon the languages involved so as to produce a similar advertisement.

The final writing was:

WATCH IT

Be stylish and punctual with these season's timepieces

GUAITA'LS

Sigues puntual i amb estil amb aquestes últimes peces de temporada

Notice here that our students' translation of the pronoun "it" was plural in the target language, so grammatically this would not be accepted. However, there were two reasons for this decision: coherence with the text, i.e. "these latest timepieces", and correspondence between the text and the image behind. So does grammar really matter much in this case?

Proverbs

The early bird catches the worm, His bark is worse than his bite... difficult to learn, aren't they? We propose a translation activity with proverbs in order to learn them easily.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>Skills</u>	<u>Previous input</u>	<u>Procedure</u>	<u>Timing</u>
1. To learn some proverbs and their use in contexts. 2. To acquire the rhythm of the language learn pronunciation. 3. To enlarge students cultural and to background of both L1 and L2.	As a follow-up activity.	Writing Reading Speaking	Cultural references (if necessary)	1. Match proverbs (give cards in Catalan/Spanish and their corresponding English equivalents) in groups of 4 people. 2. The teacher assigns 1 or 2 proverbs per group. The students will have to invent a situation in which those proverbs would be used. They will have to explain them using gestures or speech. 3. Performance / explanation of the situation + other group's guessing. The group who guesses more proverbs wins. 4. Students are given a chart of proverbs and they have to complete it. 5. Follow-up.	2 sessions

As you have read, we suggest introducing this proverb activity by matching cards. It is a bit time-consuming at the beginning, but once you have prepared all of them, you can re-use them in many other sessions.

We think it is a good idea to group the proverbs into different semantic fields such as animals, colours, agriculture or others. The examples that we show here are within the semantic field of animals.

Now look at procedure number 4 from the chart and try –if you like to do the activity we have prepared for ESO students. You can adapt this activity depending on your students’ pace of learning or knowledge of the language.

Proverbs activity. Please complete this chart.

English	Spanish / Catalan	Meaning
	A caballo regalado, no le mires el dentado	
Birds of a feather flock together		
	Perro ladrador, poco mordedor	
Don't count your chickens before they're hatched		
	Más vale pájaro en mano que ciento volando	
		Early rising is excellent

No diguis blat, fins que ho tinguis al sac i ben lligat

Dios los cría y ellos se juntan

A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda

His bark is worse than his bite

Never look a gift horse in the mouth

A bird in hand is worth two in the bush


The early bird catches the worm

It is very interesting to reflect upon the cultural references that lay beyond some of these proverbs, either in L1 or in L2. For example, in the Spanish proverb “A quien madruga, Dios le ayuda”, there is a clear religious reference which does not appear in its English equivalent. Having students reflect upon these references, not only helps them expand their L1 but also expand their L2.

Particularly in this sort of activities, it is necessary to do some follow-up activities in subsequent sessions, otherwise it is very easy for students to forget the proverbs learnt.

Recipe

was the "linguistic ingredient" that 4th ESO students were given to "cook" into English. The chart below shows the steps we followed to prepare this activity.

CUCINA IRLANDESA	
Galletas de avena	<i>Tiempo de preparación:</i> 25 minutos
	<i>Tiempo de cocción:</i> 15-20 minutos
Para el té de la tarde.	<i>Para 16 galletas:</i>
<i>2 tazas de harina de avena refinada</i> <i>1 taza de harina</i> <i>1/2 cucharadita de bicarbonato</i>	<i>1/2 taza de azúcar</i> <i>180 g de mantequilla</i> <i>1 taza adicional de harina de avena</i>
1. Caliente el horno a 200°C. Engrase ligeramente una bandeja de horno plana. 2. Ponga la harina de avena en un recipiente	grande, tamice sobre ella la harina normal, el bicarbonato y el azúcar. Mezcle. 3. Funda la mantequilla, viértala en el recipiente y
	mezcle bien. Deposite la mezcla sobre la harina de avena adicional y amase con cuidado. 4. Estire la masa dejando 1 cm de espesor y corte dieciséis cuadrados. Coloque en la bandeja y pinche la superficie con un tenedor. Hornee hasta que tengan un aspecto dorado y crujiente (15 minutos). Deje enfriar antes de sacarlas. Nota: Suelen servirse con azúcar, pero también se utilizan como base de alimentos no dulces.

Objectives	When	Skills	Procedure	Timing
1. To learn the imperative form. 2. To learn the position of adverbs. 3. To learn the passive voice. 4. To learn specific vocabulary. 5. To compare the structure of the two languages involved.	As a follow-up activity after a unit about Food and Cooking.	Writing.	1. Read the whole source text 2. Make groups of 4 people and divide the work in pairs. 3. Each pair translates 1 part. 4. Group work: elaboration of the final product 5. Teacher's correction during and after the process. 6. Hand in the corrections and reflect upon error. 7. Final rewriting of the work and learning feedback. 8. (Optional) Do the recipe	2/3 sessions.

begin with, when preparing any dish, the cook always has to check the ingredients and cutlery in order to elaborate a proper dish. Our students' ingredients are bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, parallel texts, and a grammar book.

When the ingredients are ready, the students are to start doing the translation following the procedure presented above. During this process, as in a cooking process, difficulties may come up. These difficulties are normal when elaborating an appropriate final product.


See the examples below:

SOURCE TEXT	OUR STUDENT'S TRANSLATION	PROBLEMS	SUGGESTED TRANSLATION
Galletas Avena	Oat biscuits	Word order	OK
Caliente al horno a 200º	Heat up the oven to 200ºC	Imperatives	Heat the oven up to 200º
Deposite la mezcla sobre la harina de avena adicional y amase con cuidado	Put the mixture onto the additional oat flour and knead it <i>with care</i>	Imperatives Adverbs	Add the mixture with the additional oat flour and knead it <i>carefully</i>
Suelen servirse con azúcar, pero también se utilizan como base de alimentos no dulces	<i>Usually they are served with sugar, but they are also eaten as bitter food</i>	Frequency adverb Passive form	They are usually served with sugar, but they are also used as the base for bitter food

Error-making is considered a natural process of learning a language. What does a cook do when coming across an obstacle? The cook will probably check the recipe book. What about our students? The teacher's role is the one of a recipe book: monitoring, guiding and helping. As a cook could also consult a colleague, so could our students consult each other.

IRISH FOOD

Oat biscuits



For the afternoon tea

Preparation time :
25 minutes

Cooking time :
15-20 minutes

For 16 biscuits

and mix it well. Put the mixture onto the additional oat flour and knead it carefully.

2 cups of refined oat flour	1/4 cup of sugar
1 cup of flour	180 g of butter
1/2 teaspoonful of bicarbonate	1 additional cup of oat flour

1. Heat up the oven to 200°C. Grease a flat oven tray slightly.

2 Put the oat flour into a big bowl and sprinkle

on it the normal flour the bicarbonate and sugar. Mix everything

3. Melt the butter, pour it in the bowl

4. Spread the mixture leaving 1cm of thickness and cut sixteen squares. Put it into the tray and prick the surface with a fork. Put it in the oven until they get a sold and crunchy aspect (15 min) Leave them cool before taking them out of the tray

Note: Usually they're served with sugar, but they are also eaten as bitter food.

After 2 or 3 sessions, this was the final writing that our students produced: This activity was so motivating for students that some of them actually even felt like cooking the biscuits at home. This demonstrates that any translation activity is good as long as it is meaningful to the students.

Enjoy it!

MAIN REASONS FOR USING TRANSLATION ACTIVITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

You may ask yourself whether these sort of activities would fit your everyday classes. We think they would! However, as in any activity that is carried out in class, there are always advantages and possible obstacles. After deep and careful thought, we present a summary of the pros and cons that may occur when using translation in the classroom.

Possible obstacles:

THE STUDENTS

They are not used to the different types of dictionaries
Lack of dictionaries for all the students in the classroom
Diversity of levels
Students' different ways of learning a language
Large classes
Lack of motivation if they find that what they are asked to translate is too difficult

TO THE TEACHER

- Pressure to finish the contents from the textbook syllabus
- Running out of time (especially at Batxillerat)
- Some learning activities are time-consuming
- Evaluation of certain activities
- Some group activities demand more control on the part of the teacher

Advantages:

STUDENTS

Translation (TN) is student-centred
Students play an active role in the TN process
It helps students develop a liking for the English language
Students acquire self-confidence when using a foreign language
It fosters interaction and cooperation
It helps them see error-making as a natural process to learn an L2
Students reflect upon their L1 and upon the TN process
It enables students to see the L2 from another perspective
Students become more familiar with the different types of dictionaries (monolingual and bilingual) and their use
Students broaden vocabulary
It changes the pace of the everyday classes
It fosters creativity, imagination, and precision
It is motivating
It is fun

TEACHER

- The teacher's role is that of monitoring the tasks, not controlling them.
- The teacher provides a wider view of the English language
- The teacher promotes students' self-confidence
- TN helps the teacher see group attitudes such as cooperation, help, respect,...
- The teacher helps students see error-making as a natural process while learning a language
- The teacher promotes reflection
- The teacher favours dictionary use
- TN changes the pace of the everyday teaching profession
- TN helps the teacher see students' "hidden abilities", e.g. creativity, imagination, precision, cultural background, knowledge of their L1
- TN is motivating
- The teacher sees the students' improvement
- Some activities are easy to handle
- TN is fun

CONCLUSION

In order to go back to our initial question: Translation in the classroom... Why not?, we have reached the conclusion that translation activities work as long as they are previously prepared by the teacher and as long as they are appropriate for the students' age, pace of learning and knowledge of the language. Also, two key concepts are required for a translation activity to be successful: on the one hand, it has to be meaningful to the students and, on the other hand, it has to be communicative. Moreover, it is important for the teacher to take into account the elements of flexibility and changeability whenever convenient.

It is necessary for the teacher who uses translation activities in the classroom to believe in the success of this type of activities so that his or her students can learn more effectively. If one has no confidence in what one performs in the classroom, the element of success is very rarely attained. We strongly believe that translation is an efficient tool in the class and this is why we encourage you to use it. And remember: you do not need to be a professional translator to do so; it is just a question of innovating and experimenting!

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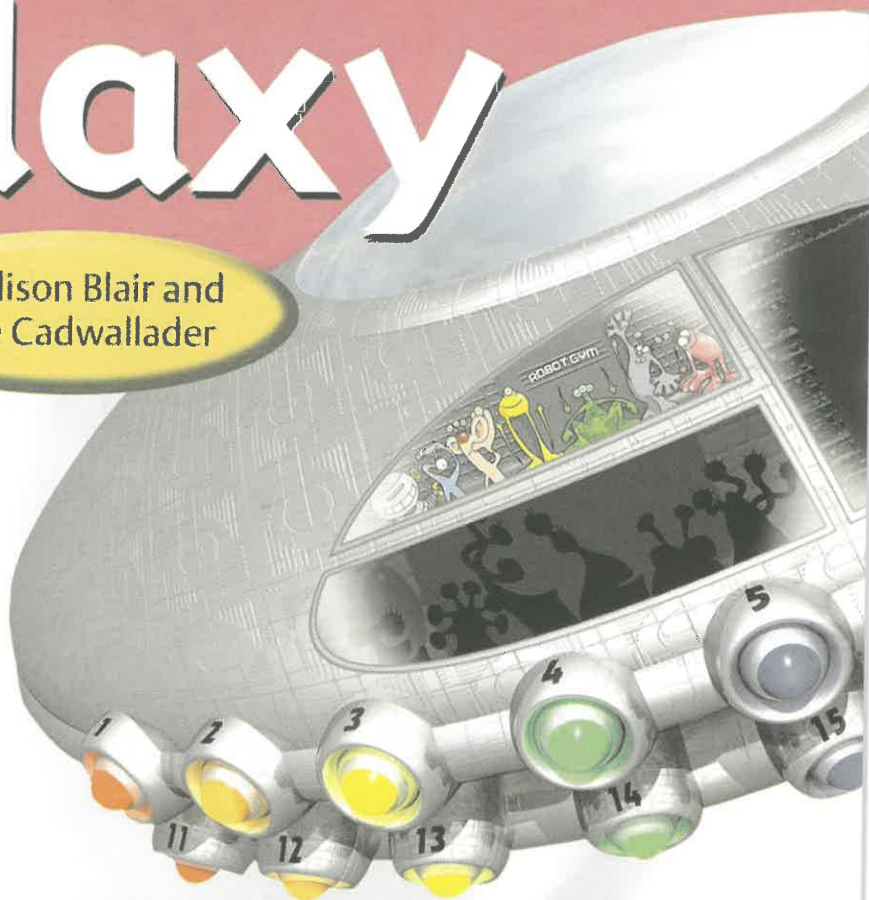
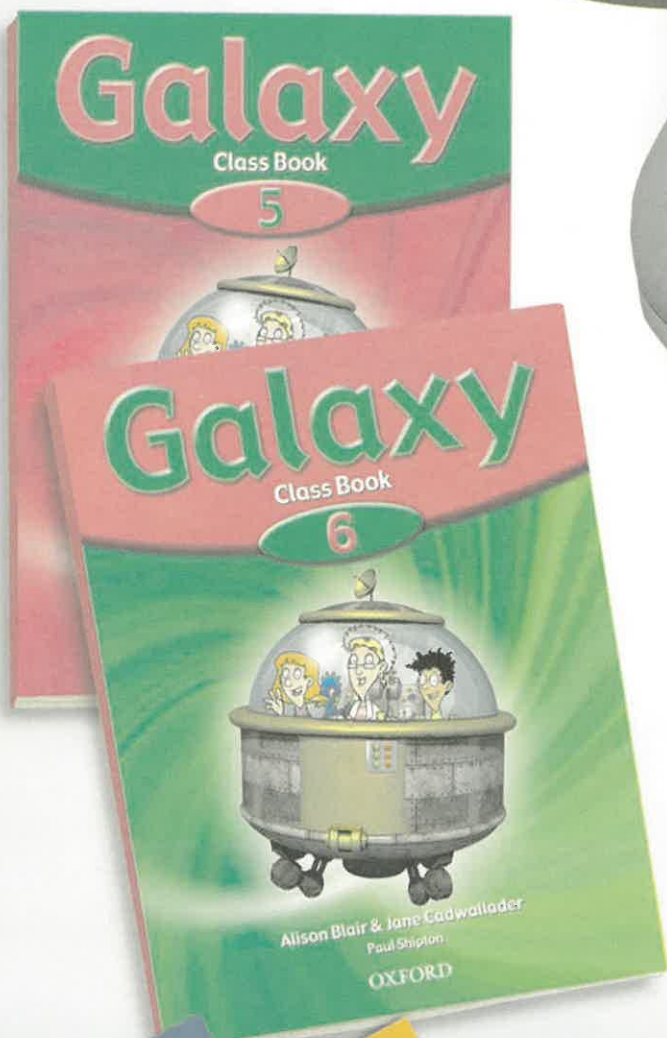
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Poetry is fantastic. Have a go!

THIS IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE LECTURE THE AUTHOR GAVE AT THE JORNADES. SHE TALKED ABOUT HER ORATOR PROJECT IN PRIMARY SCHOOL BASED ON POETRY. AFTER A THEORETICAL PART WHERE SHE JUSTIFIED THE REASONS OF HER PROJECT, THERE WAS A PRACTICAL ONE THAT SHOWED ONE OF THE POSSIBLE WAYS TO WORK WITH A POEM AND SHE SAYS ONE OF THE POSSIBLE WAYS BECAUSE THERE ARE ACTUALLY LIMITLESS OPTIONS TO TAKE.

by Cecília Reñé

THEORETICAL PART

Why Do I believe in Poetry?

- I love poetry myself.
- Children also love poetry.
- Children enjoy poetry.
- Children learn with poetry.

Thus, the learning process should be at the same time useful and enjoyable *whenever this is presented in the right way.*

The *Poems* I use have been *specially created* for non-native children, that is to say, for children whose mother tongue is not English. This is an important point because everything in the poem (vocabulary, grammar...) can be adapted to learner's needs.

What possibilities does a poem offer? What aspects of the language can we work with a poem?

- Grammar points.
- Lexical points.
- Revision of old contents.
- Introduction of new ones.
- ... *Any language content.*

We do not really need to explain a grammar point, even if it is new, because the child assimilates new contents although he does not

know the theory yet. By repeating a structure, our brain retains it. Later, the pupil will see the theory of the structure he already knows- However, the essential point of the poetic resource in the classroom is, in my opinion, the pronunciation, the rhythm and the intonation and POETRY goes deeply into those aspects. Why? Let's have an example with the following poem:

*One, two
milk for you.*

*Two, Three
chocolate for me.*

*Fou, five
take a knife.*

*Six, seven, eight
have a piece of cake.*

*Nine, ten
that's the end.*

If we count the syllables in each line we will realize that we have lines with a different number of syllables, but as the poem has a rhythm and we want to respect it (rhythm is an important memory aid and also necessary for the poem to sound nice), this means that all the syllables have to fit within the same time. Therefore, the

CECÍLIA REÑÉ IS A PRIMARY TEACHER. SHE HAS A DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND GERMANIC PHILOLOGY, AN EOI CERTIFICA D'APTITUD AND THE FCE OF CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY . SHE HAS WRITTEN A BOOK ON CATALAN POETRY SÓC UNA FLOR UN ESTEL, UN NÚVOL VIATGER, WHICH IS BEING PUBLISHED SOON.

ild has to be able to pronounce within the same line 1 with only 2 syllables and line 8 with 5 them, for instance.

What leads to the linking of words, something that comes to us naturally in our own language but something we find very difficult to do in a foreign one.

also helps us to understand better because we become more conscious that spoken language does not consist in individual words put together but in a **chain of words**. This is a basic aspect in the learning process of a new language.

METHODOLOGY

1. One of my priorities is that children should associate the poetry workshop with pleasure, relaxation and creativity, where both knowledge and **imagination** are important.

2. Each poem makes possible a lot of different activities and various ways to be approached. Taking into account that the oral work is essential, there are many other ways to be used in order to make the intake of information easier. Thus, we can use:

Mime

Drawing and colouring activities.

Prediction of known vocabulary.

Performances.

Recording of children and listening.

Use of visual support with real objects, pictures, photos...

Creation of new poems following a given structure.

etc.

I always work following these steps: **class work leading to individual work** and with the written text at the end of the activities. Notice the difference between "Text & learning" and "**Learning & Text**". The first option can be more or less attractive but the second one is infinitely motivating because before the pupils see a single word they have already played with the poem, they have had contact with it at dif-

ferent levels, they have enjoyed it, they have learnt to love the poem and they are willing to write it down.

4. I never expect children to understand the whole poem the first time they hear it. I always tell them they will surely understand quite a few things and that it is not necessary to understand the whole of it. That really encourages the pupils and makes them feel much more confident.

5. I always try to motivate children through a multi-sensorial approach, using at least the three following ones:

-Listening support

-Visual support

-Kinaesthetic support

I believe this is very interesting if we consider the fact that working with different support provides a more balanced experience in our didactic process since we are using both parts of our brain. The auditory intake of information corresponds to the right side and the visual intake corresponds either to the left or to the right side. To conclude this point, the more senses are involved, the better children assimilate the information.

PRACTICAL PART

Let's focus on one particular poem.

A dolly house
is all I want.

With a big living-room
to put
my blue balloon.

With a nice armchair
to sit
my teddy bear.

With a comfortable bed
to lay
my dolly's head.

With a wardrobe in the hall
to keep
my tennis ball.

And a large garden, of course,
to ride,

my rocking horse.

Level: elementary

Course: 5th or 6th of Primary Education.

Time: 2-3 sessions.

Aims:

- Lexic: revise old vocabulary related to the house and toys
- Grammar: become familiar with verbs in the infinitive form and their meaning.
- Pronunciation: practice of sounds, rhythms and intonation within a structure.
- Others: have a great time and feel there is also a progress.

Materials:

- A cardboard plastified house with opening windows and door, big enough to be seen from the back of the class.
- Different colourful pictures from the poem vocabulary, plastified.
- Photocopies for pupils.

Procedure:

A. Group Work.

1. Revision of vocabulary related to the parts of the house using a big dolly house made of cardboard. Revision of toys and furniture too.
2. The teacher recites the whole poem and ask the children what words they understood.
3. The teacher recites again and sticks the pictures (toys and furniture) onto the house.
4. Everybody mimes the actions of the poem.
5. The teacher recites and one or more pupils stick on the pictures. (The problem comes when all of them want to stick them; the solution comes when using another poem, a deep-rhyme, to pick one of them up).

6. The teacher sticks and the children recite.

7. In groups, pupils recite different stanzas.

8. The teacher points to a part of the house and the pupils recite the corresponding stanza. etc.

B. Individual work.

9. Cut out and stick pictures on individual houses while the teacher recites the poem. (See copies).

10. Writing activity based on the poem.

11. Reciting.

Evaluation:

1. Direct observation of the pronunciation, taking into account not only individual words but the ability to link them. The poems should come out fluently and naturally.
2. Observation of possible grammatical structure as well as lexic.
3. Pupil's behaviour.
4. And finally, if one day, while walking in the playground, I hear some of the children using a chant for one of their games, I will fell over the moon.

My last message:

Give poetry a chance, you will be surprised!

A Dolly's House

Fill in the gaps with the following words:

armchair, lay, house, bed, balloon, keep, living-room, sit, head, put, garden, bear, ride, wardrobe, ball, table, hall, horse.

A dolly's _____
Is all I want.

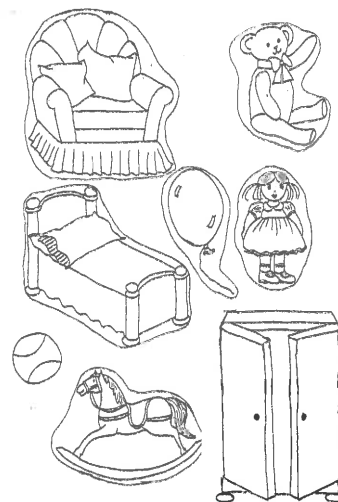
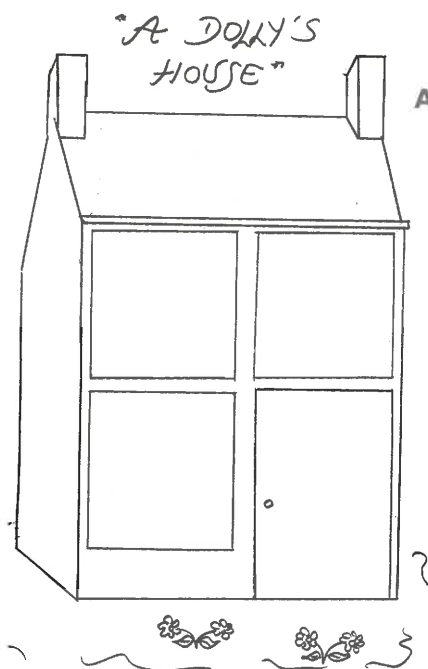
With a big _____
To _____
My blue _____

With a nice _____
To _____
My teddy _____

With a comfortable _____
To _____
My dolly's _____

With a _____ in the _____
To _____
My tennis _____

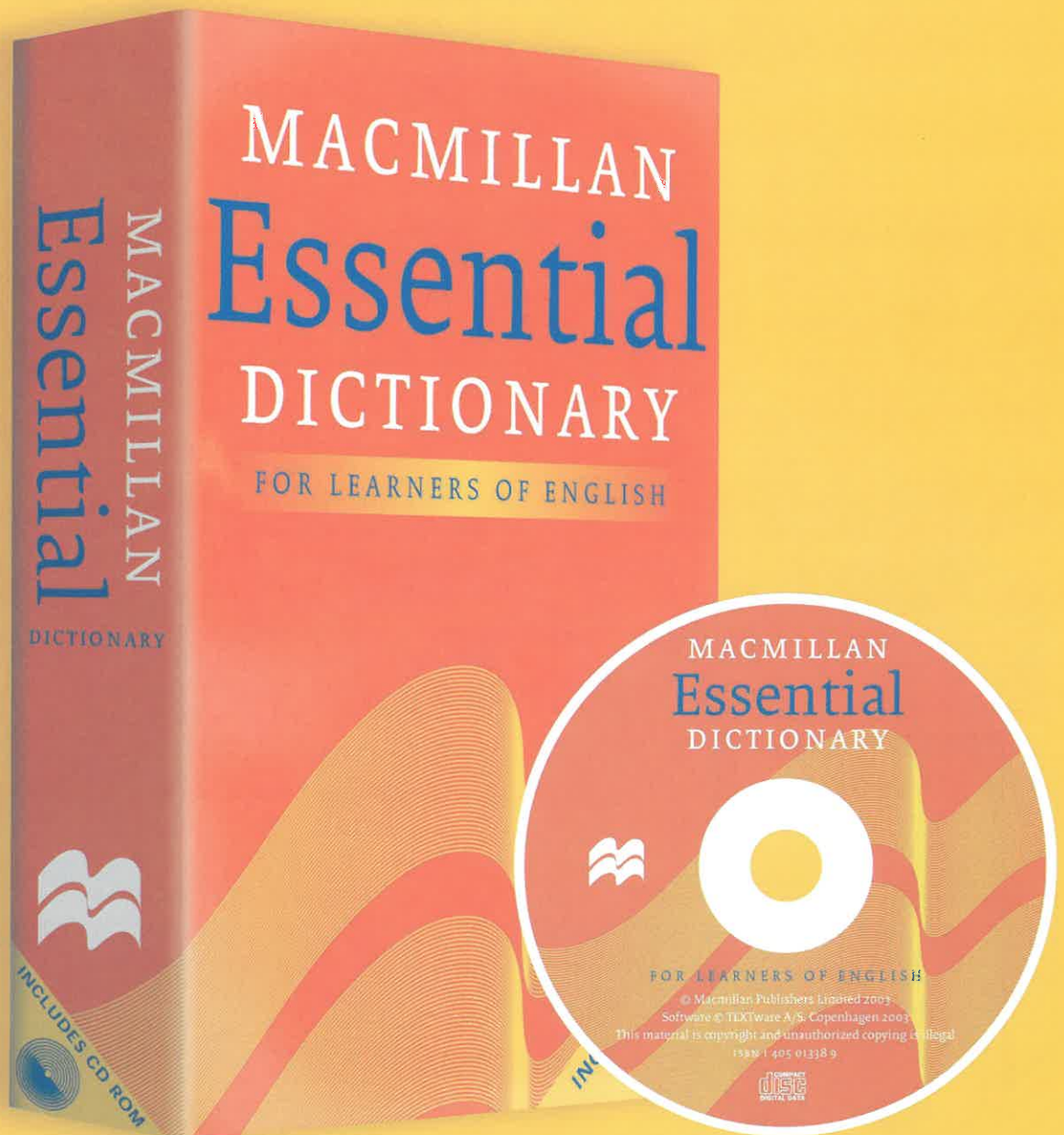
And a large _____, of course
To _____
My rocking _____



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The Land of dreams: Using Advertisements in the EFL Classroom

IN JUST TWENTY SECONDS, ADVERTISEMENTS TELL CONVINCING STORIES THAT CAN REACH AUDIENCES FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS AND APPEAL TO PEOPLE WITH VERY DIFFERENT INTERESTS. IN ORDER TO GET THEIR MESSAGE ACROSS, PUBLICITY USES A LARGE NUMBER OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES THAT OUR STUDENTS ARE SURE TO RECOGNISE AND FEEL CONFIDENT WITH. WHY NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE IN OUR ELT CLASSROOM? THIS PRACTICAL ARTICLE WILL SUGGEST A SERIES OF ACTIVITIES THAT CAN HELP US USE ADS TO MAKE OUR LESSONS MORE CREATIVE, RELEVANT AND FUN.

by **Elisenda Masgrau and Xavier Ponce**

In this paper we would like to draw attention to the variety of ways to consider and work with ads as materials for the EFL class. We will examine the possibilities they offer and give a series of practical examples to use in class.

To the average TV viewer, an advertisement is a further 20-second lapse of time before their favourite programme, filled with uninteresting commercial babble.

From the point of view of the EFL teacher, however, a number of features make ads particularly worth considering as part of the ordinary methodology for our classes. Among these features are the following:

1. Complete. Ads make a complete and meaningful input unit, which allows for the use of them either independently, as isolated learning tasks in themselves, or in conjunction with other forms of input.

2. Appealing. Ads are intended to be eye-catching, attractive, funny,

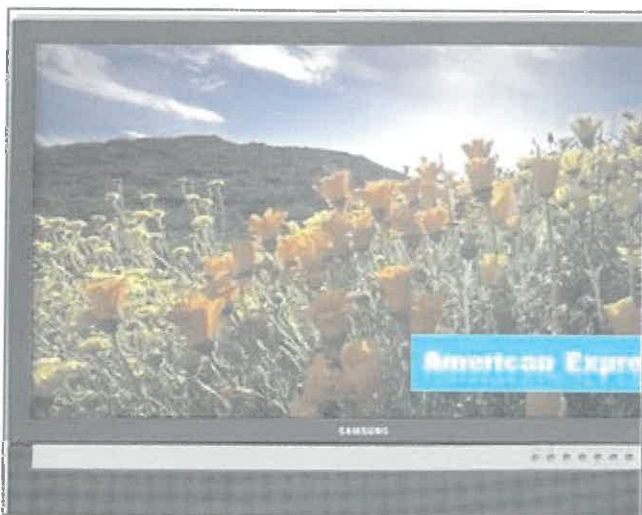
pleasing, entertaining, optimistic, inspiring... All of these make them particularly successful with students as a medium for language presentation, analysis or production.

3. Relevant. Advertisements are very relevant to our students inasmuch as they are topic-related. Everyday matters as well as serious issues, individual and social interests and concerns are present in ads because they are a fundamental part of popular culture. Students will easily understand, and often identify with, the stories and values they show.

4. Varied. The variety of ads allows for their use in class in a great number of ways, in very different moments of the teaching process,

and in connection with many aspects of the curriculum, from notional contents to procedures and values.

5. Authentic. One of the features of the teaching methodology that students appreciate most is the possibility to get in touch with "authentic" English, language input which has not been designed specifically for EFL students.



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Advertisements offer this kind of learning experience too.

6. Multimedia. We would like to mention also the multimedia character of advertisements. As well as working with the video and audio formats, transcripts allow for reading tasks, and a wide range of possibilities open up in the Internet, where every company advertising on TV will almost certainly own a website address with further information. The combined use of different media in class adds to the sense of fulfilment and enjoyment in both teachers and students.



WORK AREAS

Advertisements can be used by EFL teachers, as a teaching methodology and source of input, to implement virtually every area of the curriculum. The most obvious ones are:

1. Vocabulary presentation and practice from a variety of fields. You can find ads ranging from the most elementary: parts of the house, of the body, clothes, colours, descriptive adjectives, etc., to more specialised fields and ESP: money and finance, insurance, computers and technology, food and health care, etc.

2. Grammar is best dealt with when an ad makes use of a clear, specific structure. This, however, is not always the case, but there are a number of grammar items you can have your students practice with the majority of ads: comparative sentences, modals of possibility, probability, permission or obligation, sentence construction, active and passive voice, question formation and auxiliaries, second and third conditionals, advising and suggesting, reporting speech, verb patterns, etc.

3. Topics. One of the most attractive ways to use ads in class is in order to introduce a topic for students to comment on and debate. Many of them deal with everyday topics such as the household, families, work and leisure, holi-

days, teenage life and values, environmental and social concerns, etc., which fit in very well with the topics the standard EFL curriculum covers. Using ads in this way can lead on to a number of oral practice tasks: group work, role-playing, whole class discussion, presentations, etc.

4. Phonetics. It is really useful to give students the transcription of what they are about to hear. You can easily use the audio input from ads to devise a number of exercises: minimal pair recognition, vowel and diphthong sounds practice, stress and intonation patterns, comparing accents and dialects, etc.

5. Values, Attitudes and Procedures. Ads can be equally useful when approaching certain aspects of the curriculum that are not specific to English as a subject but relevant for the education of young learners. You will find that some ads suggest ideas that can be used.

5. Values, Attitudes and Procedures.

ACTIVITY TYPES

The activities in this section can be applied to almost any ad, regardless of its visual or linguistic input. The emphasis here is not so much on particular grammar structures or vocabulary items, but rather in using ads to make your students carry out particular learning tasks, such as arranging sentences in a meaningful way, translating or communicating with others. In the sub-sections following you will find instructions for some ad-based activities that can be carried out in an ELT classroom.

1. Script Activities

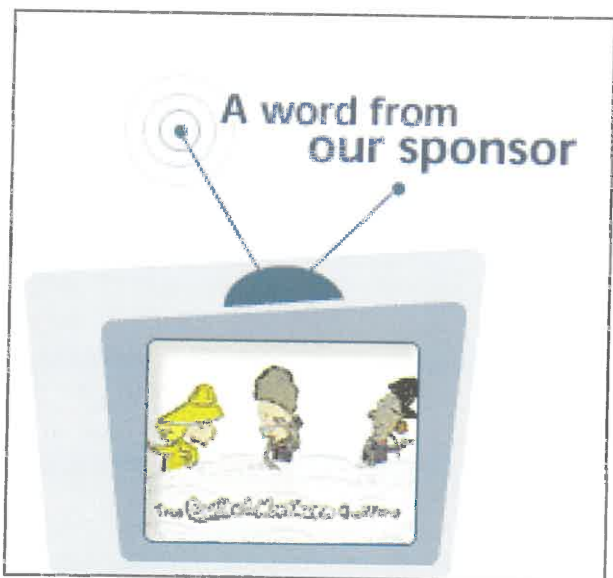
1.1. With one ad: Take one ad of your liking and copy down the script. Muddle the sentences in the script and give them to your students. You can choose to simply write the

sentences in the wrong order or to break them up in several units. Let your students try to put the sentences / units in the right place. Show them the ad, maybe with voice off first, and see if that is of any help. Let them revise their work. Finally, let them listen to the ad and check their work.

1.2. With more than one ad:

a. The same exercise can be done with two or more ads, mixing and muddling the sentences across them. In that case, you should ask your students to disentangle the ads first. Once the class is clear about what belongs to which ad, then they can start to order the sentences inside each of the ads.

b. A similar exercise can be done with a group of ads, which may or may not be advertising the same product. In this case, however, you may choose not to muddle the sentences inside each individual ad. If you select several ads and write down their scripts, you can show these to your students and get them to guess which script belongs to which ad. As a first step, you might want to give your students the scripts and get them to think about what is being advertised in each case. You can then show them the ads (voice off) and let them think which script is the most appropriate for its set of images. Finally, you can let them watch the voiced version of the ads and check their work.



2. Information Gaps

2.1. Put your students in pairs and ask one member of each pair to sit with his/her back against the screen while the other is facing the screen. Ask the student who is only listening to describe how he/she imagines the speaking character to be and let their partners correct them.

2.2. With the same arrangement, you can choose to give an answer sheet to the students who are not watching and ask them to fill it out by asking their partners. You can choose to do this with either yes/no questions or open questions.

2.3. With the same arrangement again, you can let each member of the pair watch / listen to half of the ad and then ask the pairs to reconstruct the ad together. Alternatively, you may prefer not to let them see the ending and ask them to predict it.

2.4. You can also divide the class into two groups and let one group watch the ad with the voice off while you let the other hear the soundtrack without seeing the images. Then, ask the former to write an appropriate script and the latter to mime the action in front of the class.

3. Predicting Activities

3.1. Show your students one ad, stopping just before the end. Let them predict what the ending is.

3.2. Show your students the ending of one ad, and let them guess how the ad begins.

4. Reconstruction Activities

4.1. Let your class listen to the soundtrack of one ad, without letting them see any of the images. Give them an answer sheet to complete about the setting, the characters and the story. You can then ask them to either mime the ad or tell the rest of the class. This activity can be quite creative if you choose an ad with music in it rather than language.

4.2. Choose one ad with dialogue in it. Give your students only part of the dialogue and let them reconstruct the missing bits. Show them the ad and let them compare their version against it.

4.3. Show your students an ad backwards. Ask them to tell the class what they think happens in it.

5. Translation Activities

5.1. Give your students a script from a Spanish / Catalan ad. Ask them to translate it into English. Show them the English version of the same ad and let them compare their translation against it. Comment any interesting points that may arise.

5.2. Alternatively, you can give your students the English version of one ad and ask them to translate it into Spanish / Catalan. A fun activity to see if the ad works may be to try and read their version over the images and see if it works.

GROUPS OF ADS

So far we have been presenting activities to do with individual advertisements. There are a number of tasks, however, that you can devise to exploit ads in groups. Some suggestions follow.

1 Assessing ads

a. Students have different ways to give their opinions about the ads they see. One possibility is using grids to fill in according to different criteria. For lower level students a possible grid would be intended to answer the broad question "*Do You Like This Ad?*" The criteria could be simple opinion adjectives: *funny / attractive / original / etc.*, which they would evaluate by means of adverbs (*very / a little*), a score, Yes/No response, etc. The individual opinions can then be compared and debated in small groups or with the whole class.

b. For higher levels the assessment grid could include categories for a second, deeper level of analysis, to answer the broad question "*Is This a Good Ad?*". The relevant criteria here could include: *Target audience / Setting / Characters / Main action / Motto / Message*, etc. Students would fill it in with their individual opinions and then compare in small group to discuss what makes a good ad.

2 Story-telling

You can put together a number of ads where a story-line can be traced.

For this purpose, one of the most recurring elements in advertisements is showing a moment in the love relationship of a specific couple. A first meeting, falling in love, enjoying their time together, going on holiday, arguing or splitting up are frequent plot lines.

There are different ways to exploit such a series of ads with your students:

- Eliciting the different stages in a relationship before they watch the actual ads.
- Filling in the gaps between one stage and the next to reconstruct the whole story.
- Describing the feelings of characters towards each other at each stage.
- Speculating and predicting what may come next or how they may have arrived at that point.
- Suggesting ideas, giving advice, contributing with their personal experience etc.

3 Common Elements

Often, a specific group of ads do not seem to have anything in common, because they are for different products and the topics and stories they show are totally different. There are, however, other elements to look at that can help us think of possible teaching tasks:

3.1 The music in ads is a central element. They make use of many different styles and

it is responsible for much of the emotional response ads get. Sometimes it is a melody alone, others a fragment from a popular song, which you also may want to use as a complement to the ads.

3.2 The settings: parts of the house, city and countryside, foreign countries,...a lot of vocabulary work and oral practice can come out of describing, comparing, suggesting and responding to a series of different settings.

3.3 The use of certain characters or role models: babies, children, teenagers, housewives, parents or grandparents, whole families, etc. From simple description to character analysis and role playing, on to a more serious discussion of social models, working with ads can help students develop an increasingly personal, critical view of television, consumerism and society as a whole.

3.4 Humour is another recurring element which students tend to accept easily. It can be used in class in a number of ways, from introducing the given language to analysing recurring elements in jokes, comparing or remodelling, describing cultural differences in humour, etc.

A FEW TIPS TO GET STARTED

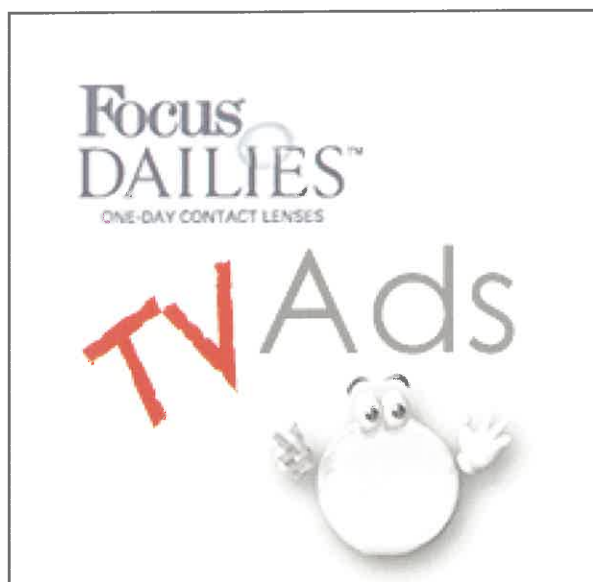
Ads can be videotaped from TV or they can be downloaded from the Internet and burned on a CD-Rom. There are a few sites where you can download ads at no cost, such as: www.advertisementwave.com, www.visit4info.com and www.absolutelylandy.com/tv.adverts. If you are burning ads on cd, bear in mind that you are going to need to change the before you are able to view them on a DVD player. Alternatively, you can choose to work on ads in the computer room, getting your students to watch the ads on the computers they are allocated.

Starting to use ads in your teaching practice may require a bit of preparation work outside the classroom

Although it may not always be necessarily so, using ads in

the ELT classroom can imply quite a long selection and editing process on the teacher's part. Selecting ads on the basis of their potential for developing activities based on a particular topic or a particular grammar item or vocabulary field might not always be easy or quick. In this case, it is advisable to do your search before your course begins and choose the ads that best fit your syllabus. If, however, you want to use ads to make your students do things with English, then you do not need to be so specific in your selection. So the activities presented in section 3 do not require as much work choosing the ads and most of them could in fact be carried out with almost any ad(s).

Starting to use ads in your teaching practice may require a bit of preparation work outside the classroom as you may easily find yourself having to spend time selecting ads or designing activities to do with them. This work, however, may prove to be very productive for several reasons. First of all, although some ad related activities can be fairly short, others can be surprisingly long and continue over a few sessions. Secondly, ads can be used time and time again, even over the years, and dated ads can indeed be very funny.



Quality, professionalism and ethics in language providers



Participants: Ann Dwyer, Ester Martin, John Kear, Susana Soler, Jeroni Sureda

Ester Martin : Good morning and welcome to this year's APAC Round Table. The title of the session is: Quality, professionalism and ethics in language providers. Some of you might be wondering just right now, what does that mean? Our purpose here is to focus on different aspects, of course, in relation to the closing of an important number of language schools. But not only on this, but also on whether teachers need to have a code of practice or not. Students should have a better understanding of what learning a language implies and we teachers should make them realise what it means to learn a language and how they could identify quality providers. I am pleased to introduce now the participants of the round table:

John Kear here is a senior teacher at the training services at the British Council, and is responsible for all the British Council *in-company* courses in and around Barcelona. He has extensive business and general teaching experience in Catalonia and Hong Kong and is also an experienced IELTS examiner and examiners' trainer. He holds an MA in English teaching from the Institute of Education from the University of London.

Susana Soler teaches at the IES Can Puig, in

Sant Pere de Ribes. Susana has been teaching English for over eighteen years and has also been involved in teacher training and producing materials. She is currently working on *Programes de Formació en el marc de l'avaluació interna de centres*.

On my right, this is *Ann Dwyer* who has been involved in TEFL for more than 20 years. Her main interest is how to enhance effective language acquisition. She combines her background in sociology and also in economics with TEFL to teach effective business communication skills in a foreign university and business English.

Finally, *Jeroni Sureda*. Jeroni started teaching private classes in 1963. After teaching for 19

years at the EOI, he moved to the Universitat Autònoma in 1993. He has published articles about politics and sports and his research interests include the role of the non-native teacher in the classroom and academic discourse.

My name is Ester Martin. I coordinate the young

learners section of a language school in Barberà del Vallès. I am also a new member of the APAC's board and I must say that I am delighted.

And just before the speakers begin giving their

“ People were, and still are, to some extent, promised by various organisations, quick painless results, learning in six months, no big efforts needed, etc. and I think it is understandable when professionally you are under pressure.” John Kear

opinions we would like to ask you a very simple question. Could you please raise your hand if you work in a primary school? Thank you. What about secondary schools? OK. Language schools? Others? For example: University.

Now John starts to present his point of view.

John Kear: I think it's enough to speak for about five minutes on the area of quality and professionalism. When we were talking before, by e-mail, etc. we decided that we look before maybe at the present situation and go back to the past to see why the present situation has arisen. The word crisis was being mentioned quite a lot. And also look at possible future solutions, and then come up with an improvement maybe in professionalism and quality. So that is what I am going to spend my five minutes doing. I think that it is fairly clear that there is a crisis in some sectors of language teaching or language learning in Barcelona, in Catalunya. My feeling is that it is not necessarily a crisis in terms of institutions, but it is more a crisis in confidence and in trust, in the job some institutions are doing. I think that washes over, that influences all institutions. My feeling is that that crisis has arisen basically because, if you like, the sector suffered a problem of faulty product. That may include, at the level of the learner, a dissatisfaction, or a lack of satisfaction with the underlying methodology, it might have to do with the quality of teaching, of the learning experiences they had. It might be an experience I had working with different companies where people learning English have had a different teacher every two weeks. But this is a crisis on quality, or the perception of quality on the behalf of the learner. There is not a crisis in the sector per se because the need to learn English has not gone away. It is still there, no question, and it still will be there in the future, for the reasons that we all know about.

“ My general impression is that the teachers I am in contact with, are highly professional in their approach. They are dedicated to what they do, in some cases to the point of obsession.” John Kear

In terms of miracle language learning schools, we have been asked to comment on, I am not going to mention any names. I have experience with students who come then to the British Council, having gone through the process of learning in miracle language schools. It is a general dissatisfaction with the kind of product

they have been given. Although my experience is that some of them have learnt things, despite their dissatisfaction with the system they have gone through. To me, it is an interesting viewpoint that learners are very, very resilient.

Despite the system they are given, they still learn.

Just to move on, why did the crisis in trust come about? On the part of the learners. I think it is essentially, as I said before, the faulty product. I think the closure of many of the language schools is a natural end to a faulty product.

When I first came to Barcelona 13 years ago, there was a huge demand for language learning. I came as an inexperienced teacher. I immediately got a job and was sent to different companies where there was a desperate need to learn languages. The miracle language schools arose out of that desperate need. Their success at the beginning was that they treated language like a sale product: heavy marketing, as we all know, television, radio, *la Vanguardia*, you name it. There were big adverts and the marketing said all the right things. It said:

- a dynamic teaching environment,
- there were no more than five people to a class,
- the latest technology.

I actually remember listening to *Radio Barcelona* Andreu Buenafuente talking with somebody from one of the language schools and saying what a marvellous system it was,

etc. etc. It was the answer, the panacea to all the people's language problems. And it was not, it is not. I think we will come on to the nature of learning a language later in this round table.

People were, and still are, to some extent, promised by various organisations, quick, painless results, learning in six months, no big effort needed, etc. and I think it is understandable when professionally you are under pressure. You work for a company. You might be forty years old, you might be twenty years old but you have got pressure, a lot of pressure from your employer to learn languages, to be able to do jobs with other people on other parts of the world, either with your company or outside your company. So I think that's where the crisis has arisen, basically. Through organisations trying to respond to quite desperate need offering what they see as a consumer product rather than a product based on pedagogical needs.

Taking us forward if you like to the future. Before, I'd like to return to the present a second just to mention current levels of professionalism, and here I don't distinguish between what we call L1 teachers, people like myself who are native English speakers, and L2 speakers who are people who are born maybe in Catalunya, other parts of Spain or other parts of the world but who teach English. My general impression is that the teachers I am in contact with, are highly professional in their approach. They are dedicated to what they do, in some cases to the point of obsession.

I think there are possibly one hundred people in this room, 9.30 to 10.45 on Saturday morning it is an example of professionalism and dedication. You are here because you are dedicated. Also I think people are increasingly highly qualified. They are well trained, when they start teaching, and educated as they go on through their teaching career. And going to do other qualifications, going to do masters,

degrees, etc. etc. And also experience, I think that L1 speakers and L2 speakers have an awful lot of experience.

Finally just to move on to the future, I would suggest that what we need is a three part approach:

- Firstly for employers
- Secondly for teachers
- Finally and most

importantly for learners

Employers need

- To move towards some kind of code of practice to provide a framework for, among other things, guaranteeing pedagogical standards.
- Guidelines concerning contracting conditions for teachers and other staff. I am talking here very much about the private sector.
- Transparent business practice. Organisations must become aware that they need to be transparent, and they need to put learners first.

Teachers,

- I think it is teachers' responsibility to look for contractor conditions.
- Make sure they work for organisations that provide full coverage in all areas, health coverage, social security coverage, etc. I know I am talking theoretically. These things may be difficult to attain, but we should look towards those areas.
- Adequate teachers' development programmes, if you are working for a school, that should be provided to help teachers develop the multitude skills that are needed today to be a language teacher.
- Adequate resources and back up support.
- Finally a salary that you can live on.

Learners,

- Learners need to be encouraged, and I am

“ It is not looking for the excellence of a group of people; it's just giving every single student in the class the possibility to learn, to improve.” Susana Soler

talking about learners of all ages here, they need to be encouraged to understand that learning a language, in many cases is a life-long commitment. There are no quick solutions for learning a language. Anybody that tells you that you would learn a language in six months, you would reach first certificate in six months, you would be able to communicate with a Chinese in six months is basically lying. That is harsh but I think it is the truth.

- Also learners need to be educated to ask themselves why they are learning a language, especially younger people and adults as well. I think you need to know why you are learning English. You need to know why you are learning Chinese or Japanese or Spanish or whatever.

- Also they need to be made aware of their own role as language learners, and what they can do; not only in the classroom but outside the classroom. I think that fits in with the idea of a global lifelong commitment.

- And finally, when they are choosing a centre to learn a language, learners need to ask themselves what methodology the school uses, and they need to ask the centre this as well. I am talking about private centres here but I think it is applicable to the young learners sector as well as the state sector. Qualified, experienced staff. Do they exist? Are they there? The kind of facilities the school or the centre provides. Are there self-access facilities, libraries, etc?

- To be very sceptical if offered quick, painless solutions. To be aware of what learning a language really involves.

At this point I think I have gone over the five minutes, I'll stop speaking.

Susana Soler: I shall follow the same pattern: present, past and future but from the point of view of the secondary teacher. And as a secondary teacher from a state school I have

to say what I think quality should mean for secondary teachers in state schools. I understand quality just as giving a public service, It is not looking for the excellence of a group of people; it's just giving every single student in the class the possibility to learn, to improve.

What makes a key difference with other kinds of schools, specially private schools, is that we want students to develop themselves as citizens. I think this is a very important difference between secondary schools and the other kind of schools. I have to begin with that so that you understand that our interest is not with productivity but in cohesion; in social cohesion. This said I'll first talk about the pre-

" We can identify a good school when this school has resources and qualified teachers are among schools most valued resources. "

Susana Soler

sent from the point of view of the secondary teacher. I insist because that is what I am here for. I must start distinguishing

two kinds of secondary schools: Those that are professional and those that are not. I have to say that loud and clear because there are language schools that have been historically ahead in methodological research and in training, and they have helped us very much. But unfortunately, we are here, I think, because of the other kind of school, those that are not so professional. They are unethical. Those language schools do not train their teachers, so they are behind methodological improvements. All they do is to follow a textbook, most of the time with an old fashioned structural, teacher centred approach with some exercises in computers thrown in. And so our students, students in secondary school who also attend those language schools, and their parents as well start thinking why on earth we are teaching English working in groups, trying to work with projects, and all these strange things. Because this is not English. This is not learning English. Learning English is what they do in that school outside. That's something that happens to me.

And in the second place there is a kind of

school that keeps telling the only thing a teacher needs to be a teacher is to be native. In many cases, the teachers don't know probably the language and the culture of the students they are teaching. So they see the secondary school teachers, as most of us are not native, they see us as not good teachers. A good teacher is the native one. It doesn't matter what our qualifications are. Both schools, both kinds of schools are mixed, unfortunately and consumers, not only do not have all the information, but they are convinced, most of the times, that learning a language can be done quickly and without effort, if they pay. We are so convinced that money buys everything!

And why does all this happen? Because of our past. Learning foreign languages has started very late. While it did not exist or it had little prominence, parents needed to send their children to language schools. The situation created disbelief on the possibilities of the state system to teach languages. And the situation still persists. Learning a language does still start too late in the system and the conditions are not the necessary ones. There is too high number of students per class; no possibility for the majority of these students to travel to the country of the language they are learning; there is a need for training programmes, specifically for teachers to be.....

Language schools have taken advantage of this in an unfair way and so people had great confidence in them. After the closing of some, the truth is now showing. And of course, it does all also happen because of the present, our present conditions.

And what is the future? I want to talk about two things related to the future. One of them I am involved in: a teaching programme of the *Avaluació Interna*. The need for quality, now that we have all students up to 16 at school, is clear but the way to achieve it, it can vary. *El Departament d'Ensenyament* was persuaded

to start with the *Avaluació Interna*. So, by law, every language department in secondary schools will have to begin a process of evaluation on those aspects they consider they have a problem with. I've been working now for three years in this programme, and I honestly think it can be a key to close analysis and to quality.

Also, I think it would be interesting to have a look abroad, for example to the Pisa Assessment survey. Perhaps some of you know it. It links with what we are talking here.

The proper name is Programme for International Students Assessment. That was carried out in many countries, industrialised countries all around the world coordinated by the governments of these countries through the Organisation for Economical Cooperation and Development. And the survey, what does it say about schools? Very, very briefly, it says what a good school is:

- We can identify a good school when this school has resources, but specially if it is associated with good skilled performances when students use these resources. Not only that we have a lot of computers, calculators, but also how often our students use this. I think the difference is important.
- The survey also says that qualified teachers are among schools' most valued resources. And as an example, written here for you, in reading an advantage of nine points over the average is associated with the proportion of teachers with university level qualification. This is important to say.
- Also the number of students per class. If it exceeds 25 the performance deteriorates.
 - Some aspects of school policy and practice:
 - School climate
 - Teachers' expectations of the students
 - Teachers' morale and commitment
- And finally some aspects of classroom

" We all know that children have a wonderful gift in that they can imitate. " Ann Dwyer

practice that lead to better students' performance, such as

- teacher / student relation,
- disciplinary climate of the classroom,
- the extent to which teacher emphasises academic performance and places high demands on the students.

Perhaps, we can hope the future comes in these terms.

Ann Dwyer: I agree with your points of view. I come with a different one, not only for the place where I work but also because of my background. I have done a lot of teacher training with primary school teachers. I still go out voluntarily to Barcelona industrial belt to work with primary teachers so I can see reality in the classroom. I have children of my own. So I am very much in touch with the problems that exist in the state system, and the problems that exist in the private system. We are talking about two worlds which influence each other. And I think that one of the problems in secondary and primary schools is the diversity of the classroom that people are suffering from. It comes because parents send their kids to language schools to learn English. Often, they are taught by incompetent teachers. This idea that you are not an English speaker, therefore you can't teach kids, to me feels really odd. I would understand that we all know that children have a wonderful gift in that they can imitate. Surely, it is the native speakers who should be teaching children.

And the Catalan teachers, who understand grammar, who can understand learning, and who can explain things, could be therefore with the intermediate and higher classes. I think that schools are selling the native teacher without understanding what they are selling. And the public is buying the native tea-

cher without understanding what they are buying.

In addition, we have what I would call parasite schools, ESADE and places like that where conditions and quality are correct. We have ethical language schools or we have unethical language schools. Before Spain joined the European Union, in order to work in a language school you needed a work permit. In order to get a work permit, you needed to have a University qualification. I had to pass my CAP to get a work permit. You had to have qualifications that were recognised by the Ministry. OK, you had where people didn't have their papers, they didn't have local qualifications. I mean cowboy outfits. But it was not general.

When I arrived in Barcelona in 1981, every single language school in Barcelona, everyone of those 99 language schools that existed in the time gave their teachers holiday pay, medicare.. And if you were off work because you were ill, you were paid. And teachers on those days were paid fairly well. If you'd be paid now the proportion you were paid then, teachers would not be squatting one on top of each other. I mean I know of quality teachers who are living in appalling conditions because they cannot pay the rent.

You can say, well yes cowboy outfits, in the past the teachers didn't even have a qualification. In fact, you did not need much of a qualification to use *Streamline English One* or *First Things First*, to be quite frank. Now they have a one month course and think that with that, they can be

professional teachers. In one month, you cannot learn the psychology of language learning, you probably do not know much about grammar. With a one month course. We have got intrusion in the sector and nothing is being done about it. I'll give ideas later about what could be done.

“ Global English is some kind of myth, because it is a world language, but it is not in the hands of the world. Why do we have to give to our students what is perceived as important by some author in English, whatever it is?” Jeroni Sureda

In the private sector, there was a great boom up to 1992. Then most language schools were charging company classes at 5.000 pesetes an hour. Now language schools are accepting company classes at 21€ an hour.

After the Olympic Games we are talking about the saturation of the market, we are talking, if you like, about supply and demand. There is a huge demand for English language learning. The quality of the state teachers has absolutely improved. I see a remarkable difference between 1981 and now. An enormous difference.

But in the private language schools, they've squeezed the prices so you get company classes that pay their teachers less than I pay my babysitter. And, according to Tessa Woodward, if you are a beginner teacher, for every class that you teach you need to prepare for about two hours plus travelling time. That's four hours, at 6€ an hour. This in the private sector is a real crisis.

I think there is a problem of confidence. No confidence in teachers because of the price: you pay peanuts, you get monkeys. And there are a lot of monkeys out there.

In addition, the backwash effect in the classroom for people working in primary and secondary is "But my teacher says you are wrong" or "My teacher says this" or "My teacher says that". Now that teacher might be a Norwegian student aged 19, extremely proficient in the English language, who has done a one-month course. Or simply a native speaker who doesn't know. My Norwegian student is probably better teacher than many native speakers who do not know why one form of verb is used rather than another. I say so because it is so. I think that in primary and secondary, private and state, there is a serious need for building self-esteem. Self-esteem is in teaching that you are able to say: "I don't know. I will find out". Self-esteem among teachers means admitting that our pronunciation might not be perfect, not knowing how to pronounce.

Primary and secondary teachers have to have courses. And here the *Departament d'Ensenyament* has actually failed you in some ways, I think, as they have removed a large number of courses that there used to be to develop the foreign language competence of primary and secondary teachers so they can go to the *Escola Oficial d'Idiomes*. How many teachers are going to go to the *Escola Oficial d'Idiomes*, and say in the class that he is an English teacher. And everybody in that room would say: "She is an English teacher, my God!"

Non-native teachers have to have self-esteem.

Even if she does not pronounce perfectly, she can hear when one student is pronouncing perfectly and use that student as a model. That student

might be pronouncing properly because he has been going to the British Council in the afternoon or maybe he is pronouncing properly because she or he listens to Eminem. I think that a teacher who doesn't take advantage of a native speaker in the classroom as a model of pronunciation is wrong. You can hear I can't pronounce the "s" properly. You think I train my students to pronounce the "s" the way I do?

Ester Martin: What do you think of the future in the private sector?

Ann Dwyer: OK. The future. I think that places like ESADE or the British Council are suffering from unfair competition. I think they should go to the Ministry of Labour and say this place and this place (I can tell you a lot. I have a whole list here), do not pay social security for their teachers, or do not tax their teachers. They have their teachers working under the table. If the textile industry can report the Chinese to the Ministry of Labour, then all above mentioned teaching institutions have to denounce that unfair competition. That's what should be done. We teachers have to improve quality and we have to improve conditions. To improve conditions, we have to watch out for those schools who exploit their teachers.

"To understand what we do, we should be students."

Jeroni Sureda

Jeroni Sureda: As everybody has spoken so much I have very little to say. I remember in 1966. I was then 16. The very first thing I did when coming to Barcelona is come to this very room. There were no classes. The classes started in October. It was September. And I remember I entered here. I sat at one of these benches. After having passed all the night on the boat from Mallorca, sitting on one of these benches my ass was not very happy. If 37 years ago somebody had said, well in 2003, you will be sitting at this very same room I would not have believed that. And the place is still the same.

I want to talk about something that really worries me: the way our role is perceived has not changed like this room has not changed either. In our classrooms we have new technology, coloured textbooks, everyday less text and more colour. Many things have changed but one thing has not changed: what do policy makers, what do school owners, even our teachers, parents; what do they think they know about our profession? What do we do? Why do we do it? I am a bit tired of reading, and reading, and reading. Of going to lectures, to conventions and being shown that what I am doing is teaching global English. I am using the word teaching, though it is not politically correct. But I refuse to be a facilitator, I am a teacher.

So this business of teaching. Do we ever teach global English, world English? And I remember last year, something from Robert Philipson who said : global English is some kind of myth, because it is a world language, but it is not in the hands of the world. What we should learn, is in the hands of some publishers. And look at the contents of the books. Every year I say the same. Look at the first page. Why do we have to give our students what is perceived as important by some author in English, whatever it is. Why do the schools do Oxford English or Brighton English and not Model English (referring to the name of the main prison in Barcelona) Because that's where our students would practice their English as many of our

prisoners come from Subsaharian Africa, or Taj Mahal English. So, do we serve the interests of our students? I have not got the solution, so I am a bit demagogic now, but I think the first we should do when we talk about self-esteem is being aware of what we are doing. We are helping people to do, what? As I said yesterday, when you are in a village in Mallorca you have not got underground; yet all the books talk about taking the underground, taking the metro.

After 20, 30 years we say that we teach English for everybody. Is this middle class suburban England, is that what we want our students to do?

This perception should be changed by the school owners, because, we insist we do not want to be travesties speakers, we want to be ourselves. But when it comes to sell it, even my university, goes for the native speaker. That is the incoherence in some institutions. There are people here from all universities and they'll be able to tell you, that in some universities, teachers of English don't get the same salary as the teachers of other subjects. I once asked why and one administrator from the University told me, what else can you do? You can only teach English.

So what must we do? In the classroom: think whether what you are doing is what the students need. Not teaching the difference between must and have to.

Have you ever thought about being a student? This is very important. To understand what we do, we should be students. At present, I am a student of Dutch, a very bad student, by the way, and I know that when the teacher asks me to write a composition of about three pages on non-smoking I think, how cruel he is. Before we talk about them, be a student and you will see it's not the same.

That was about the past and the present, all mixed up. The future depends on you.

Joana M. Sancho

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Interviewed by Ana Aguilar

Ana Aguilar: The initial extravagant hopes of some intellectuals with ICT seem to have given way to the *The computer delusion*. Do you think that is because too much was expected of the new technologies?

Joana M. Sancho: The answer is yes. Once again, as it had already happened with other technologies, information and communication, like video or TV, when they appeared it was considered they would solve all the problems in education. As time went by, they were put in their place; some did not even occupy a place in the schools.

Those people with too high expectations often had no reasonable ground for them. But technology has to be sold. Technological innovation gets mixed up with educational innovation. Also these technologies have represented an important transformation of the economy, making some people very rich, such as Bill Gates. It was thought that the same transformation would happen in education. But those people with extravagant expectations had very little idea of the problems of education.

“ The differences in learning produced by computers depend on the educational context, and how the teachers can organise learning activities that are significant for learning.”

Even in the productive and economic world, the initial expectations have been greatly reduced. Now people are becoming aware that technological innovations must go hand in hand with reforms in the productive system as well as the conditions of the working place. Buying a few computers is of no use if the obsolete structures of the firm do not change. The same happens in the schools.

AA: You mention some very interesting research from the author who coined the expression *The computer delusion*. He seems to have concluded that there is no relationship between learner's achievement and the extensive use of computers.

JMS: Since the eighties, there have been many researchers trying to identify the improvement in learning produced by the computers, as it happened with films, TV, video. Oppenheimer, collected about 240 pieces of research trying to identify whether the learners had learned more and better with the computers, but he could not find any difference. The differences in learning depend really of the educational context, and how the teachers can organise learning activities that are signi-

ficant for learning.

Learning is done differently from a book than from a computer. But computers are very versatile instruments and if the programmes are for what the English call Drill and kill, and not for creative activities, they might not be very helpful. But it is not the computer itself, it is the way the task is organised; whether the teacher allows the learner explore their own ideas, or finds new means of representing knowledge ...

Robert McClintock is an scholar in charge of setting up millionaire projects on the use of the IT in schools. After ten years experience in the field, has written an article in the review *Cuadernos de Pedagogia* where he establishes the indispensable conditions, he calls axioms, for computers to represent a difference in the schools.

The first one is technological:

- High-speed WAN to LAN connectivity is essential, reaching into all classrooms.

The other six are pedagogical axioms:

- Schools should integrate new media into all aspects of the curriculum, for students of all ages.

- Diffusion of the use of new media in a school should result, not from mandate, but from responsive support of voluntary efforts – constructivism in school management.

- Schools should design their technology implementations as investments in the power of students to acquire their education.

- Educators should abandon the premise that they can predict what a good student should have learned as a result of an educational experience.

- Classrooms should become places from which students and teachers communicate interactively, among themselves, and with specialists and peers throughout the locality, culture, and globe.

- Under emerging conditions, precepts of pedagogical common sense may need substantial revision, particularly with respect to

what is and is not «age appropriate,» who can make sound pedagogical choices, and how feedback controlling the educational process should work.

“ Children should know that there are many interpretations for any phenomenon. That is what IT can offer; but if teachers insist on knowing previously anything their learners have access to, that is impossible.”

In the project he has participated in, only the technological axiom was always fulfilled, so there was no real difference in learning. The teachers, with the computers, were teaching in exactly the same way they had always done.

I remembered when the LOGO language was introduced in the schools. It was meant for the kids to explore problems and hypothesis, but I have watched teachers adapting the instrument to their own idea of learning, not exploring new possible means and ways of doing things differently.

AA: In one of your articles you differentiate between endogenic (what each person knows) and exogenic knowledge (the information we have at our disposal, outside the individual). The second one has progressed immensely but we have not much evidence that the private knowledge of each individual has varied too much.

JS: The information available is spectacular. Each day more than a thousand books are published, 29.000 scientific publications, plus newspapers, radio, TV. It is impossible that anybody can grasp more than a minimal part of that knowledge.

But the knowledge of each individual, which constitutes his own cognitive, emotional web,

has not increased enough to process all this information. The day has only 24 hours. People need sleeping, social relationships... Not even in one field of knowledge can one person be up to date in everything that is published.

It is a real pity that children with immense capacity for learning waste their time at school. The world goes at motorway speed but schools progress like mountain paths, children are bored at school.

Nowadays, children live very much with adults; they hear and listen to everything, and most of the things they are taught at school sound already familiar. Outside school, they have access to everything, but in a very superficial manner. At school, instead of dealing with themes in depth, they receive again a coat of varnish. Children soon learn that what is required from them is that they are able to repeat what the teacher or the textbook says. I am asking forgiveness from teachers, I am a teacher myself, but I think that children are cheated at schools. They should not have to repeat what the books say. They should solve problems, become articulate, be able to express their own ideas, elaborate their own criterion, and discern what is significant for each learner.

No textbook offers the different theories prevailing over any subject. They say, for instance: The brain is so and so. But for a linguist the brain is something different than for a biologist or a doctor. Children should know that there are many interpretations for any phenomenon. That is what IT can offer; but if teachers insist on knowing previously anything their learners have access to, that is impossible. My students should get to know much more than I know myself.

AA: That is the question. Many teachers do not feel confident to allow their learners go into the WWW and find things they do not know about.

JS: It is dramatic when my students tell me that their teachers do not enter in Internet, so to prepare a paper they just cut and paste. Already, in 93, the son of a friend used to do that with the Encarta Encyclopaedia. His mother told him to change some words so that the teacher would not notice, because the type of discourse used is not proper of an adolescent. But he said the teacher did not even look at the papers. Perhaps it was just that teacher and there may be teachers that read their students' papers.

AA: There are still great believers in IT. You quote in one of your articles Bill Gate's views on how telematic networks would make learning pleasant and practical. Do you share his optimism?

JS: Nowadays, there are many people talking about education and technology, learning, and teaching, and giving three pennies solutions. That is not possible because learning and teaching is not only having access to information. Information is not knowledge. Learning goes far beyond that. It is a good tool but without the power some people assign to it.

To learn, children need a situation minimally stable emotionally. They need to be loved and safe and feel that what they are trying to learn is important. It is necessary that society

“ The Cyber Teacher needs to be aware that the walls of the classroom have crumbled. He does not need to be a fanatic of internet, but needs to link his teaching with the knowledge that his pupils might have acquired outside his classes.”

appreciates learning and values more an honest, articulated person than somebody who kicks a ball or hits a tennis ball. Children feel that the effort necessary to learn is not worth it, as the ones who earn the real

money mostly have very few qualifications.

Bill Gates also says that for the WWW to be effective it is necessary to eradicate violence and marginalization. That is the problem. Why was Finland first in the Pisa test organised by the OCDE in which the pupils had to transfer the knowledge acquired at school to daily life

questions? We have a project with Finland and I can say that Finnish schools are not very different from schools all over the world. But Finland is a country that cares for education. It is also a small country, without social conflicts or emigration, where schools are important for the authorities and society in general. Schools are really autonomous, with a polytechnic curriculum in which they learn cookery and physics and chemistry through it. They also learn carpentry. The curriculum is integrated and education is important. Most people learn foreign languages. Finland is not a rich country, but has a great project of integrating schools with the productive world and society in general. That is fundamental as learning does not only take place from 9 to 5.

AA: You mention the term Cyber teacher. How would you define his characteristics?

JS: The dimension of space and time have been shattered. From my computer I can enter a university library, a simulation, a web camp. Space has exploded. We can be in many places at the same time. Equally, the cyber teacher needs to be aware that the walls of the classroom have crumbled. He does not need to be a fanatic of Internet, glued to his computer all day, but needs to link his teaching with the knowledge that his pupils might have acquired outside his classes. Otherwise learners would consider what they are being taught at school totally irrelevant.

I think schools timetables need to be more flexible and be organised around projects or interest groups.

AA: You mention as aberrant the expression used in education: "*Con este examen he eliminado material.*"

JS: That is pathetic. Learners regurgitate at the exam and forget about it later.

The cyber teacher connects his teaching with the outside world. Take EFL. All is full of terms in English, and in other languages: Internet, films in original version... Nowadays the teacher is symbolically in the cyber space despite being inside a classroom.

AA: Training. How does one train cyber teachers?

JS: That is the hot potato. Not only primary and secondary teachers lock themselves up in their classrooms and forget about the cyber space, it also happens to university teachers. The rich experiences we might have outside the classrooms are not invested in the classes. The great problem is that the new teachers, particularly the new university graduates that enter teaching after the brief CAP, are really not well equipped to deal with the job.

So, when things go wrong, teachers blame the educational authorities, they blame the parents, they blame the children. They never blame themselves. Each has to take all his own responsibilities. And the training does not help him for that.

He has been trained for the school of two centuries ago. The new teacher focuses excessively on his own subject matter and considers quality in learning being able to repeat what he has taught. He does not teach for comprehension but for repetition, does not equip the learner for furthering his acquisition of knowledge beyond his school life.

Learners question the usefulness of all they are being taught at school. I think all the subjects in the curriculum can make sense and be transferred to life outside, even Latin. But not the rote learning of *rosa, rosae*, but an awareness of how our culture hangs on the Roman one; etymology can be fascinating.

"The idea of the *School Plus* project, is that all the IT material need to go hand in hand with what we call symbolic and organisational technologies; that is, different ways of organising teaching, grouping learners and think about knowledge."

Rote learning of declinations is of no use. Memory is important but learners need to practice meaningful memory.

Training of teachers is much more than a few courses in the use of the computer. The teacher needs to know how knowledge is built.

What should the state school represent?

For me, state schools should promote an educational space that is not promoted by any other entity at the moment. It needs to be pluralistic, responsible, and democratic. It needs to be aware that the different cultures add values to our own.

The way teaching is organised nowadays, it could be substituted by multimedia modules. But we need somebody making sure the learner does what he has to do.

Information is not knowledge. Knowledge needs to happen in a context and make learners understand the reasons of the phenomena. Learners of English as a foreign language need to be aware of the logic of the language and the culture and of the reasons the speakers of that language have for using it.

AA: You participate in projects in secondary schools in Catalonia. Are these projects giving satisfactory results? Could they be extrapolated?

JS: From the University of Barcelona, we promoted and coordinate a project called Schools plus. More than a platform to build the school of tomorrow. I am a member of the team that evaluates school projects for the European Union. The evaluation follows a very rigorous scheme. There were many projects that presented software for the in-service training of teachers; as if just some software could retrain a teacher. I coined the sentence: *"It takes more than a platform to rebuild a profession"*.

When we participated in an IT project for the schools of tomorrow, we gave it this title. The idea of the project is that all the IT material needs to go hand in hand with what we call symbolic and organisational technologies (different ways of organising teaching, grouping learners, thinking about knowledge).

To start with, we have carried out some research on how parents, learners and teachers see the educational needs of our society of today. It has been great. We organised Internet forums asking the opinion of parents from five different countries. Many were thrilled to be questioned for the first time in their lives. With the results of the information provided we have started a platform on

ways to work with learners based on projects and work groups. We have started the project with a group of teachers from The IES Bernat Metge, Barcelona who have done a pilot platform. We are quite happy, but, as we suspected, it is difficult for teachers to change their ways of working.. Making the platform is not difficult, changing the ways teachers see things is a totally different question and it will take time.

At the moment, five schools from five different European countries participate in the project. We want to include more schools and widen the net joining other innovative schools.

AA: That links with one of the things you said in your lecture about teaching other subjects through the medium of English to make it more relevant. What is your proposal in that question?

JS: Unfortunately I know very few schools in which different languages are taught through English.

AA: It could be done through projects.

JS: In fact, in the project Schools plus, *More than a platform to build the school of tomorrow*. We thought of a cooperative activity

"Values have changed and the way to relate to learners is to create learning situations they feel connected with."

shared by the learners of the five schools. But we had a problem. The activity had to be carried out in April, but the five schools had four different religions and it coincided with the different celebrations, so it could not be achieved. But we shall do it in future.

AA: At what stage is the project at the moment?

JS: We agreed on the choice of a theme. We had to problematise it, not just describe it. We chose WATER. And each country had to find five significant questions about it. It is quite evident that the questions of Israel about water would greatly differ from the ones the Finns ask. But they all treat the subject of water, and explore the informatic resources with a software for managing information. When they present the project to their colleagues it would become self evident that any theme can vary enormously according to the country.

AA: Who created the soft?

JS: A Greek firm, but we also participate with a computer expert, who is great. We are a compact, well organised team.

AA: In your lecture at the Jornades you mentioned that pupils demand from teachers that they have a good control of the class and are able to create an atmosphere conducive to learning. Discipline seems to be fundamental for the learners.

JS: In the questionnaire on line we did previous to the project it was clear that learners do not want teachers who cannot control the class. Learners say that they want to learn and his classmates do not allow it. They consider that teachers should have means and ways of controlling this. But I shall differentiate this from the old school, rigid discipline based on punishment. That does not work today, because learners just do not care whether they are punished or expelled from the classroom. If they are sent home, so much the better. Values have changed and the way to relate to learners is to create learning situations they feel connected with. I worked with a group of very difficult learners of 7th EGB and the first day were difficult, until I

started talking to the learners and finding what was happening to them. I invested a lot of time that was not wasted. Teachers think that if he/she is not teaching the subject she is wasting her time. For me it is quite the opposite. You have to create a learning environment, a mutual confidence, so that they realise that learners and teachers are in the same boat and have the same goal. For me discipline is auto imposed, an awareness that different learners learn at different paces and even different things. But I do not believe in discipline, or even in separating the good from the bad. The poor teacher that has to take the bad has a difficult job. And what means to be good/bad? Perhaps the ones we call the good are just docile, ready to repeat. While the bad can be more creative not wanting to be submitted.

Sociology distinguishes three types of conduct:

- Connected
- Disconnected
- In conflict

The first one does not give problems. The disconnected need to be brought back into the fold. But the really interesting conducts are the third type. They are telling you that something is going wrong and perhaps teachers are not doing it so well.

AA: It is quite sad that one of the reasons why girls obtain such good results at school is because they are submissive, obedient.

JS: In an international seminar we found out that in all countries there were more women than men going to university and obtaining better results. I pointed out that there was something wrong. Women arrive at the university better schooled but afraid of any creative, proper idea. Schools produce containers and those not ready to be containers fail. The old disciplinarian ways have no place in the school of today. The school of today needs to progress in a democratic, humanitarian way.

Thanks Dra. Sancho for your enthusiasm and interest in education.



INSTITUT BRITÀNIC

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NO L'OBLIDARÀS

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courses for advanced
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to improve their
skills and knowledge.

Information can be obtained from:

- Amigó, 74 i 83 · 08021 · Barcelona
- T. 93 241 99 77/97 00 · F. 93 202 36 95
- Vendrell, 1 · 08022 · Barcelona
- T. 93 253 19 00 · F. 93 418 86 01
- www.britishcouncil.es
- regisbcn@britishcouncil.es

Carla Beard's site: Web English Teacher

AP & IB
Book Reports
Children's Literature
Critical Thinking
Drama
ESL/ESOL/ELL
Governance, Mechanics, Usage
Home
Interdisciplinary
Journals, Blogs, and Yearbooks
Just for Fun
Literature (Drama)
Media & Media Literacy
Mythology, Folklore, and the Hero
Poetry
Professions
Resources
Reading



Biography, Autobiography Personal narrative, Memoir

Part narration, part description, and sometimes part exposition, writing about people is a challenge for students at every level. Try these ideas to improve student skills!

- [Alphabetical Autobiography](#)
Students write a 26-page alphabetical autobiography, in the format of an elementary school alphabet book. "A is for Alabama. I was born in Alabama, and..."
- [Biography: Experience It!](#)
Materials for working with biographies from A&E and the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader for access.
- [Edgar Allan Poe, Ambrose Bierce, and the Unreliable Biographers](#)
This lesson, designed for high school students, asks students to consider the possible bias of the biographer.
- [Shifting Gears](#)
Students reflect on changes in their lives and their impact.

by Ana Yagüe

This is a website that we want to recommend for teachers of all levels, because here you can find almost anything and everything connected with the teaching of English language and literature. There is a great collection of links organized according to different and enticing topics like Media and Media Literacy, Poetry, Mythology, Folklore and the Hero, Critical Thinking, etc. Although it is basically aimed to teachers of English as first language, you will find many lesson plans and texts that can be immediately usable in your classroom. It also has a very well organized and complete links section on ESL teaching.

But let's see what the author says about her aims in putting together this great page.

About Web English Teacher

"When I started teaching in 1975, "cutting-edge technology" in the classroom meant opaque projectors, 8-millimeter loop movies, and ditto masters in green and red as well as purple. Today it includes wireless networks, streaming media, SMART Boards, and e-books. Fortunately, it also includes the Internet and its most popular component, the World Wide Web.

In the spring of 2000, my student teacher spent hours online trying to find information and ideas to help her in the classroom. "Someone," I thought, "should put ideas teachers can use in one place online. It would save a lot of time searching."

That June, "someone" became me.

At Web English Teacher educators can take advantage of online technology to share ideas and to benefit from the work of others. Beginning teachers can find guidance; experienced teachers can find inspiration. Think of it as the faculty library and faculty workroom on a global scale.

Because the most important part of teaching isn't the technology."

Carla Beard

We want to show you some examples of the contents of this website and we will focus on the excellent section of humour. We think that humour is a sure hit with students and also a very efficient way to work on cultural perspectives. Here are just a couple of examples of each category.

PUNS

Life's Questions:

- If you choke a Smurf, what color does it turn?
- Is it OK to use the AM radio after noon?
- What do you call a male ladybug?
- What hair color do they put on the driver's license of a bald man?
- Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes?
- Why do they sterilize the needle for lethal injections?
- How is it possible to have a civil war?
- If you try to fail, and succeed, which have you done?
- If the "black box" flight recorder is never damaged during a plane crash, why isn't the whole plane made of that stuff?
- If man evolved from monkeys and apes, why do

we still have monkeys and apes?

- Whose cruel idea was it for the word lisp to have a "s" in it?

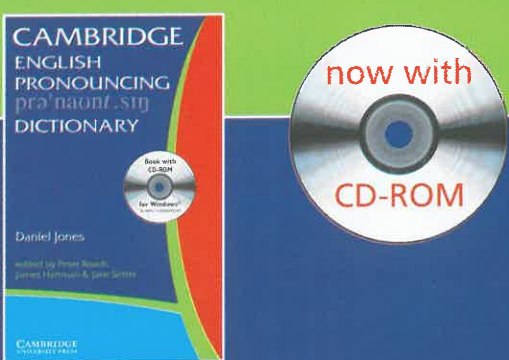
Technology for Country Folk

1. LOG ON: Makin a wood stove hotter.
2. LOG OFF: Don't add no more wood.
3. MONITOR: Keepin an eye on the wood stove.
4. DOWNLOAD: Gettin the farwood off the truk.
5. HARD DRIVE: Gettin home in the winter time.
6. WINDOWS: Whut to shut wen it's cold outside.
7. SCREEN: Whut to shut wen it's blak fly season.
8. BYTE: Whut them dang flys do.
9. CHIP: Munchies fer the TV.
10. MICRO CHIP: Whut's in the bottom of the munchie bag.

CAMBRIDGE

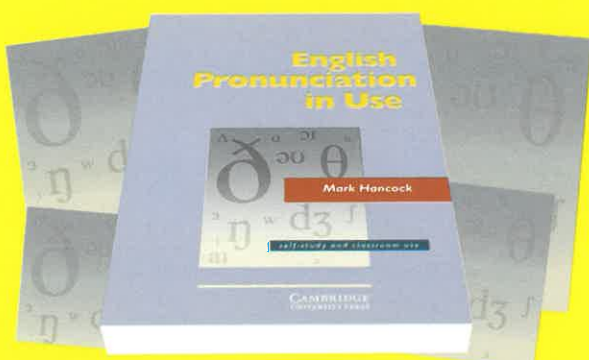
/prəˌnʌntsi'eɪʃən/

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**now with
CD-ROM**

Introducing pronunciation to the *In Use* family



dictionary.cambridge.org

www.cambridge.org/elt/inuse

www.cambridge.org/elt 

11. DOT MATRIX: Old Dan Matrix's wife.
12. LAP TOP: Whar the kitty sleeps.
13. KEYBOARD: Whar ya hang the dang keys.
14. SOFTWARE: Them dang plastic forks and knives.
15. MOUSE: Whut eats the grain in the barn.
16. ENTER: Northerner talk fer "C'mon in y'all"
17. RANDOM ACCESS MEMORY: Wen ya cain't 'member whut ya paid fer the rifle when yore wife asks.

Romeo: Outside yr window.
 Juliet: Stalker!
 Romeo: Had 2 come. feeling jiggy.
 Juliet: B careful. My family h8 u.
 Romeo: Tell me about it. What about u?
 Juliet: 'm up for marriage f u are.. Is tht a bit fwd?
 Romeo: No. Yes. No. Oh, dsnt mat-r, 2moro @ 9?
 Juliet: Luv U xxxx
 Romeo: CU then xxxx

by cartoonist Roz Chast, first published in the New Yorker

PARODIES

Romeo and Juliet text messages

Act 1

Login: Romeo : R u awake? Want 2 chat?
 Juliet: O Rom. Where4 art thou?

Virus Alert

- If you receive an email titled "I Hate You," delete it immediately.
- Do not open it. It contains a virus.

CAMBRIDGE

Contemporary fiction for learners of English

Cambridge English Readers

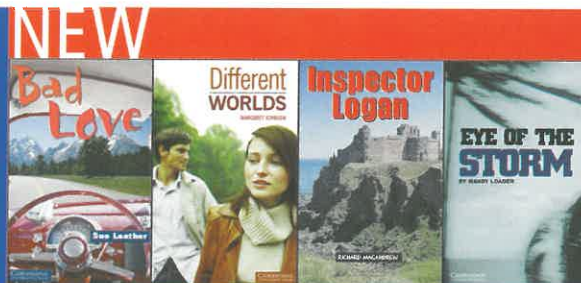


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www.cambridge.org/elt/readers



www.cambridge.org/elt

CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

Apparently this one is pretty nasty.

- It will not only erase everything on your hard drive, but it will also delete anything on disks within 20 feet of your computer.
- It demagnetizes the stripes on all of your credit cards.
- It reprograms your ATM access code, screws up the tracking on your VCR and uses sub-space field harmonics to scratch any CD's you attempt to play.
- It will re-calibrate your refrigerator's coolness settings so all your ice cream melts and your milk curdles.
- It will program your phone auto dial to call only your mother-in-law's number.
- This virus will mix antifreeze into your fish tank.
- It will drink all your beer.
- It will leave dirty socks on the coffee table when you are expecting company.
- It will replace your shampoo with Nair and your Nair with Rogaine, all while dating your significant other behind your back and billing their hotel rendezvous to your Visa card.
- It will rewrite your backup files, changing all your active verbs to passive and incorporating undetectable misspellings which grossly change the interpretations of key sentences.
- If the "I HateYou" message is opened in a Windows 95/98 environment, it will leave the toilet seat up and leave your hair dryer plugged in dangerously close to a full bathtub.
- It will not only remove the forbidden tags from your mattresses and pillows, it will also refill your skim milk with whole milk.
- It is insidious. It is destructive. It is also a rather interesting shade of mauve.

LANGUAGE PLAY

Double negative

A linguistics professor was lecturing to his class one day. "In English," he said, "A double negative forms

a positive. In some languages, though, such as Russian, a double negative is still a negative. However, there is no language wherein a double positive can form a negative."

A voice from the back of the room piped up, "Yeah, right."

Rules of writing

1. Verbs HAS to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat)
6. Also, always avoid annoying alliteration.
7. Be more or less specific.
8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.
9. Also too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
10. No sentence fragments.
11. Contractions aren't necessary and shouldn't be used.
12. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
14. One should NEVER generalize.
15. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
16. Don't use no double negatives.
17. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
18. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
19. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
20. The passive voice is to be ignored.
21. Eliminate commas, that are, not necessary. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
22. Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.
23. Kill all exclamation points!!!

24. Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.
25. Understatement is always the absolute best way to put forth earth shaking ideas.
26. Use the apostrophe in it's proper place and omit it when its not needed.
27. Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
28. If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times -- Resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it correctly.
29. Puns are for children, not groan readers.
30. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
31. Even IF a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
32. Who needs rhetorical questions?
33. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
34. Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.

Ooops!

Mistranslations

"Please to bathe inside the tub."
(In a Japanese Hotel Room)

"Please leave your values at the front desk."
(In a Paris Hotel Elevator)

"Visitors are expected to complain at the office between the hours of 9 and 11 A.M. daily."
(In a Hotel in Athens)

"The flattening of underwear with pleasure is the job of the chambermaid."
(In a Yugoslavian Hotel)

"You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid."
(In a Japanese Hotel)

"Our wines leave you nothing to hope for."
(On the Menu of a Swiss Restaurant)

"Ladies may have a fit upstairs."
(Outside a Hong Kong tailor shop)

"Drop your trousers here for best results."
(In a Bangkok dry cleaner's)

"Ladies, leave your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time."
(In a Rome laundry)

"Would you like to ride on your own ass?"
(Advertisement for donkey rides in Thailand)

"We take your bags and send them in all directions."
(In a Copenhagen airline ticket office)

"English well talking. Here speeching American."
(At a shop in Majorca)

"When passenger of foot heave in sight, tootle the horn. Trumpet him melodiously at first, but if he still obstacles your passage then tootle him with vigor."
(Rental car brochure in Tokyo)

FOR TEACHERS

Grammar correction

An English teacher spent a lot of time marking grammatical errors on her students' papers and was beginning to doubt whether she was getting through to them. One day as the stress got to her, she leaned over her desk and rubbed her temples.

"What's the matter, Mrs. D?" one passing student asked.

"Tense," she mumbled.

The student hesitated a moment, then said, "What could be the matter? What has been the matter? What was the matter?"



Web English Teacher

Just for Fun

Here is a collection of jokes, puns, parodies and other fun stuff I've received via e-mail from students and colleagues or found as I explored the Web. Most are humorous and show different aspects of English at play. A few are more serious. Almost all are appropriate for use in a classroom.

- [Puns](#)
- [Parodies](#)
- [Language Play](#)
- [For Teachers](#)
- [OOPS!](#)
- [Miscellany](#)

MISCELLANY

Great truths about life that little children have learned:

- 1) No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.
- 2) When your Mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.
- 3) If your sister hits you, don't hit her back. They always catch the second person.
- 4) Never ask your 3-year old brother to hold a tomato.
- 5) You can't trust dogs to watch your food.
- 6) Reading what people write on desks can teach you a lot.
- 7) Don't sneeze when someone is cutting your hair.
- 8) Puppies still have bad breath, even after eating a chocolate.
- 9) School lunches stick to the wall.
- 10) You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.
- 11) Don't wear polka-dot underwear under white shorts.
- 12) The best place to be when you're sad is Grandpa's lap.

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Our web

Teachers-Useful Links



by Ana Yagüe

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Link to the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional, where you can find grants, funding, international organizations, etc

Institutions

In this section you can find links to other institutions, like the Instituto Cervantes or the Fulbright Institute, some of which also offer grants and projects that can be of interest for English teachers.

Press and Media

On-line newspapers and magazines.

Travelling

If you are thinking of travelling to the U.K. you can find interesting information on different travel and tourist guides from this section. Lots of useful links for people travelling to the UK for all sorts of different purposes.

Link Exchanges

Here we have selected some pages of general interest for the teaching of English. Among other links, there are pages of teachers, like the great *Isabel Pérez's site* or teachers associations from Spain and abroad. Also, there are some directories of resources for learning English on the net, like the *English Web Guide* or general sites like the *EFL web*.

Catalan Department of Education

You can keep up to date on regulations; grants and projects in Catalonia with the links in this section.

Ministry of Education

Official information for all the state can be found here.



APAC - JOHN McDOWELL AWARD 2004

Concurs per a professors i alumnes de llengua anglesa de tots els nivells educatius

PODEN OPTAR A PREMI

- A.** Proposta d'activitats d'aula
(Crèdits variables d'anglès o interdisciplinaris, treballs per tasques, projectes, etc.)
UN PREMI I UN ACCÈSSIT.
- B.** Treballs de recerca
B1 Presentats per professors
B2 Presentats per alumnes de Batxillerat
DOS PREMIS I DOS ACCÈSSITS
- C.** Treballs presentats per alumnes (Vídeos, revistes, còmics, etc.)
TRES PREMIS I DOS ACCÈSSITS

BASES GENERALS

Tots els treballs presentats hauran d'ésser en anglès. En el cas de la modalitat A i B, els treballs, a més de presentar-se impresos, hauran d'incloure una còpia en suport informàtic, atent a les característiques del treball

Els treballs presentats per a l'opció A han de ser inèdits i han d'incloure: objectius, continguts, material per utilitzar a classe i activitats d'avaluació.

Els treballs de recerca presentats pels professors (opció B1) han de ser treballs d'investigació sobre aspectes relacionats directament amb la llengua anglesa.

Els treballs presentats pels alumnes (opció C) han d'incloure una introducció pel professorat de la matèria indicant els objectius de l'activitat.

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 qual participa.

El termini de presentació finalitza el dia 31 de gener de 2004.

Els premis consistiran en lots de material didàctic, llibres de lectura i/o metodologia exceptuant el primer premi de la modalitat B1, que consistirà en un curs de dues setmanes al Regne Unit, esponsoritzat per l'Institut Britànic (l'anada i tornada al lloc de destinació serà a càrrec del professor/a premiat/da).

Els premis es lliuraran en el marc de l'APAC-ELT Convention 2004.

APAC es reserva el dret de publicar totalment o parcialment els treballs presentats, en el butlletí de l'Associació.

Tots els participants al Premi APAC han de ser socis d'APAC amb l'excepció de les modalitats B2 i C.

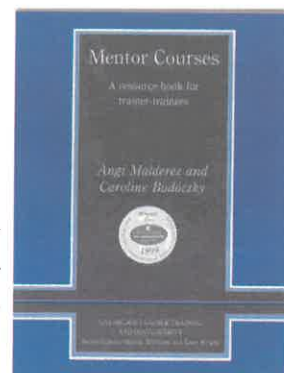
Tots els treballs s'enviaran per correu ordinari a:

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Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 606, 4t 2a F
08007 BARCELONA

L'APAC no es responsabilitza dels treballs no recollits abans del dia 30 d'abril de 2004.

Mentor Courses a Resource Book for Trainer-Trainers

BY ANGI MALDERZAND CAROLINE BODÓCZKY
CAMBRIDGE TEACHER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
SERIES EDITORS: MARION WILLIAM AND TONY WRIGHT
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1999



reviewed by Ana Aguilar

In teacher training programmes, a Mentor is a teacher in a school with responsibility for the student teachers, during their school experience. The term conveys personalised and humanistic nuances and it represents the spirit of the whole book. In their relationship with the student-teachers (mentees), mentors need to develop many skills and undertake many different roles. Those roles include, among others:

- Model
- Acculturator in the particular teaching culture
- Sponsor, to be able to open doors
- Support
- Educator

This resource book provides a collection of material for practising the skills required to support the development of learner-teachers. It presents a range of activities and processes for exploring the roles and duties of mentors and for use in mentor courses, but can be equally useful for self-study. *Mentor Courses* would also be a useful reference book for school inspectors and advisors.

The book is divided into 10 chapters:

Chapter one: **Basic Concepts** looks at the principles underlying the activities and the training approach.

Chapter two: **Course procedures** contain activities used in TT courses.

Chapter three: **Leads-in** has activities for beginning sessions.

Chapter four: **Start seeing** initiates on observation skills.

Chapter five: **Challenging appropriately** inclu-

des practice activities for the development of interpersonal skills and the ability to challenge sensitively.

Chapter six: **Role plays** where the activities are designed to simulate mentoring events in order for practising the elaborate skills of mentoring.

Chapter seven: **Assessing teachers.** Here the activities are intended to help mentors turn evaluation into a positive experience.

Chapter eight: **Observation tasks** to be done in session

Chapter nine: **Reading tasks** to be done at home and followed up in the next session.

Chapter ten: **Writing tasks** contains the specifications, preparation procedures and follow-up tasks on written assignments.

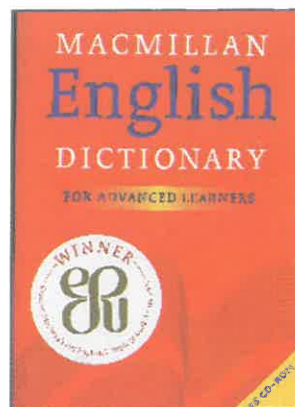
The book also offers

- A set of photocopiable resources
- A reference section
- Appendixes with references, observation sheets, teaching practice evaluation form, criteria for the record of performance in the teaching practice, self-observation schedules, mentors' evaluation form and a checklist for the visits of the tutors to the lessons.

Globally, *Mentor Courses*, endeavors to transmit, to those involved in teacher development, the awareness that explicit judgemental feedback may not be very helpful to the mentee, and might have a negative effect in their relationship. It favours the figure of the supportive mentor ready to overcome his personal prejudices.

MacMillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners

MICHAEL RUNDALL, GWYNETH FOX (EDITORS)
MACMILLAN, 2002
PAPERBACK 1693 PP



reviewed by Josep Sala

A dictionary is an excellent tool in learning English. Nobody knows all the words of a language. Therefore, we, as teachers, learners and even writers, need to have many kinds of dictionaries to master the English language: bilingual, monolingual, etymological, pronunciation, cultural, illustrated, pictorial, technical, business, thesaurus, phrasal verbs, false friends, collocations, etc.

The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (MED) is a two colour English-English dictionary (red and white) but there are also cross references to over a 1000 illustrated words, many in two colours and full colour. The layout is appealing and eye-catching. This dictionary was the product of an enthusiastic and creative team of about 100 lexicographers who benefited from a collaboration with the University of Brighton. It won the Duke of Edinburgh English Language Book Award in 2002.

One of the major innovations of the MED is to make a clear distinction between the basic vocabulary of English. The authors have identified a central core of around 7,500 words that are most likely to be needed by students working in both productive and receptive modes. These headwords are highlighted in

red type with a star rating to show their frequency while the less common words are in black. A word with one star is fairly common and a word with three stars is one of the most basic words in English. The 1980s saw the development of the first large corpora of English text. Since then, the corpus as the primary data source for dictionaries has become standard practice. The most frequently used words in written and spoken English are graded and based on a new 200 million word corpus. The MED contains 100,000 references with 30,000 idioms and phrases. It has a CD-Rom user guide.

Another of the MED's innovations is that two similar but separate editions have been created from the same database: one for learners whose main target variety is American English the other for learners of British English. Both editions offer British/US differences. Occasionally there are other types of English that have labels in the dictionary: Australian, Canadian, Indian, Irish, Scottish, South African, Welsh...

There is a great deal more that is new and special about the MED: a fresh approach to describing the meaning of complex words and 22 pages devoted to Language Awareness.

**We, as teachers,
learners and even
writers, need to
have many kinds of
dictionaries to
master the English
language.**

This section is designed to give up-to-date information on topics that are relevant to everyone who is interested in English nowadays. It is intended to give you a deeper understanding of such areas as Spoken Discourse, Metaphor and Pragmatics, all of which are crucial for users of the English Language.

Although the MED is a dictionary for upper-level learners of English, the simple clear definitions are written using only 2500 of the most common words of the English language and this means that learners can broaden their linguistic horizons with a limited vocabulary. Besides, this lexicon is listed at the end of the dictionary.

As a dictionary of English, it includes grammar patterns for students to learn and helpful example sentences based on real-life spoken and written English. The International Phonetic Alphabet shows you how a word is pronounced. When British and American pronunciations are very different, both are given. Similar meanings are grouped together within one sense of the word and the most common meaning is shown first. The users can scan through the different shades of meaning before they focus on the right meaning in detail. Entries with five or more meanings have a 'menu' at the top to make it easier to find the specific meaning you are looking for. Sometimes, it provides cultural and encyclopaedic information. On other occasions, it supplies synonyms and opposites. There is style and usage information when a word is used : spoken, written, informal , formal , humorous, offensive, literary and old-fashioned. All phrases, phrasal verbs and idioms are given at the end of the entry.

The dictionary seems friendlier and easier to handle than others. It is a competitor to any of the other dictionaries for advanced learners currently available and it is highly recommended. As professor Michael Hoey says in the foreword : " English is no longer any country's property but has become a true lingua franca, and it is appropriate that the first major English dictionary of the 21st century is a dictionary of world English. If you work with this dictionary, it will help you become a citizen of the world."

V Jornades de Llengües Estrangeres

TARRAGONA

27,28 i 29 de novembre 2003

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