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- Improving Speaking by Simon T. Harris
- The Intelligent Purpose behind the Lesson Planning
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OUR PICK FROM THE WEB

- An Integrated Approach to Teaching
Literature in the EFL Classroom by C. Savvidou

ELT2007
License To Teach

apac-elt convention 2007
Barcelona, February 22nd, 23rd and 24th

Dear Members,

This new issue of the APAC journal will arrive in your hands when the ups and downs of the beginning of the school year have subsided a little, although this does not mean that 2006-07 will be a calm year. As with every year, and even somewhat more, our concern as teachers continues to be how to improve our students' performance and reach the levels our society demands of them and us. The results of the different tests which have been publicised lately show what should be improved. Our politicians are searching for all kinds of strategies to get our people to be able to speak more than one foreign language, and the education authorities are seeking ways to help teachers.

The blizzard of training courses here and in Britain, the new foreign language innovation projects and the increase in class time for students are some of the actions taken in this direction. However, the burden continues to be on teachers, who, day after day, have to go before students who, in many cases, offer a wide range of abilities, interests and motivations.

In this issue, APAC provides you with a variety of articles to help you reflect, in some cases, and to offer you ideas and materials, in other cases, which can be used straight away in class with little modification.

We have brought together the articles of some of the speakers from the 2006 APAC-ELT Convention. Simon Harris, with "Improving Activities", offers a variety of oral practice activities culled from his years as a teacher. Paul McConochie leads us to reflect on what elements come into play in order to "make" a good teacher. Luz Rodríguez places emphasis on the need for good class planning, and finally we have included the reflections of the round table, "Teachers Listening to Teachers".

We are also getting more and more articles from teachers who want to share their ideas and experiences with all of you. We are beginning this section with the reflections that Joan Martorell has sent us on the challenge of teaching English in our schools and which would be interesting to organise into a deeper debate. We have also included two articles on multi-culturality, with the one by Nina Lauder being more geared to primary education and the one by J. L. Bartolomé dealing with the topic of xenophobia through songs. We do not want to abandon the area of new technologies, and therefore the Joana Angrill's presentation on e-learning through MOODLE will hopefully entice many of us to try it out. Finally, the article on Project Work by Salvador Montaner will help organise all who would like to work on projects and do not know where to begin.

Often there are articles in other journals which catch our eye, and we would like to offer them to you, with the permission of their author(s). In this case, it is the reconsideration of the literary text as a powerful teaching tool.

The programme of the TNC and Teatre Lliure is included to facilitate your attendance, with some small discounts. And the announcement and rules of the 2006 APAC-John McDowell Award is aimed at encouraging you to participate in it.

We hope that all of you find an article that really interests you, and, as always, we eagerly await your views and articles.

Have a good 2006-2007!

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Dear colleagues,

At a certain age, some say, humans have the face they deserve. And at a certain age, others say, almost anything could have happened twenty years ago. Well, let's stay in the present for a moment: APAC was founded twenty years ago this December. It was December, 12th, 1986, to be precise. This is a fact. And we are still alive and, er, yes, somehow, kicking. Let me proudly state the names of the founding fathers and founding mothers according to records: RAMON PUJOL, NÚRIA VIDAL, MAGÍ CASAÑAS, NEUS SERRA, M^a CRISTINA RIERA, RAMON RIBÉ, MARGARITA RAVERA, MIQUEL LLOBERA, MONTSERRAT DEJUAN, PEPITA SUBIRÀ, ROSA CAIRÓ, MIQUEL BERGA, FERNANDA RODRÍGUEZ and JOSÉ MIGUEL LUCEA. As you can imagine, some are no longer APAC members, many still are; some might not be teaching English anymore, many still are... It is interesting to note that a couple of them are active members of the present board of directors. Whatever their present circumstances, a tribute is owed to those who stepped forward in those days. To make sure we don't forget our own roots, this year's convention will offer a round-table discussion focusing on the ups and downs of EFL in Catalonia from the mid-eighties to the present. It does seem as if the concern on the standard of English in our society has, finally, reached the status of a public debate. I have always argued that in order to improve the level of communicative competence in English among Catalans our Government has to consider the issue as a key strategic point in global policy. Action taken by the Departament d'Educació only, however important, is not going to solve the problem. We want to expose learners to a much greater range of authentic materials in their daily lives: films and television, of course, but also newspapers, pop music and so on. And we have to keep reflecting on "where" and "how" action has to be taken in the school curriculum in order to become significant. Some of this will certainly be discussed in the February convention and, in the meantime, the APAC Forum is open to all. At the end of the day, the basic questions remain the same: What makes a good teacher good? And, what makes an efficient learner efficient? As our motto this year suggests a "license to teach" may not be enough...

Let me end on a prosaic note. Your annual fees for membership have been frozen yet again. APAC grows but we don't have to pay more. I know you don't care about money but I know you like the idea. So, let's enjoy the thought...while we can.

With best wishes,

Miquel Berga - President

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THE MAKING OF A GREAT TEACHER

by Paul McConochie

It all began shortly after I finished university in London. I decided to go abroad, teach English and see the world. Sounds great eh? I had been working for a few months in an office so I informed my boss (a teacher of Hebrew in his free time) of this brilliant idea and he replied, by way of advice that you are either a teacher or you are not. I inferred from this that he meant teaching was either something you were **made for or not** and if not you just shouldn't bother. Wise words I thought at the time and I never forgot them. So off I went truly believing I had what it took to be the best teacher ever.

After teaching for quite a few years and then moving into teacher training I became more and more obsessed with this idea...is teaching something you are born for or can we become great teachers with the right training? I did a bit of reading on the internet and discovered I wasn't the only teacher thinking about this question: As Dorothy Dixon says in her article (Dec, 04):

"Some say great teachers are born, that it's "in the blood", while others insist great teachers are made..."

Of course it is probably a bit of both, but as a teacher trainer I firmly believed that I had helped create a few good and even great teachers in my

time. In fact it seemed to be a case of great teachers can be made if they are willing to be made. The task I set myself in this presentation was to pick out a few of the key aspects of teaching, things we should be doing, or remember to keep doing, in order to be great teachers. I've tried to include a few teaching ideas to help illustrate each point.

1) A Great Teacher will do his best to affect levels of motivation amongst his students.

This can be done through fun, interesting activities that engage students and switch them on to learning the language. I accept this is no easy task in secondary education, but by 'sprinkling' into the lesson activities that appeal to the students we might go some way to achieve this.

The idea for the following activity came to me some years ago while I was teaching in Thailand. I had a class of about twenty teenagers and I was getting very frustrated with their tendency to secretly (or so they thought) pass notes to each other instead of listening to the teacher. So as a last resort I started *telling* them to pass notes to each other, but in English of course! They were delighted! I even joined in and *passed the notes for them*, which they also loved and enabled me to check their English.

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ACTIVITY: Have the students make plans with each other by writing notes with the persons name on it. They should make a simple agenda to fill in.

For example: 'Juan, do you fancy meet in MacDonaldis on Saturday night?'

They then write replies for notes they receive, checking their agendas and refusing or accepting the plan. As a class feedback I ask some of the students to tell me what plans they have made. The fact that some of the students were clearly going to carry out their plans later, added a real purpose to the task.

A great simple reading/writing activity! The point here is that by thinking about the tasks we give our students, choosing or adapting exercises so that we engage them, they will want to participate and get involved. Thus we can *positively* affect their motivation to learn English.

2) A Great Teacher uses pairwork. It is interesting how many teachers are reluctant to do activities with this type of interaction, especially in the secondary classroom. However, it is not difficult to see why: loss of control, noise, too much L1, not doing the task, classroom lay out, these are just some of the problems. However this doesn't stop the great teacher! They will ask their students to read a text with a partner so they can help each other with unknown words, to check answers in pairs after a listening before going over them as a class, and of course to do the majority of speaking activities.

The advantages of pairwork make this type of classroom interaction essential. Apart from maximising student talking time, it takes the pressure of the teacher and gives them the chance to monitor, listen to the students and help where necessary. And don't get stressed about the amount of Spanish being spoken, if 10% of the class speaks some English, that's 10% **more** than when only the teacher is speaking. It often takes a little time to get students used to this type of interaction especially as it is not common in other subjects, but once they get the idea the majority of students will work quite well with it.

There is of course any number of specific pairwork activities throughout our coursebooks, in supplementary books and on the internet. Here is a simple idea that is easy to set up and gets students speaking.

ACTIVITY: Copy a short 2-person dialogue on the black board from the coursebook (I try to do this before the students come into class to save time). It's a good idea to use a dialogue from a previous unit so they are familiar with it. Now have the students practise the dialogue, taking a role each and reading it aloud. Now rub out two or three words or phrases from the dialogue and have students repeat it, inserting the missing words from memory (don't forget to have them switching roles as well). Continue in this way until all or most of the dialogue has been rubbed out. A possible follow up is for students to write out the whole text in their notebooks (in pairs of course) from memory.

3) A Great Teacher encourages student autonomy. The idea of helping students take some responsibility for their own learning is a very important one. We are now being encouraged to do this through the Council of Europe initiatives with the **European Language Portfolio (ELP)**, a document in which learners '*can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences*'. The main aim behind this is to promote a learner-centred approach to language teaching.

Briefly, it consists of:

The Language Passport – a record of language competency and learning experiences.

The Language Biography -learners record what they can do and through reflection and self-assessment, identify areas for improvement.

The Language Dossier - samples of work to illustrate their learning experience and progress

Essentially it is a personal project for each student, but it is certainly something which could have implications in their future job/educational pursuits.

It might all sound rather ambitious for the average ESO student, but we can start the process in class with all students, make them aware of the ELP, tell them what it is, and encourage those interested in taking it further. Think about doing work in class that students can put in their dossiers, such as project work.

4) A Great Teacher caters for diverse learning styles. A group of student will have a range of learning styles. By including activities that cater for a mix of styles you can be sure that you are helping all your students to learn effectively.

ACTIVITY: I've included one of my favourites here: Battleships (see activity sheet 1 below): This well-known activity is very visual and engages the students in using a number of skills whilst at the same time revising vocabulary.

In pairs, students complete the top grid with words according to the categories and alphabet (I've filled some in already to give the idea). They then draw in their 'ships' (also in the top grid). These can go horizontally or vertically. Now they face another pair and 'bomb' each others ships. Of course it is very important they can't see their partner's grid. They target an opponents square by describing the word they have in that square **in their own grid**. For example: A long, yellow fruit (Banana)

Their opponent finds the correct square on their grid (Food – B, of course they might have different words). If they have part of a ship there, they must say 'hit'. Otherwise they say 'miss'.

The lower grid is used to record their hits and misses. The first team to destroy all of their enemies' ships is the winner.

And finally, to summarise:

The Great Teachers Top Ten Tips

1. Do as much as you can to help your stu-

dents enjoy your classes.

2. Get students in pairs or groups as often as possible. They will soon get used to this form of interaction.

3. Give students opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning. Tell them about the European Language Portfolio and do work in class that they can put into their own portfolios.

4. Think about how often and the manner in which you praise students

5. Move around the class, get eye contact, use names.

6. Vary the pace of the lesson by changing things (task, student interaction, your position in the class). i.e. don't stick with the same activity for too long. You can always come back to it.

7. Think about visual learners, tactile learners and audio learners.

8. Show enthusiasm (even when you don't feel it!)

9. Talk to your colleagues about your/their classes, share ideas, use the internet, observe colleagues

10. Keep up to date with new ideas by going to conferences and reading articles. Of course the fact that you are reading this makes you a Great Teacher!

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Battleships

(Activity Sheet 1)

	Animals	Cities/ Countries	Parts of body/ Clothes	Food	Jobs	Furniture/ Things
A	USE THIS GRID TO MARK YOUR SHIPS			Apple		Armchair
B			Bear	Boots		Butcher
C	Cheetah				Chemist	Carpet
D		Denmark	Island	Doughnut		
E	Eel			Island		Eraser
F		France	Feet	Fish	Firefighter	

	Animals	Cities/ Countries	Parts of body/ Clothes	Food	Jobs	Furniture/ Things
A	USE THIS GRID TO RECORD YOUR SHOTS					
B						
C						
D			Island			
E				Island		
F						

Key:

	Battleship (x 1)	X = Hit
	Destroyer (x 2)	O = Miss
	Submarine (x 3)	

IMPROVING SPEAKING

by Simon T. Harris

This article is based on the first section of the talk I gave at last years' APAC Convention. The session was designed to send teachers away with lots of ideas, and perhaps would have been better titled 'Speaking Activities that Require No Preparation'. My main objective was to send teachers away with plenty of ideas to experiment with in class on Monday morning – I don't promise that all the ideas outlined below will be new, but even if they remind teachers of something they have tried before and encourage them to take a new angle on an old idea, then our purpose is served.

The complete talk was a rollercoaster ride through nine categories of speaking activity – **Drills, Interviews and Surveys, Yes/No Games, Pyramid Discussions (Reaching a Consensus), Talking about Yourself, Information Gaps, Discussions and Debates** and **Storytelling**. I also included a category called **Anything Else?** so that participants could suggest ideas that had not occurred to me in my planning. Each category was introduced and then I gave a quick demonstration of how the idea works in practice. Participants were then given the opportunity to think about how the techniques might be applied to their own teaching situation.

I don't remember who said 'a picture paints a thousand words', but in the world of English teaching it might be paraphrased as 'a demonstration makes clear a thousand theories'. For the purposes of this article it is not possible to 'Show and Tell' the whole talk, so I will just review the first two categories that I demonstrated – **Drills** and **Interviews and Surveys**.

Both activity types can both be found towards the Accuracy end of the Accuracy-Fluency continuum. They are particularly useful when teaching younger students at Intermediate level and below, and applicable for useful for both Secondary School teachers and for teachers working in the private sector. In both cases, the main objective is to get learners speaking in the target language, and to provide moments of light relief from more traditional written or grammar-based activities. This is certainly not to say that we are forgetting about grammar, but rather that a creative fun-oriented approach can often allow us to sneak grammar in through the back door.

Drills

Drills have become very unpopular in recent years mainly because they were standard techniques used in the Audio-Lingual Method. When I first began teaching, I often had to do repetitive oral exercises usually involving a cassette – there was no element of communication and accuracy was the priority. As a result, my students weren't interested in doing them and I found them a very limiting teaching technique. 'Drills are for boring,' we used to say in the Teachers' Room.

However, in these days of Communicative Language Teaching, I wonder if we haven't 'thrown the baby out with the bath water'. I look at modern text books and often find that they provide little in the way of Controlled Oral Practice. I don't suggest going back to the dark ages (or a learning theory that sees language as habit), but it is important to remember that sometimes it's very useful for stu-

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dents to have the opportunity to concentrate on accuracy and just 'get their tongues' round a structure. As an additional teaching technique, drills can also be a lot of fun.

The basic idea that underlies drills is that most complex sentences contain a number of 'slots', where words can be changed but the underlying grammatical structure remains the same. For example, the sentence

The plane from Paris arrives at 7.30.

contains a number of slots, the most obvious ones being *plane*, *Paris*, and *7.30*. It is quite easy to see that each of these words is changeable. If the above words are exchanged for *train*, *Barcelona* and *9 o'clock*, you end up with

The train from Barcelona arrives at 9 o'clock.

In the old days, we used to practice this kind of drill with flashcards or visual prompts. A whole lesson based on this approach can be very boring, but every now and again, particularly if done with good humour, drills are a lot of fun, and give weaker students the chance get oral practice in the non-presure situation of the classroom chorus.

In order to demonstrate this, we can take a more complex structure, such as the Third Conditional, and look at the sentence in terms of slots.

If I'd known you were coming, I'd have baked a cake.

The way to make the most of a sentence like this is to get students to listen and repeat so it almost becomes a mantra. It is important to get everybody to chant the sentence in unison, and become comfortable with the rhythm. Once this has been achieved you can start to play about with the structure.

So that learners understand what they have to do, I write *I'd have bought some beer* on the board below the second half of the sentence and, with some help from me, very quickly students will be chanting:-

If I'd known you were coming, I'd have bought some beer.

Through a combination of pointing and shouting, the second slot will soon be freed up – *had a shower*, *cleaned the flat* and *finished my homework* are all possible variations. You can now apply a similar

technique to the first slot. When I gave my demonstration of this at APAC last year, we ended up with

If I'd known you were Spanish, I'd have made a paella.

As I mentioned before, the only way to make this kind of drill work is to use a good dose of humour and plenty of inventiveness. As with many other language teaching techniques the only limitation is your imagination! I do suggest, though, that before you try this kind of drill, you note down possible alternatives for the words and expressions you intend to work on.

Disappearing Drills

Another group of activities that incorporate a 'Listen and Repeat' element are Disappearing Drills. These are particularly useful for helping students to improve their intonation and memorise useful functional language.

As I just want to give you an example of how they work, I am going to use the beginning of a listening text taken from a popular coursebook (English File 1) but this technique can be used with any short listening text involving two characters. In order for a Disappearing Drill to be the 'icing on the cake' of a listening activity, you should work through the procedure as suggested in the book. Listen as many times as necessary, fill the gaps and answer the questions... by the time you get to the Disappearing Drill, learners should be very familiar with the dialogue. Let's imagine that the following is the listening text you have been working with.

A: Hello. I've got a reservation. My name's Okker. Pieter Okker.

B: Just a moment. Can you spell that, please?

A: O-double-K-E- R

B: Right, Mr Okker. A double room with a shower for two nights, is that right?

The dialogue needs to be up on the board, so if you have done enough backup work, you might even be able to elicit this from your students. The first thing you need to do is to divide your class into two - A and B, and get each group to repeat their part of the script after you (or the tape if you prefer). In order to make the procedure clear, I then change the groups round so that the As are now Bs and vice versa, but this time rather than repeating after you the learners chant the dialogue in chorus, whilst looking at the board – the teacher can make enthusiastic facial expressions and arm movements to make sure the learners chant with sufficient 'gusto',

When you are confident that each group is chanting with acceptable pronunciation and intonation, the fun can begin. Now you start removing words from the text as follows:

A: _____. I've got a _____. My name's _____.
Pieter Okker.

B: Just a _____. Can you _____ that, _____?

A: O- _____ -K-E- R

B: Right, _____ Okker. A _____ room with a _____ for two _____, is that right?

The moment you start to do this, a look of amazement will cross your learners' faces – you are actually asking them to think! Keep drilling whilst reversing the groups and removing words from the dialogue, Learners are forced to remember the missing words, which is great for their learning of fixed functional expressions. Drill and drill again removing a few words each time. Finally you will be left with a completely blank board and learners will have effectively memorised the whole text. In the process, your learners will have had a lot of fun but also will have become more aware of grammar, vocabulary, intonation and pronunciation.

Memory Games

Another set of activities that involve a large degree of repetition are memory games such as 'I went to market'. In this game learners have to remember what was bought by everyone who has preceded them in the chain, so Learner 1 says 'I went to market and bought some oranges', Learner 2 repeats what was said before and adds her own idea and might say 'I went to market and bought some oranges and a packet of crisps' etc.

Once again an activity such as this can be applied to diverse teaching situations and learning needs. For example, if you want to practise the Present Simple. 'At the weekend, I like to relax' becomes 'At the weekend, she likes to relax, and I like to watch football.' etc. Similarly, if you want to practise job vocabulary a similar chain could be 'When he leaves school, he wants to be a pilot, she wants to be a dentist and I want to be a pop star.' The flexibility of an activity such as this is only limited by the teacher's imagination, but just like Drills and Disappearing Drills, there is a strong repetitive element which is very important for learners who are as yet unable, or unwilling to use the target language creatively.

Interviews and Surveys

Obviously, drills and their variations, although a lot of fun, involve little in the way of 'real' communication. It is important to make good use of other techniques that also give learners controlled oral practice, and **Interviews and Surveys** provide a perfect opportunity for this, because they can also be repetitive. In an Interview, Student A asks Student B a set of questions, whilst in a Survey, each learner may ask the same set of questions to as many as five other students.

Many coursebooks include questions concerning the theme of the unit, be it holidays, crime or films etc. The indication in the Teachers' Book is often discuss in pairs, but all too frequently the questions are not the ones that learners would like to ask each other, and furthermore, the activity lacks an objective – talk in pairs and then what?

Consequently, over the years I have become interested in formalising these questions and turning them into interviews that require learners to feedback their results (often in writing). Similarly, a survey on a particular topic involves the repetitive element exemplified earlier in the section on Drills. An example of a set of questions on Holidays is shown below.

HOLIDAYS

- 1.- Where do you usually go on holiday?
- 2.- Do you prefer to be on the **coast**, in a **city** or in the **countryside**? Why?
- 3.- Do you like to spend a lot of time on the beach or do you prefer going on **excursions**?
- 4.- Is **sightseeing** an important part of your holiday? What kind of places do you like to visit?
- 5.- What about food? Do you like to try the local **specialities**?
- 6.- Do you take **souvenirs** home from your holiday? What kind of things do you buy?
- 7.- If you could choose, what would be your ideal holiday destination? Why?

By creating the questions themselves, teachers can not only make a speaking activity more relevant to the learners' needs and interests, but also focus on grammar or vocabulary as I have done here by emphasising certain lexical elements. There are many ways of organising this kind of activity – questions can be given on a handout, copied from the board or dictated to students.

Survey Grid

However, what frequently occurs (particularly with lower level or adolescent groups) is that, as the learners all have a copy of the same questions in the same order, what was intended to be a productive oral activity in L2 is reduced to 'Y que tienes para el tres?' in L1, which inevitably removes some of its value.

Therefore, whilst taking advantage of the above mentioned activities within the Speaking Lesson, a task involving repetition, unpredictability and the learners' agenda is necessary. My own solution is the survey grid (included at the end of this article).

My Survey Grid is nothing more than a 6 x 5 word table. At the top there is space for learners to write the topic, their own name and the names of the three people they are going to interview. A slightly broader column on the left is where students write questions, and the remaining columns provide students with a space to write down the answers.

All the teacher has to do is decide on the topic. This may be Holidays, The Environment, Work, Hobbies etc – basically the central idea behind whatever Unit you are working on. Students write the topic at the top of the questions column, then they invent five questions in groups, and finally they go off and interview other members of the class.

As a teacher, you have time to check that each group's questions are well-formed, but the great thing is that the students have decided what they want to talk about themselves. The fact that no group will have exactly the same set of questions in the same order, introduces an element of unpredictability which means that the activity tends to be done in English. Even weaker students, who may have trouble responding, will be forced to repeat their questions a number of times.

Although I have had students come up with very original surveys, normally their ideas are quite similar. This is no disadvantage because what they have decided to ask has been of their own choosing – it is difficult to legislate for lack of imagination! Furthermore, if we let students fill in the first column themselves, we are actually allowing them to prepare their ideas in advance thereby 'scaffolding' themselves. They are likely to have to answer questions similar to their own and will be more capable of responding spontaneously.

A final point to bear in mind is that a survey must have an outcome. Consequently, once back in their groups, I usually ask my students to pool their information. They can then either write a report or elect a spokesman and feedback their results to the class.

Conclusion

As I mentioned in the introduction, my 'Improving Speaking' seminar covers a lot of ground, and this article has only introduced two types of Speaking Activity that I regularly use in class.

Drills involve a lot of teacher-control but can provide an enjoyable break from written work. With Interviews and Surveys, students are beginning to enjoy a little more freedom, but the repetitiveness of the task means that weaker learners have more chance of participating successfully – particularly, if survey results are summarised by the group.

I see good language teaching as a slow process of giving control of communication to learners. If we want to be able to set up good class discussions and successful debates in the target language, it is important, particularly during the earlier stages of a course, to get students involved in activities that develop their confidence. It can require a lot of patience, but when weaker students finally overcome their language limitations and are able to express themselves confidently in a class discussion (in the target language), it is surely worth it.

JORNADES DE LENGÜES ESTRANGERES

Girona 2006
Novembre, 23, 24 i 25
E.O.I. GIRONA

THE INTELLIGENT PURPOSE BEHIND THE LESSON PLANNING

Ana Luz Rodriguez

The last two centuries' education became an important issue and often a subject of debate.

During the XIX century what mattered was **WHAT TO TEACH ?**

In the XX the clue was to know **HOW ?**

The present time demands to know **WHY?**

The idea of the "intelligent purpose" is based on Maria Montessori's philosophy which remarks the necessity of having an intelligent purpose behind everything what is done with and for the children.

She focuses on the universal characteristics of the human being and offers the vision of education as an "**AID TO LIFE**". It assists the children with their task of inner construction observing and respecting the human being's natural development from childhood to maturity.

" My vision of the future is no longer of people taking exams and proceeding on that certification from the secondary school to the university, but of individuals passing from one stage of independence to a higher, by means of their own activity, through their own effort of will, which constitutes the inner evolution of the

individual" (Maria Montessori)

Teaching English or any subject can not be considered in an isolated way and educators must be aware that teaching is not a mere transmission of knowledge but something that goes beyond the subject itself. When we understand the significance of our daily task it becomes more meaningful and the necessity of having an intelligent purpose behind what we do gains more and more importance.

It is great responsibility to learn that education is an aid and helps the child to achieve apart from the knowledge of the subject itself :

- Mental and internal order from external order.
- Independence -the first step towards freedom
- Self discipline
- Self esteem.

It may sound quite pretentious and ambitious to say that in an English classroom we can achieve such things. However it is true that we can help the child to achieve what he needs if we take into account certain attitudes and facts.

- So, how can we apply these ideas to our daily task?

RODRÍGUEZ VILLASANA ANA LUZ . MONTESSORI TEACHER. FREELANCE ENGLISH TEACHER WITH 20 YEARS EXPERIENCE. RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF "TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP" FOR YOUNG LEARNERS AND "MONTESSORI SUMMER SCHOOL" FOR THE EUROPEAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL IN BRUSSELS. SPEAKER AT "JORNADES DE LLENGUA ESTRANGERA", TRAINING WORKSHOPS ORGANIZED BY THE TRINITY COLLEGE AND THE LAST APAC ELT CONVENTION.

- How can we plan our lessons in an intelligent and more efficient way?

Montessori remarked the importance of the "prepared environment". It is the classroom itself and it is where the child finds an answer to his necessities. It is prepared by the adult containing all the essentials for optimal development. It is all the lessons we give.

It should include:

- Direct and indirect purpose, knowing that every action prepares the mind in the present for something in the future.

- Level. The child's development occurs through successive stages of independence and planes so we have to remember the characteristics and interests of each stage:

* From birth to age 6, children are sensorial explorers.

* From 6 to 12 children are conceptual explorers.

* Years between 12 and 18 humanistic explorers

* From 18 to 24 specialised explorers.

- Order and reality
- Beauty and simplicity
- Control of error.

A good lesson planning will help *to absorb and process in a correct way the information given*, that is what it is called "intelligence"

"Ask and seek enlightenment to the only one that can help:
the child"

"Education should no longer be mostly imparting of knowledge, but must take a new path, seeking the release of human potentialities."
(*Maria Montessori*)

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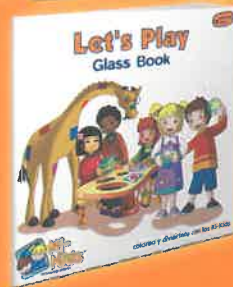
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TEACHERS LISTENING TO TEACHERS

by Dick Edelstein, Conchita Catalan, Genevieve King, Ana Martínez, José Luis Regojo

INTRODUCTION

This article discusses an approach to teacher development explored in a workshop given at the 2006 APAC conference. The aim of the workshop was threefold:

- To allow participants to discover the range of resources available within the group and among peers and colleagues in general
- To give participants an opportunity to work on defining particular needs
- To match needs and resources within the group in order to find some solutions to particular teaching problems and to explore new teaching options

The list below was used as a working definition of resources:

Intangible Resources

Examples

Specific training

Teaching mixed ability classes
Class management and discipline

Experience and teaching skills

Teaching writing skills
Teaching young learners

Classroom techniques

Grammar games
Story telling activities

Knowledge

Knowing where to find information

Contacts

Knowing who to ask

Tangible Resources

Teachers' resource books
Books on methodology
Videos
Web pages
Reference library
Teachers' resource centre

DICK EDELSTEIN HAS WORKED AS A TEACHER TRAINER AND DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF MATERIALS FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING INCLUDING SIX BOOKS ON READING AND WRITING, SOFTWARE PRODUCTS, MULTI-MEDIA MATERIALS, AND SELF-STUDY DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES.

CONCHITA CATALAN IS AN ENGLISH TEACHER AT THE EOI IN L'HOSPITALET SINCE 2004. SHE HAS ALSO TAUGHT AT THE ESCOLA D'EMPRESARIALS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA AND AT UNIVERSITAT OBERTA DE CATALUNYA AS WELL AS ON A MASTER'S COURSE IN NURSING. SHE HAS ALSO DONE EDITORIAL WORK FOR PUBLISHERS IN VARIOUS FIELDS, MOSTLY RELATED TO ELT.

GENEVIEVE KING CURRENTLY WORKS AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE SABADELL TEACHING CLASSES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS, ADULTS AND BUSINESS ENGLISH. SHE HAS ALSO WORKED AT THE DUBLIN LANGUAGE CENTRE TEACHING ELT COURSES FOR ADULTS AND HAS TUTORED SECONDARY STUDENTS IN FRENCH AND PRIMARY STUDENTS IN VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

ANA MARTÍNEZ MUNILLA HAS BEEN AN ENGLISH TEACHER AT I.E.S. CAN PEIXAUET, STA. COLOMA DE GRAMENET, BARCELONA SINCE 1991, AND HAS SPENT TWO THREE-YEAR PERIODS AS A BILINGUAL TEACHER IN CALIFORNIA TEACHING CHILDREN FROM 5 TO 8 YEARS OLD. PREVIOUSLY SHE TAUGHT AT INCLUDE ESCOLA DEL TREBALL IN BARCELONA YEARS, AND I.E.S. BADALONA -7.

JOSÉ LUIS REGOJO HAS WORKED AS A SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS IN SANTA COLOMA AND IES SANT JOSEP DE CALASSANÇ. LAST SEPTEMBER, HE WAS APPOINTED HIS SCHOOL'S COORDINATOR OF A PIONEERING TEACHING PROJECT SPONSORED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND THE GENERALITAT.

The Teacher Development model

A secondary aim of the presenters was to popularize the use of the teacher development model and of experiential workshops. The teacher development model on which the workshop was based is often not strongly represented at teachers conferences, partly because there is little commercial or other interest to support it. The table below summarizes differences between teacher development and teacher training.

other participants and the resources they commanded; then defining the most pressing needs of each participant, either classroom problems requiring solutions, or the desire to explore new teaching options; and finally, a task which matched teachers having a particular need with others who had resources that might fulfill that need.

Listening to Teachers

The most common needs identified during the

Teacher training	Teacher development
can be costly and requires a definite time commitment.	is free and flexible. It does not always require a definite commitment.
is an industry that moves a considerable amount of money.	Moves very little money.
Attracts more attention	Attracts little attention.
Provides certification.	Usually provides no certification.
has important uses on a pre-service and in-service basis.	has no pre-service application
Depends heavily on available resources in the context of an educational system.	Depends mainly on the motivation of individual teachers and groups of teachers.

The structure and content of and experiential workshop

The presenters decided on an entirely experiential workshop not only as a convenient way to convey notions relating to teacher development but also as the best way for teachers to experience working with these ideas. In a workshop of this type, teachers work through an experience and generally achieve some sort of internal change. Perceptions, expectations and even beliefs may subtly change in a way that allows participants to make some changes in their approach to teaching (or to their own development) and ideally to continue developing their teaching practice over time.

About half of the ninety-minute workshop was dedicated to tasks in which teachers worked together in small groups or pairs, while a further 30 minutes was taken up in three summary discussions in the whole group based on what had occurred. Thus relatively little input came from the presenters, who were nonetheless free to interact with participants during the tasks and group discussions.

The tasks involved first becoming acquainted with

Teachers Listening to Teachers workshop were (1) improving discipline, (2) motivating students, and (3) getting students to speak English in big groups. The following resources to get started about these needs were recommended: (1) reading *Righting the Educational Conveyor Belt*, by Michael Grinder (Red Seal Educational Series. Metamorphous Press, USA, 1991). (2 and 3) using grammar games (Mario Rinvolucrí or Peter Watcyn-Jones) or jazz chants (Carolyn Graham).

Examples of contributions from participants were the following activities: (1) using students' own experience as their main resource, ask them to bring their own photographs and comment on them, (2) using grammar games, (3) using games like "find as many words as possible with initial a, b, c,..." (4) using Total Physical Response in games like "stand up if you are a brother, sister,..." or "sit down if you like horror films,..."

An interesting point about this workshop was that to remind everybody that while people are essential in our life, perhaps teachers don't communicate enough with our colleagues, who may have enriching ideas and change our teaching ways to both our students' and our own benefit!

Outcome of the workshop

Over 500 professionals registered in the APAC convention, but most workshop participants indicated that during the first two days of the conference they had had discussions with only two or three teachers. In the workshop, most participants had discussions on a one-to-one basis with at least five other colleagues. The energy of the participants as each task began was explosive, attesting to not only the timeliness of the tasks but especially to the engaged, serious approach to work of participants at APAC.


Among the most useful results were a series of suggestions for classroom techniques and activities found to work well in specific situations, particularly in situations which other teachers had specified as problematic for them. Suggestions were also made regarding more general approaches to difficult problems such as mixed ability classes, discipline problems and lack of motivation.

Participants as well as presenters made the point

that some of the most acute current problems in public education are societal, and solutions need to be generated at that level. Nonetheless, inexperienced teachers in the workshop were able to formulate quite specific questions about problems in their teaching situations and to receive relevant and useful suggestions that they intended to put into practice. Teachers with greater experience also learned about new activities useful for specific situations.

Although the tasks and general discussions were carefully set up to ensure the greatest chance of producing a desired outcome, the six different periods of large and small group interaction mainly yielded similar results: participants put forward general advice and a series of techniques and activities that had proved useful to them in dealing with specific classroom situations and which could be applied by others. This suggests that in other circumstances, such as in teacher study groups, essentially similar results might be achieved mainly by replacing the structure of the workshop with a single injunction: "Get together and help each other"

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MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A WITCH

Making the most of a story

by Marisa González & Cristina Miralles

Once upon a time, there was a Primary English teacher, her name was Cristina; she arrived in a school where most of the children came from difficult social backgrounds and dysfunctional families. The most important aim for her was to integrate diversity in the process of teaching & learning. In both classrooms, there were enough pupils with learning difficulties and lack of motivation in school matters.

One day, she heard that there was a trainer who had a project called *Books-on-Wheels*. She also had travelling bags full of books & projects, and a wishful thinking. Cristina took part in a course and Marisa, the trainer, presented a unit which was based on a picture story book called "*I think my mum's a witch*".



That was incredible!, unbelievable!, magic!. The unit was not only ready to be carried out but also it was asking somebody to unveil it to the children.

Suddenly, she didn't know how - but she thinks bewitched by her trainer - she decided to put Marisa's unit into practice .

The experience took place in the two 4th primary form classes.

At the very early stages, they realised that the project was working. The children were having fun, and every time that met their English teacher at school were longing for what was going on in the next class.

One day, meanwhile the jumping series was being carried on, the teacher realised, there were two absentee girls who were concentrated on learning the words for the scattered items in order to participate in the activity. After 4 jumping series, they were the last members of their teams, to her surprise the two girls were the most skilful pupils picking up the items from the floor. That made the other children want them in their teams. Fortunately, it was the beginning of their integration in learning English.

MARISA GONZÁLEZ CURRENTLY WORKS AS FOREIGN LANGUAGES CO-ORDINATOR AND TEACHER TRAINER FOR CEFIRE VALENCIA WHERE SHE HAS RUN MANY IN-SERVICE TRAINING COURSES. SHE IS A PRIMARY TEACHER AND IS FOUNDER OF THE "BOOKS ON WHEELS" INITIATIVE, PROMOTING READING AND LITERACY IN THE VALENCIAN COMMUNITY. RECENTLY SHE HAS BEEN AWARDED THE DISTINGUISHED "PREMIS D'INNOVACIÓ EDUCATIVA" BY THE CONSELLERÍA D' CULTURA, EDUCACIÓ I ESPORT FOR HER WORK ON THE CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING UNITS (CLIL).

CRISTINA MIRALLES MARTORELL WORKS AS PRIMARY ENGLISH TEACHER IN THE "C.P. REI EN JAUME ", IN XIRIVELLA (VALÈNCIA). SHE LIKES USING STORY TELLING & DRAMATIZATION IN CLASS. SHE HAS RUN SOME PLAYS BASED ON STORY TELLING STARED BY HER PUPILS IN MOIXENT, IN MANISES & IN XIRIVELLA.

Another day, the students discovered counting up till 100 in the estimating activity. They counted from 5 to 5 anxious for knowing which group had the closest estimated amount of seeds. They didn't care how many times they were counting because all of them were excited just counting up aloud.

The puppets were accepted enthusiastically, so pupils learnt in a short time the puppets sentences & the story sequence by heart. The students with more difficulties learnt firstly the most repeated sentence: "*I think my mum's a witch because ...*", secondly the pictures words and finally, when they already knew the items, the sequencing of the story, without learning the puppet complete sentence: "she has a ...but".

In each session motivation & interest in learning English were improving, floating in the classroom air. The children were getting trapped by the story. They were appropriating & introducing new items in the story.

After that the teacher introduced the story book. Their faces showed astonishment & happiness. The students had discovered that their story really existed in a book.

The pupils with difficulties were happy. They claimed they could learn English because they could read sentences and even a book in English. The pupils with no difficulties were happy because they had learnt to read in English. The teacher felt satisfied because her children were learning English like an only team. In the end she was able to cater such diversity, including those children who can't read.

The motivation was so sticky that some children made an extra effort in music; their music teacher was very pleased because she could give a pass mark to some difficult students for playing the English song with their recorders.

The experience has been so profitable that we encourage teachers, especially those who have a big range of diversity or lack of motivation in their classrooms, to carry out projects like this one. It's really pleasant hearing things like:

**I like English, it's better than last year.
I like English, it's fun and we learn.
Three hurrahs for English!**

And the stage was set for fun, play and motivation the main principles for LEARNING

Introduction

The fact of working with students coming from difficult social backgrounds or dysfunctional families made us think about putting into practice a sample unit valid enough to enhance their motivation. The story is the basis of our work, but we have tried to match the basic story telling methodology, with a Content-Based approach (CBI) in which we also work other cross-curricular content. As the main characters of the story are witches, we thought that the project could be implemented during the first term, due that we reinforce and amplify vocabulary related to Halloween.

Lots of things have been said about the story telling methodology and it is because of that, that we are not going to talk about it. We know that stories are suitable for Foreign Language Learning and our students are familiar with them, but some students also have the need of being involved in the magic of a story to forget their own. They can be identified with non-real characters and situations and enrich their creativity, vivid imagination and fantasy at the same time as fostering their need for expression.

As our work grew, we easily noticed that the students wanted to participate and even as they became familiar with the story text, they were able to add new items and create their own new story, so that, the input they were exposed to was enlarged and became richer.

In this Unit students were exposed to a flip-flap picture story book and began developing story lines orally and in writing. The teacher could easily incorporate various instructional strategies into students' reading and writing, such as the use of dialogues, the setting development, the characters description, the sequencing of events and the story development. The students also had a story map in order to assist them in the developing of the story line and a vocabulary monitor which was a great tool to help low-level students to read and write.

Picture story books enhance literacy, creativity and language development for students of all ages, at all stages of cognitive development. They provide a motivating, challenging and authentic resource and can act as a spring board for a wide variety of related language and content activities. The creativity stimulated by picture story books encourages students to look more closely at story details, to carefully consider all story elements, and to more clearly understand how texts are organized.

Students also made a book. Making their own books not only improves their reading and writing skills, but also encourages their creativity. Furthermore, children are motivated to read the books that they and their classmates wrote. Children can also take them home and share them with their families. The self-made book in this Unit is a story cube box that can also be used as an evaluation tool, or might be included in the Dossier if the students are using the Portfolio.

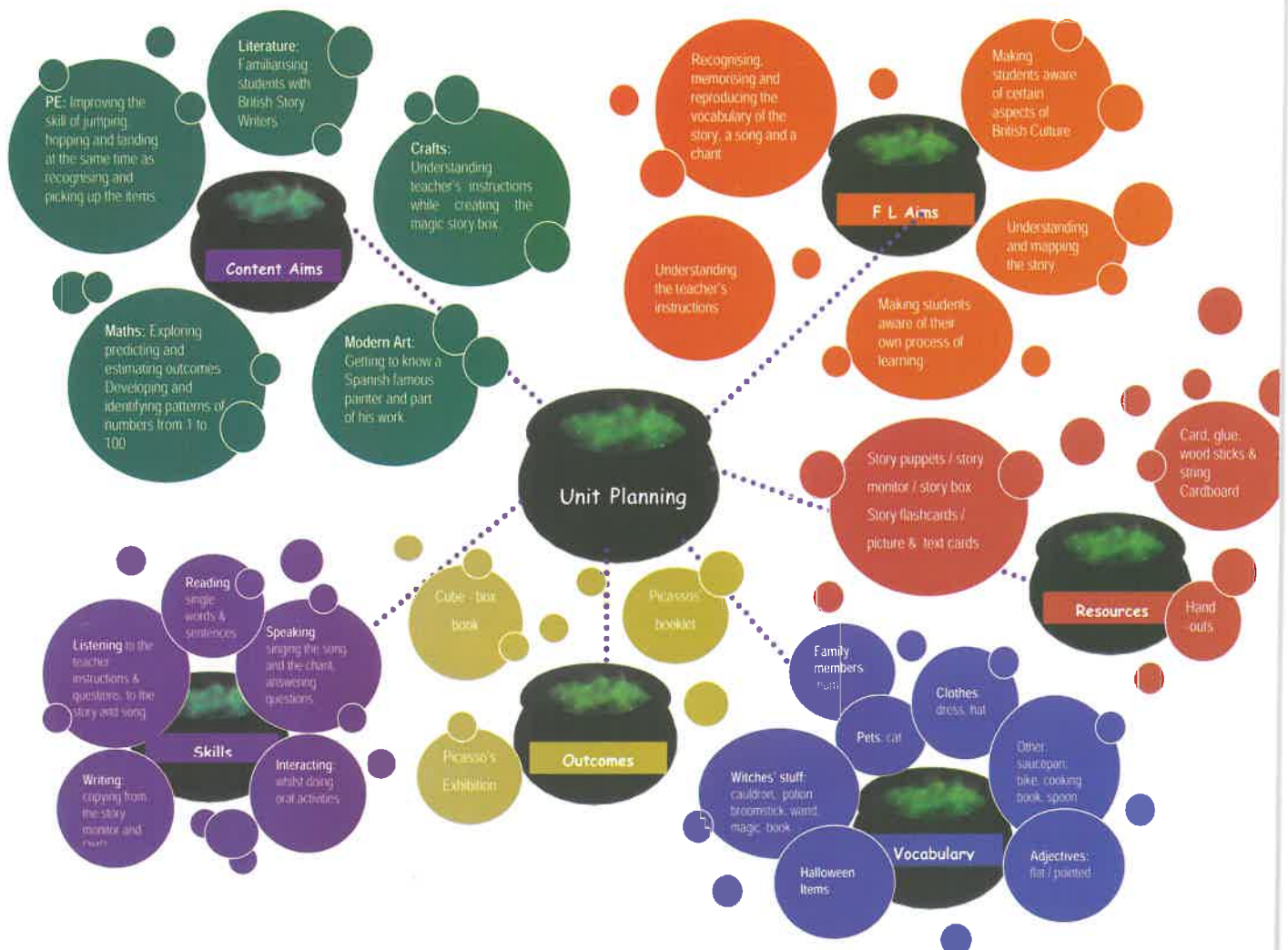
While putting this Unit into practice we have taken into consideration the following aspects:

- Children must be exposed to a rich input;
- Motivation is of vital importance as a basic tool towards active learning;
- It is important to focus not only on the linguistic aspects of the language but also on the content and the Target Language Culture;
- It is necessary to present meaningful and challenging tasks in which children can be easily and active-

ly involved in order to enable them to use the language in a meaningful context.

Teachers must

- Consider what they should do to make the content information accessible to their students;
- Impart information through oral, visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learning modalities;
- Present content area vocabulary and concepts using 'realia', pictures, and hands-on activities;
- Provide students with written and aural messages as well as interaction;
- Teach learning strategies. Learning strategies empower our students to become active learners rather than passive recipients of information to be memorized. Teachers should demonstrate how to organize information, how to select the main idea and supporting details of the story. Techniques such as recognising essential concepts and vocabulary, labelling pictures using a vocabulary monitor, organizing information on story maps, are important skills used in this Unit for foreign language learners to acquire.



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Dear Readers,
 Due to the length of this article, we could not include the accompanying hand-outs in the journal. Therefore, we have posted them, along with the complete article, on the APAC web page. These hand-outs are very interesting and useful, so you must not miss them. Please go to the APAC web page (www.apac.es/teachresource_exper.html) and see for yourselves!

Yours faithfully,
 The Editor

Lesson Planning

WC (Whole Class) IND (Individual Work) PW (Pair Work) GW (Group Work)

Pre-Presentation (Motivating students)

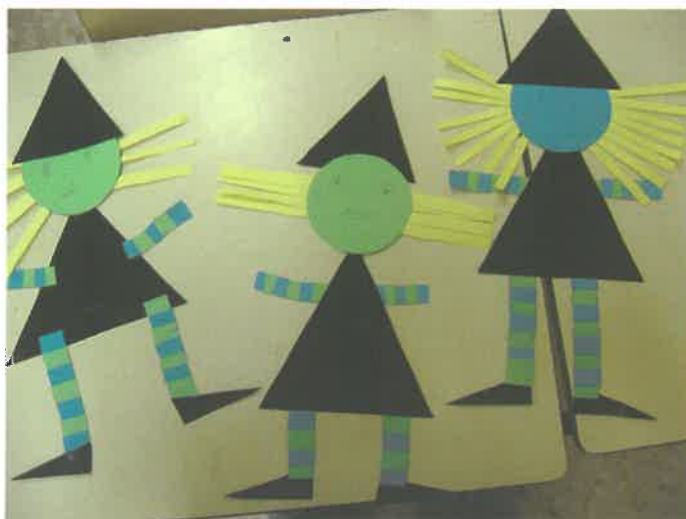
	Objectives	Procedures
<p>1st Session</p> <p>What do we put in the brew?</p> <p>Maths Activity</p> <p>Hand-outs 1 - 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing vocabulary before Ss see the picture story book. (WC) Adding up (WC) Creating a chant (WC) Introducing the theme of the story through a song and actions.(WC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the flashcards to introduce the vocabulary. Game: '<i>What's missing?</i>' Take out a flashcard, say the others aloud and ask what's missing. '<i>Adding up</i>' using the '<i>Chant</i>' and '<i>What do we put in the brew</i>' worksheets. Learning to sing the '<i>Song</i>' through actions.
<p>2nd Session</p> <p>Jumping Series</p> <p>Physical Education & Maths</p> <p>Hand-outs 2 - 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Saying the chant and singing the song as a warm up activity each session.(WC) Jumping series (GW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say the chant & sing the song. Scatter the Halloween & the story items on the floor of a determined area (playground).Divide the Ss in groups. Say jump/hop/walk/run/skip...and pick up the '<i>ghosts</i>'. Do the same with the others items.

<p>3rd Session</p> <p>Witch's rhythm</p> <p>Music Activity</p> <p>Hand-out 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relating the song to the notes they know playing the recorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sing the song (WC). Teach the rhythm .Play the notes following the rhythm. Divide the class in 5 groups. 4 groups sing & 1 group plays the recorder Change the playing group until all of them had played. Repeat this series twice.
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<p>4th Session Estimating Music & Maths activity</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 10px auto;">Hand-out 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Singing the song & playing the recorder. W Introducing Ss to estimating amounts (GW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Sing the song .Divide the class in groups, 4 groups sing the song & 1 group plays the recorder. W Divide the Ss in groups (1.pointed hat, 2.cauldron ...). Hand out a piece of paper in which each group writes down the answers. Two members of 1 group put an amount of seeds in Mum's pumpkin bag. All the groups agree an amount of seeds. Write the groups amount on the blackboard. Take the pumpkin seeds out of the bag. Place them on the table making groups of five. Ask Ss to count with you. The groups write down the name of the group which has the closest estimate & the total amount.
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Presentation

<p>5th Session Magic Story Box Literacy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Warming up W Jumping series W Introducing the story using the story box & the stick puppets (WC). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Introduce the story without showing neither the text nor the story book and using the story box & stick puppets.
<p>6th Session Magic Witches Crafts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Making witches with geometric shapes. (GW). W Telling the story & adding more items. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Hand out the cardboards with the different shapes (circle, triangles & rectangles).the Ss cut out the shapes, make a witch by sticking the shapes. W Retell the story as the day before & add as many items as the number of children in your class with their collaboration.



<p>7th Session My Mum is a Witch Storybook Reading motivation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Telling the story with the help of the students & stick puppets.(IND&WC) W Reading the picture story book.(WC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Hand out 1 puppet for each S. Order the Ss following the story sequence including the extra items. Review the story telling giving them a sentence for each puppet & let them telling the story with the puppets. W Show the covers of the real book and read them the story from it.
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Post – Presentation

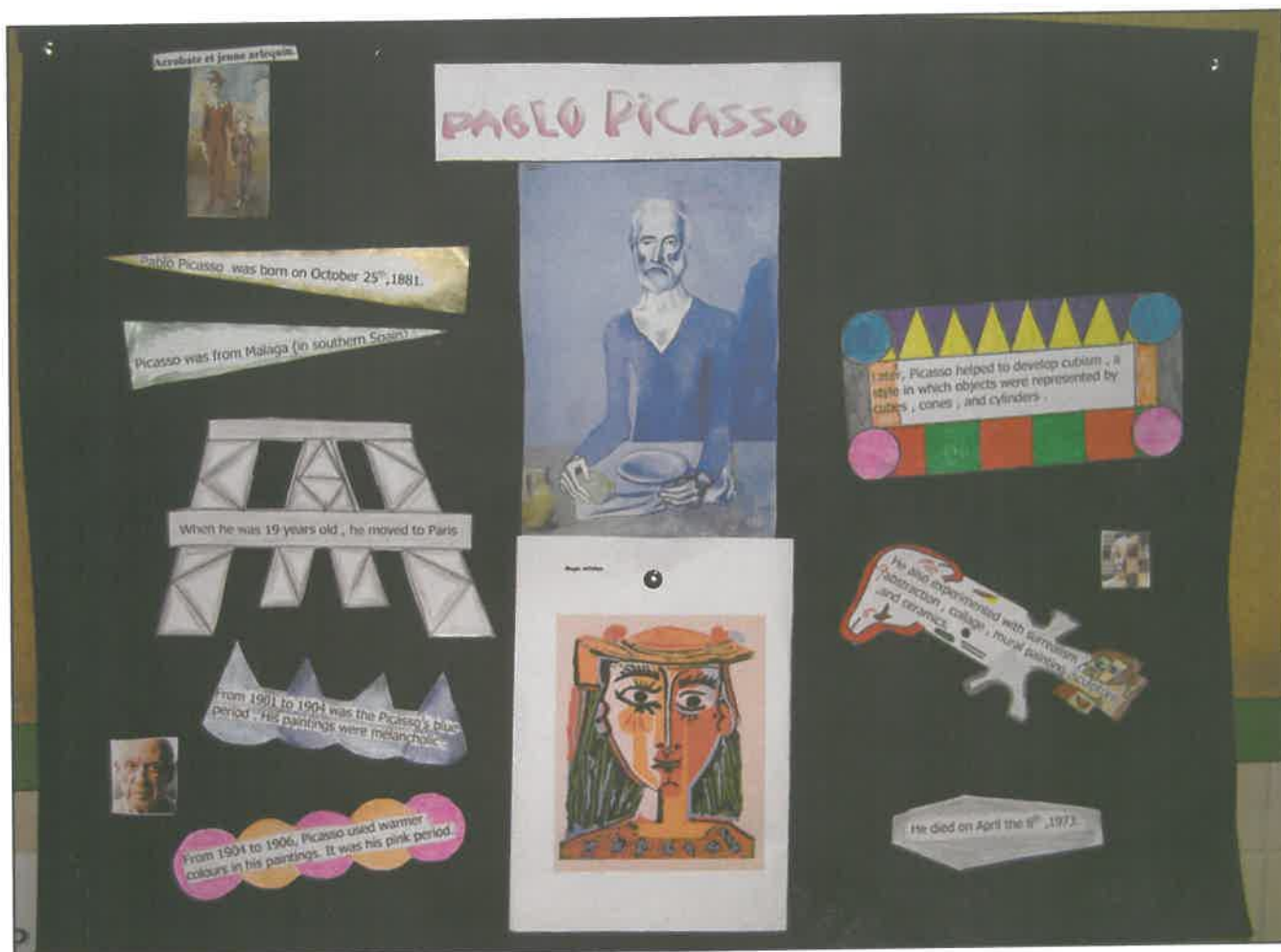
<p>8th Session Story Monitor Story Comprehension. Motivation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Introducing the written form of the story matching the pictures & the text of the story monitor.(WC) W Introducing the written text (GW). W Singing the song 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Introduce the Ss to the story monitor matching the pictures & the sentences following the sequence. W Divide the Ss in groups. 'Black cat': order the pictures. 'Broomstick': order the text. 'Black dress': order the flashcards. 'Cauldron': match & order the small pictures & words. 'Pointed hat': read the book to check out. W Sing the song to encourage them
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<p>9th Session Story Map Literacy Hand-out 5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Introducing Ss to the story map W Discussing the elements of the story map (WC) W Filling in the gaps (IND) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> W Introduce the story map & its elements by showing the book covers and reviewing the story. W The Ss fill in the gaps of the story map worksheets, first the picture filling & last the written filling.
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<p>10th Session A Story with Gaps Story Cube Box Literacy</p> <p>Hand-outs 6-7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Filling in the gaps (IND). ✎ Making the Story Cube Box (IND) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Hand out the story gap filling. Review the missing words by looking at the pictures & let the SS fill the gaps. Check it out .Cater diversity (2 different text , 1 picture dictionary sheet for the SS who can't read but can copy the words in the easiest text) ✎ Hand out the story box. Ask the SS to colour it , cut it out .
<p>11th Session Story Cube Box Literacy & Crafts</p> <p>Hand-out 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Book making (IND). ✎ Elicit speaking (IND) (PW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Hand out the picture bubbles & the text ones. Colour the pictures. Cut out all the bubbles. ✎ Hand out the puppets & review the story with the Ss. Let the Ss tell the story with the puppets
<p>12th Session Story Cube Box Literacy & Crafts</p> <p>Hand-out 7</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Warming up.(WC) ✎ Sequencing the story text.(IND) ✎ Elicit speaking.(IND) (PW) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Order the pictures & the text. Tie the laminated bubbles (pictures & text) to the story box . ✎ Tell the story to their mates & family.

<p>13th Session My Picasso</p> <p>Hand-out 8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Relating the content of the story to an art activity. ✎ Learning about a famous painter and his pictures ✎ Improving their creativity (IND). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Show the Ss the biography map . ✎ Read the text of the card board. USE L1. if it's necessary. ✎ Show the Ss the 'Women in Hats' of Picasso. ✎ Hand out the outline drawings. ✎ Let them think the materials they are going to use for their Picasso. (Wool, soft wax crayons, pieces of paper, paintings...) ✎ Start their Picasso
<p>14th Session My Picasso Exhibition</p> <p>Hand-out 9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Improving their creativity (IND). ✎ Making an exhibition of the pictures (WC). ✎ Making a booklet of the class pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✎ Finish the Picasso's pictures. ✎ Hung up the pictures ✎ Make a booklet of the Ss pictures. ✎ Hand Ss out their 'Witch Medal Award' and the 'students' self assessment worksheet'



Teacher Assessment

It is fundamental to bear in mind the following aspects:

- Evaluate both, content & language objectives;
- Include the assessment in the application of each activity through daily observation and make notes of the students' progress. Use an anecdotal record and a checklist and write comments about, students' work, behaviour, attitudes, participation, co-operation and motivation. A sheet is kept for each student which might be fill in on regular basis, preferably at the end of each lesson;
- Hand out the students' self-assessment worksheet. Ask them to classify the activities according with their preferences. (* *The most successful activity for most of our students was 'My Picasso'*)
- Write comments about the pros and cons of the unit in order of making the necessary changes to improve it.
- Give feedback to the students and parents.

Conclusion

And now, it is 'time for reflection'. We may conclude that the teachers' good practice improves students'

involvement in their process of learning, their participation in class work, the enhancement of their motivation... but not only that, it also helps to a great amount to avoid (individual and group) behavioural problems. As a teacher and trainer, we would like to ask you a few questions:

- What does good practice mean?
- How does our attitudes and work influence our students?
- How can we modify your daily teaching?

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IMMIGRATION, XENOPHOBIA AND OLD POP SONGS

by J. L. Bartolomé

Immigration, alongside with the fear or dislike of foreigners which often involves, is quite a harrowing experience these days. Teachers and all kind of learners should not become callous or keep cool while reading news stories like the following

Condenado a cinco años de cárcel un "skin" por apuñalar a un magrebí

La Audiencia de Barcelona ha condenado a cinco años de cárcel a un skin por apuñalar con una navaja en siete ocasiones a un magrebí tras llamarle "moro de mierda" en un vagón del metro de Barcelona en marzo de 2003. [...]

(El País, 4 de febrero 2005)

Llega a Fuerteventura una patera con una embarazada y cuatro bebés a bordo.

Una patera con 38 inmigrantes subsaharianos, entre ellos cuatro bebés menores de nueve meses y nueve mujeres, una de ellas en avanzado estado de gestación, encalló en la noche del viernes en medio de un fuerte oleaje a escasos metros de la playa de Pozo Negro, una localidad del sur de Fuerteventura [...]

(El País, 9 de enero de 2005)

Melilla's border sees record number of people breaking through

About 1,000 would-be African immigrants have tried to break through the double border fences around the Spanish city of Melilla in less than 24 hours, the largest wave of illegal immigration in the area since 1999. At least 30 people were injured. [...] Scores of immigrants risk their lives every year to enter Spain. Melilla and its sister-city Ceuta are stepping stones to Europe.

(Catalonia Today, September 29, 2005)

JOSÉ LUIS BARTOLOMÉ IS CURRENTLY WORKING AT THE NEW EOI IN RIPOLL. HE WAS GRANTED A 'LLICÈNCIA D'ESTUDIS' BY THE DEPARTAMENT D'EDUCACIÓ LAST YEAR. THE TARGET OF HIS RESEARCH WAS PROVIDING A PACK OF MANYFOLD RESOURCES ON MULTICULTURALISM IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM. THIS ARTICLE PARTLY BORROWS FROM AN EXTENSIVE CHAPTER ON POP SONGS.

Pop music has dealt with these topical issues for decades. The message of some oldies has not died out. In this article four of those all-time songs are revisited and a rainbow of activities is suggested in order to fill a number of school lessons with

updated, sympathetic stuff on this domestic and global trouble. English shares borders with other musical / poetical backgrounds in some of the tasks.

"Sinaloa Cowboy", Bruce Springsteen
Album *The Ghost of Tom Joad* (1995)

Miguel came from a small town in northern Mexico
He came north with his brother Louis to California three years ago
They crossed at the river levee when Louis was just sixteen
And found work together in the fields of the San Joaquin.

They left their homes and family 5
Their father said "My sons one thing you will learn
For everything the north gives it exacts a price in return".
They worked side by side in the orchards
From morning till the day was through
Doing the work the hueros wouldn't do. 10

Word was out some men in from Sinaloa were looking for some hands
Well deep in Fresno county there was a deserted chicken ranch
There in a small tin shack on the edge of a ravine
Miguel and Louis stood cooking methamphetamine.

You could spend a year in the orchards 15
Or make half as much in one ten-hour shift
Working for the men from Sinaloa
But if you slipped the hydriodic acid
Could burn right through your skin
They'd leave you spittin' up blood in the desert 20
If you breathed those fumes in.

It was early one winter evening as Miguel stood watch outside
When the shack exploded lighting up the valley night
Miguel carried Louis' body over his shoulder down a swale
To the creekside and there in the tall grass Louis Rosales died. 25

Miguel lifted Louis' body into his truck and then he drove
To where the morning sunlight fell on a eucalyptus grove
There in the dirt he dug up ten thousand dollars all that they'd saved
Kissed his brother's lips and placed him in his grave. 29

Activities

• Answer these comprehension questions

1. How old was Louis when he died?
2. How did the two brothers come into the USA?
3. What kind of work did they find in the fields of the San Joaquin?
4. How long did they have to work in the orchards? Was it hard or light work?
5. Why did they take a dangerous job?
6. What was made in that "small tin shack"?
7. How did Louis die? When was that?
8. Where did the two brothers keep the money they had saved? How much had they saved?

"Illegal Alien", Genesis
 Album Genesis Live (1973)

Got out of bed, wasn't feeling too good
 With my wallet and my passport, a new pair of shoes
 The sun is shining so I head for the park
 With a bottle of tequila and a new pack of cigarettes.

I got a cousin and she got a friend 5
 Who thought that her aunt knew a man that could help
 At his apartment I knocked on the door
 He wouldn't come out until he got paid
 Now don't tell anybody what I wanna do
 If they find out, you know that they'll never let me through. 10

It's no fun being an illegal alien
 It's no fun being an illegal alien

Down at the office had to fill out the forms
 A pink one, a red one, the colours you choose
 Up to the counter to see what they think, they said 15
 "It doesn't count man, it ain't written in ink"

Don't trust anybody, least not around here
 Cos it's no fun being an illegal alien
 It's no fun being an illegal alien
 An illegal alien, OK 20

Consideration for your fellow man
 Wouldn't hurt anybody, sure fits in with my plan
 Over the border there lies the promised land
 Where everything comes easy, you just hold out your hand

Keep your suspicious, I've seen that look before 25
 But I ain't done nothing wrong now, is that such a surprise?
 But I've got a sister who'd be willing to oblige
 She will do anything now to help me get to the outside

So don't tell anybody what I wanna do
 If they find out you know they'll never let me through 30

Because it's no fun being an illegal alien
 It's no fun being an illegal alien

Activities

About the song

1. Find three non-standard words that mean "because", "want to", "isn't / haven't".
2. Which line suggests the nationality (Mexican) of this illegal alien?

3. Which line suggests this alien wants to go to the USA?
4. How can the man (line 6) help ? Does he work for free?
5. What problems does the alien find at the office?
6. Why is it no fun being an illegal alien?
7. "If they find out you know they'll never let me through ". Who are "they"?

8. Find lines that show how an illegal alien feels (nervous, uncomfortable, distrustful...) before going through the customs.
9. Which line shows that to be an illegal alien is not a crime?
10. This alien has got a 'wallet', a 'passport' and 'new shoes'. How does he plan to go to the States?

Follow-ups

1. "Foreigner", "outsider"... There are quite a few words for "estranger" in English. "Alien" sounds derogative. Another common meaning of "alien" is...

- ___ extraterrestre
- ___ rodamón
- ___ ocell migratori

2. "I'm an alien I'm a legal alien / I'm an Englishman in New York" . Read and listen to this song by Sting ("Englishman in New York"). Why does he feel "an alien" in NY? Why is he a legal alien?

3. The song and the videoclip "Illegal Alien" was inspired by the film The Border 1982) directed by Tony Richardson, starring Jack Nicholson, Harcey Keitel and Warren Oates. This is the trailer of the movie-story. Which is the missing word?

A U.S. border agent becomes involved in an international smuggling ring. When the _____ of a poor woman is stolen so that it can be sold on the black market, he decides to fight the corruption which threatens to destroy him.

- a) golden watch
- b) jewel box
- c) baby

4. Watch Bread and Roses (2002, directed by Ken Loach, starring Pilar Padilla, Adrien Brody), the



story about Mexican women working illegally as cleaners in the States and an American unionist working to improve their working conditions.

5. Before you read a news-item about illegal aliens in Spain try to answer these two questions: about how many illegal aliens ("sense papers") are there in Spain? Why can it be good idea for the economy of the country to legalize them?

Immigrant Amnesty

SPAIN. The government approved new regulations on immigration, giving amnesty to any of the country's estimated 800,000 illegal immigrants who can prove at least six months' employment and evidence of residence in Spain for at least six months. The move is expected to increase social security payments and generate new tax revenues for Spain, which was a thriving underground economy.

(Time, January 10, 2005)

6. Read this poem by Abdelghani El Molghy (quoted from Aquí ningú no és estranger, Edicions del Bullent, 2004, pp. 42-3) about how it feels to be an illegal traveller. Coming from Nador he has now settled in Catalonia. Translate into English some of the most touching lines.

La Pastera

L'exili s'ofega a mig camí
sense deixar rastre de frustració.
Un paradís sense aigua és el nostre somni preferit
i la nostra salvació és aquesta pastera.

Però la pastera no duia cap nom
ni tenia adreça.
Aigua beneïda,
porta les nostres pregàries a cada llar!

A cada sant li portarem espelmes
i hi sacrificarem l'últim cap de bestiar.
L'horitzó només ens ha promès
onades de sospirs i muntanyes de cansaments.

S'enfosca l'aigua, tan a prop i tan lluny
i s'enfosca l'ànima.
El vent del sud bufa a olor de morts.
Cementiris líquids.
Noms descolorits.

Res no ens detura en aquest camí cap a la Meca.
 Creiem en aquest mar; pou de miracles.
 I si patim és perquè anem a contracorrent.

Homenatge al mar, homenatge al seu poble.
 La teva esquena no es cansarà mai
 I mai no ens cansarem nosaltres.

7. Repatriating foreign immigrants is overly expensive. Spain sent back to their own countries 12,449 immigrants in 2004 (13,684 in 2003). Most of them are flown back home under police escort (two cops for each return ticket). Most of these repatriations have Europe (Romania), South America (Ecuador) and Africa (mainly Nigeria) as a destination. The repatriation of an Ecuadorian costs 3,353 €, that of a Senegalese 2,000 €, 6,750 euros if Chinese.

Writing task

- Write a letter to the Spanish Interior Minister. Discuss these facts and figures. Make suggestions about how to stop expensive (and often unsuccessful) repatriation and how to spend that waste of money on plans to improve the way of life of those immigrants in their own or guest countries.

"Killing an Arab", The Cure
 Album Boys Don't Cry (1978)

Standing on the beach with a gun in my _____
 Staring at the sea, staring at the _____
 Staring down the barrel at the arab on the _____
 See his open mouth but hear no _____

I'm alive 5
 I'm dead
 I'm the stranger
 Killing an arab

I can turn and walk away or I can fire the _____
 Staring at the sky, staring at the _____ 10
 Whichever I choose it amounts to the same
 Absolutely nothing

I'm alive
 I'm dead
 I'm the stranger 15
 Killing an arab

Feel the steel butt jump smooth in my _____
 Staring at the sea, staring at the _____
 Staring at myself reflected in the eyes
 Of the dead man on the beach 20

I'm alive
 I'm dead
 I'm the stranger
 Killing an arab

24

Activities

1. Put these missing words where they belong in the lyrics. Use the rhymes as a clue.

ground sand gun sun hand sound

2. What figure of speech is the burden ("I'm alive / I'm dead / I'm the stranger / Killing an arab"), apparently a self-contradictory statement?

- a) a metaphor
- b) a paradox
- c) a hyperbaton

3. Who is the dead man on the beach?

4. Who shot him?

5. Who can the singer see in the eyes of the dead man?

6. Is this song for or against xenophobia?

7. Which seems to be the message of the song?

- a) To kill a stranger is like killing myself
- b) To kill an arab is not fun
- c) To be alive or to be dead is all the same

8. This song was inspired to The Cure by the reading of one of the most outstanding novels of the 20th century, L'Étranger (1942, UK The Outsider, US The Stranger), a study of alienation. The author was a French existentialist writer named...

- a) Jean-Paul Sartre
- b) André Malraux
- c) Albert Camus

9. Read these last lines of a famous poem by John Donne, an English poet (1572-1631) of the Metaphysical school

Any man's death diminishes me,
 Because I am involved in Mankind.
 And therefore never send to know
 For whom the bell tolls; tolls: rings
 It tolls for thee. thee: you

Compare these lines with the burden of the song

I'm alive
 I'm dead
 I'm the stranger
 Killing an arab



"Le métèque", Georges Moustaki
Album Georges Moustaki (1981)

10. Listen to the song "El extranjero" by Enrique Bunbury (with Pequeño, 1999).
Translate these words into English

Me siento en casa en América
en Antigua quisiera morir
parecido me ocurre con África

Pero allá donde voy me llaman el extranjero
donde quiera que estoy el extranjero me siento

También un extraño en mi tierra
aunque la quiera de verdad
pero mi corazón me aconseja:
los nacionalismos qué miedo me dan.

Ni patria ni bandera
ni raza ni condición
ni límites ni fronteras
extranjero soy.

Avec ma gueule de métèque
De Juif errant, de pâtre grec
Et mes cheveux aux quatre vents
Avec mes yeux tout délavés
Qui me donnent l'air de rêver
Moi qui ne rêve plus souvent
Avec mes mains de maraudeur
De musicien et de rôdeur
Qui ont pillé tant de jardins
Avec ma bouche qui a bu
Qui a embrassé et mordu
Sans jamais assouvir sa faim.

Avec ma gueule de métèque
De Juif errant, de pâtre grec
De voleur et de vagabon
Avec ma peau qui s'est frottée
Au soleil de tous les étés
Et tout ce qui portait jupon
Avec mon cœur qui a su faire
Souffrir autant qu'il a souffert
Sans pour cela faire d'histoires
Avec mon âme qui n'a plus
La moindre chance de salut
Pour éviter le purgatoire.

Avec ma gueule de métèque
De Juif errant, de pâtre grec
Et mes cheveux aux quatre vents
Je viendrai, mau douce captive
Mon âme soeur, ma source vice
Je viendrai boire tes vingt ans
Et je serai prince de sang
Rêveur ou bien adolescent
Comme il te plaira de choisir
Et nous ferons de chaque jour
Toute une éternité d'amour
Que nous vivrons à en mourir.

Et nous ferons de chaque jour
Toute une éternité d'amour
Que nous vivrons à en mourir.

Activities

• Testing my French

Work with a partner who knows French (an African immigrant from a French-speaking country or is learning French as a second language at school). Read the first verse and answer these five questions:

1. What is the singer's religion?
2. Where is he from?
3. What was his father's job?
4. Which part of his body makes him look like a "foreigner" (métèque)?
5. Which part of his body makes him look like a dreamer?

Read the translation of this first verse into English and check your answers

With my mouth of wog
Of wandering Jew, of Greek shepherd
And my hair with the four winds
With my very diluted eyes
Which give me air of a dreamer
Me who does not dream very often
With my hands of petty thief
Of musician and of prowler
Who have plundered so many gardens
With my mouth which has drunk
Which has embraced and bitten
Without never appeasing its hunger.

Read the twin translation of the following verses and fill out the gaps. Work with a partner or rather on your own, with the help of a dictionary (French-English, French-Catalan, Catalan-English)

With mouth of wog
Of wandering Jew, of Greek shepherd
Of robber and vagrant
With my _____ which has been rubbed
With the sun of every _____
And all that carried undershirt
With my _____ which has known to make
Suffer as much as has known pain
Without for that making stories
With my _____ that has never had
The least chance of salvation
To avoid the purgatory

With my mouth of wog
Of wandering Jew, of Greek shepherd

And my hair with the four winds
I will come, my _____ prisoner
My soul mate, my living source
I will come to _____ your twenty years
And I will be a prince of blood
Dreamer or teenager
As you will like to _____
And we will make of every day
A whole eternity of love
Which we will live until we _____

• The title

In ancient Greece a "métoikos" was a foreigner who settled down in Athens without enjoying full citizenship rights. This classical word remains in French (métèque) as well as in Catalan and Spanish (metec, meteco). In English "wog" sounds taboo. Can you think of a couple of softer alternatives? Cross out (x) the ones that sound awful or are offensive to some nationalities or races

- ___ stranger
- ___ outsider
- ___ alien
- ___ mick
- ___ dago
- ___ wop
- ___ wog
- ___ honkie
- ___ ofay
- ___ gook

• Catalonia. Land of "xarnegos"

In Catalonia we still call "xarnegos" people who come from other places in Spain and live among us. Originally this term comes from the old days when...

- a) mixed marriages between Catalan and French spouses were common
- b) Basque shepherds came to Catalonia for pastures and married village girls
- c) farmers from la Manxa flocked to Catalonia for jobs after the Spanish Civil War ("xarnegos" is a corruption of "manxegos": manxecs)

Check your family names (up to eight if necessary) until you find a surname which is not Catalan. Draw your family tree and try to find (through your parents, grandparents) who was the first "García" (Martínez, Sánchez, etc.) to come to Catalonia.

When was that?
Where did he / she / they come from?
Where did they settle first?
Why did they have to move?
What problems did they have to face at first?
How did they manage to get by?
How did they meet their wives / husbands?
etc.

- Read the following autobiographical books
Jo també sóc catalana (Editorial Columna) by Najat El Hachmi
De Nador a Vic (Editorial Columna) by Laila Karrouch
Més enllà del mar de sorra (Editorial Rosa dels Vents) by Agnès Agboton



These books show that the issue of being / feeling "català" has become a good deal more complicated today. A few years ago it was quite easy to say that anyone working here or just learning to speak Catalan was a Catalan. Because there are so many races, nationalities and religions living together Catalan people have become a little bit more choosy.

Write down the features which in your opinion qualifies a foreigner working / living in Catalonia to be regarded as a Catalan fellow. Discuss your opinions and feelings with a classmate.

- Have a look at the following newspaper story

El Reino Unido somete a un duro examen a los inmigrantes que desean obtener la nacionalidad

SER O NO SER BRITÁNICO, HE AHÍ LA CUESTIÓN

[...] De las 24 preguntas los aspirantes a sacar el pasaporte deben responder correctamente 'en torno al 75%'

(La Vanguardia, 5 de noviembre 2005)

Some of the 24 questions in the test: "Who is the head of the Church of England?", "Which dialect is spoken in Liverpool?", "What are the four countries that make up the United Kingdom and when do they celebrate their national holidays?", "What kind of courts admit a jury?", "What is the Commonwealth?", "Where do people speak with a cockney accent?"...

Imagine immigrants in Catalonia could apply for Catalan citizenship after passing a cultural test. Just for fun design a 24-item test with multiple choices. Here are five tips:

CATALONIA QUIZ

1. Which is the national anthem of Catalonia?
 - a) Els segadors (The Reapers)
 - b) Tot el camp és un clam
 - c) El cor de la ciutat
2. Which of the following newspapers is written in Catalan?
 - a) El País
 - b) Avui
 - c) La Mañana
3. Which is a typical house in the Catalan countryside?
 - a) barretina
 - b) sardana
 - c) masia
4. Who was a famous architect?
 - a) Pompeu Fabra
 - b) Antoni Gaudí
 - c) Pau casals
5. Which sticker can you see on many Catalan cars?
 - a) a bull
 - b) a donkey
 - c) a cock

Discuss your items with other partners. See how much you agree or disagree. Is this kind of test useful? Can it be degrading, humiliating, even a loss of self-respect to young / old immigrants?

- "Singing national chants at school?"

Read this news headline and the main point of the story

**Els escolars de França aprendran
"La Marsellesa"**

Un diputat considera l'himne un símbol davant la immigració[...] L'ensenyament de *La Marsellesa* a l'escola contribueix a respondre al repte de l'assimilació de les poblacions exteriors vingudes al territori nacional", va assenyalar el diputat.

El Periódico, 20.02.05

Do you think learning and singing national songs or anthems at school can help integrate or discriminate newcomers? Discuss it in the class.

Just for cultural interest collect a number of 'patriotic' Catalan folksongs. Read and write down the main stanza and sing out the tune:

"L'emigrant"

Dolça Catalunya,
pàtria del meu cor,
quan de tu s'allunya
d'enyorança es mor.
(Jacint Verdaguer)

"El cant dela senyera"

Al damunt dels nostres cants
aixequem una senyera
que els farà més triomfants.
(Joan Maragall)

"El cant del poble"

Glòria, catalans, cantem!
Cantem amb l'ànima!
Un crit i una sola veu,
Visca la pàtria!

(Josep Maria de Sagarra)

"La Santa Espina"

Som i serem gent catalana
Tant si es vol com si no es vol,
Que no hi ha terra més ufana
Sota la capa del so!

(Ángel Guimerà)

"Els segadors"

Catalunya, triomfant
Tornarà a ser rica i plena!
Endarrera aquest gent
Tan ufana i tan superba!

Bon cop de falç!
Bon cop de falç, defensors de la terra!
Bon cop

(from an original folksong from the 17th century)

Translate into English the Catalan folksong above:

- with the most chauvinistic words
- with the saddest, most nostalgic words

Find and read the whole text of "L'emigrant" (lyrics by Jacint Verdaguer, music by Amadeu Vives). This song should be a reminder that Catalonia has also been a land of emigrants. Check and tick from this list the things that the Catalan emigrant misses most far away from his fatherland:

- valleys
- food
- mountains and hills
- rivers
- woods
- the wind
- the sea
- the birds
- the climate
- the sky
- the plants
- cities
- his family
- wild animals
- school friends

Do some research about emigration in Catalonia suggested by that song:

- In what ages did Catalans have to leave their homes for lands with better job chances?
- Where did they go? How did they go there? Did they settle for long?
- What is an "india"? And an "americano"?
- In what American countries can you find "casals de Catalunya"?

Try to get into a foreign newcomer's skin. Talk to one of them. How does he / she feel far away from home, his / her friends? What things or places does he / she miss most? Write a short checklist.

You may wish to carry on with this empathetic activity by considering the mass migration of other Spanish peoples to Catalonia and some European countries in the 1950s and 1960s. You can also collect and study a large pack of emotional emigrant / immigrant songs in Spanish from that time.



IPA: English theatre in education



Little Red



Rudolph



Robin Hood

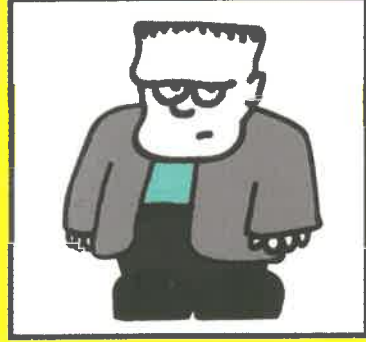


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“ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN OUR SCHOOLS: A REAL CHALLENGE”

TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN OUR SCHOOLS IS BECOMING A DIFFICULT TASK, AND MANY OF US TEACHERS DO FEEL FRUSTRATED WHEN WE SEE THE RESULTS WE OBTAIN AT THE END OF EACH PERIOD. THIS ARTICLE TRIES TO ANALYSE THE SITUATION FROM A PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW AND GIVE SOME PROPOSALS WHICH MAY TRIGGER A FUTURE DEBATE. IN TERMS OF RESULTS, WE HAVE DISCOVERED THAT THERE ARE DEFICIENCIES IN ORAL AND WRITTEN PRODUCTION, A COMMON DENOMINATOR THROUGHOUT OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM

— by Joan Martorell Coca

FOREWORD

One of the main reasons for writing about this topic is the mismatch / disproportion, which I consider exists, between the amount of time devoted to English Language Learning / Teaching in our school system and the level of proficiency attained, especially by the end of the “ESO” Cycle, which is particularly poor compared to other European countries.

When trying to look for possible explanations, one encounters no small amount of possible theories, and even experts “pass the buck” to the recurrent use and abuse of the traditional approaches and methods. We are referring to textbook-based approaches –Type A: PPP = Presentation-Production-Practice or also SOS = Structural-Oral-Situational. In both cases, there is usually a sequenced grammar curriculum, but the results are that the students, in general, are unable to master what is taught or practised in class in a real-life context. Prabhu (1987: 16) states that “the students are unable to:

- Use the language when necessary outside the classroom.
- Achieve an acceptable level of grammatical accuracy in their language use outside the classroom.

- Achieve an acceptable level of situational appropriateness in their language use outside the classroom.”

No sooner did I realise that the aforementioned is a reality in our system than I personally volunteered to “tutor” a 2nd Batx. research paper, carried out by Noemí Bocanegra, in order to formulate certain hypotheses which will be analysed in a separate chapter.

Consequently, this article will be presented as follows:

1. A general introduction, where we briefly analyse some elements which constitute the core of language learning pedagogy.
2. An approximation to the Primary Education Cycle in Catalonia. In this section I must humbly admit that I lack experience and information, thus we have tried to gather data from teachers and reach some conclusions, from the point of view of outside observers.
3. A close study of the Secondary Education Cycle (ESO), where I have been teaching, and which will include a complete reference to the research paper previously mentioned.
4. A brief reference to “BATX.” studies.

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5. General conclusions and personal proposals.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. STUDENT ROLES

This will be a brief section and we shall simply set down some of the general traits that so far have been mentioned by experts about the flaws of foreign language learners.

Basically, all of them agree on the point that classroom tasks and activities do not guarantee fluent oral production in real-life situations. As for the factors that may impede this proficiency or which may thwart classroom oral practice, we can list the following:

- Inhibition.
- Lack of confidence in talking in pairs/groups.
- Fear of making mistakes or errors.
- Lack of practice in interpersonal relationships.
- Lack of vocabulary, connectors, etc.
- Lack of real-life opportunities to use L2.
- Lack of motivation for the school subject.
- Classroom anxiety.

On the other hand, we could also quote some factors which may help to improve the students' learning attitude. In fact, they are not unfamiliar to teachers and we are fully aware of them in our daily routine:

- Extroverts seem to do better than introverts, at least in oral production.
- Cognitive styles: on average, the level of intelligence of the learners influences their level of proficiency.
- Motivation: a key word in classrooms and schools and difficult to achieve.
- Tolerance for ambiguity and diversity.

It goes without saying that the list is open, but to specify on paper what is a reality in our daily classes is fundamental.

1.2. TEACHER ROLES

"Teachers are made rather than born" (R. Phillipson, 1992).

The position of the teacher has changed a lot, but having analysed different approaches, and from my own experience, we can trace some of the

most outstanding features that any teacher should bear in mind. Personally, I would like to make reference to J.M. Lucea (2004: 37-43), Inspector of Secondary Education, who commented on what are the parameters in which teachers are working, after interviewing and attending real lessons in order to evaluate the teachers who were trying to become "catedràtics". In spite of the fact that the evaluation was a little "biased", since we were assessed in a classroom context which, in general, was a little pre-planned, nevertheless, the interviews and the interpersonal contact were clearly fruitful. Thus, some of his views will be reported in this section.

In this way and talking about teachers, we shall establish some reference points, as a pool of different theoretical views:

- The teacher must be a good communicator, have rapport with the students and feel comfortable and at ease in class.
- S/he must use new technologies, encourage oral output and use L2 as an input source. Richard and Rodgers (1986: 137) state that "*the teacher is the primary source of comprehensible input in the target language.(...) Class time is devoted primarily to providing input for acquisition, and the teacher is the primary generator of that input*".
- S/he must also have clear, realistic objectives, and pragmatism, diversity and variety should be basic concepts in his/her daily teaching.
- S/he should be an active creator of his/her own materials, tasks, activities, etc.
- Finally, a reference to Peter Strevens (1997:71) when he points out that "*Equally, it is obvious that the teacher must be intelligent, have a non-discouraging personality and display emotional maturity*". And also a quotation from Paul Seligson, who insists in following one's instincts: "*In short, trust your intuitive feelings, follow your "teacher's nose", share your spontaneous successes and failures with colleagues and try to work out why you made them and why they did/didn't work.*" (Seligson 2005: 15)

1.3. CLASS ACTIVITIES / TASKS

In this section we want to offer a general view of the main guidelines offered by experts in preparing and using classroom materials. In the first place, the teacher is considered the basic source of input in the L2. M. Parrott (1993: 100) declares that "*the giving of instructions in the classroom is one of the few genuine communicative acts which takes place*". Apart from the input provided by the teacher, it is essential to "offer" authentic materials. Thus, all

tasks and materials should parallel the real world as closely as possible.

Other general characteristics of classroom tasks are the following, selected from D. Nunan's general points:

- They should require the use of the four macro-skills.
- They should involve the learners in risk-taking.
- They should enable the learners to share in the planning and development of the task.
- They should allow the learners to rehearse in class communicative skills which they will need in the real world.
- They should be suitable for mixed-ability groups, which sometimes means over preparation for teachers. (D. Nunan, 1989: 53-140)

Finally, another reference must be made to Nunan (2002: 58) and a task-based syllabus, since he points out that "any approach to language pedagogy will need to concern itself with three essential elements: language data, information and opportunities for practice". He also clarifies and categorizes all kinds of tasks: real-world tasks, pedagogical tasks, rehearsal tasks, activation tasks, communicative activities, etc. In general, he insists on the point of communication, authenticity, the importance of grammar as the manipulating of the linguistic system, and the genuine exchange of meaning, among others.

Last but not least, a brief comment must be made on Manuel Estrany's classroom methodology. Personally, I think it is a mixture of the Humanistic view, plus Communicative Language Teaching and his own personal "recipes", probably deriving from his long personal experience. As I understood, he takes authentic materials and works with the students in a weekly-planned system. The keys to his success may be: the students are always surprised by the materials; they think they are doing very little; there is a continuous oral assessment of their participation; there is no attention devoted to mixed-ability or diversity; the syllabus is not grammatically sequenced and less than 10% of the students fail, which is a factor to be considered. So, we need more ideas to break our classroom routines and avoid boring lessons.

2. PRIMARY EDUCATION CYCLE

By way of introduction, we shall delve into the way children learn their mother language, their L1, and

then we shall also try to systematise information about this complicated and outstanding period in the process of learning a foreign language. The process of learning an L1 has been widely analysed. In this short section, we shall only focus on the main general points so as to direct our views towards the situation of the Catalan educational system.

It seems to be unquestionable that "before the age of five any normal child has mastered his or her native language" (C. Painter 1989: 1). We can also talk about "motherese", which is the language spoken by adults to young children, which is different from that addressed to adults. In addition, we should refer to Piaget's term "egocentric speech", which is the children's speech directed to themselves, irrespective of having a receiver of the message. He also refers to two basic functions: *the mathetic and the pragmatic*. Thus, "the mathetic function was the use of language to learn, to build up a picture of reality; the pragmatic function was the use of language to act on that reality" (C. Painter 1989: 24-25). Taking into account both functions, they argue that children combine them in their later development of language acquisition.

As for second/foreign language learning, we can formulate some general points. Firstly, everybody agrees that the earlier a child begins to learn a foreign language the better. Secondly, there is disagreement on the process, since the learning of a foreign language is distinct from learning the mother tongue, basically because the children "learn" the foreign language, and the native speaker "acquires" the mother tongue. So, personally, I firmly believe that the process is not the same.

Before closing the section, a brief reference should be made to the Natural Order Hypothesis. Many experts give their views on the assumption that there is a sort of natural order in the way children learn language items or morphemes. Richard and Rodgers (1986: 132) point out that "the acquisition of grammatical structures proceeds in a predictable order. Research is said to have shown that certain grammatical structures or morphemes are acquired before others in first language acquisition of English, and a similar natural order is found in second language acquisition".

Rod Ellis also claims that the order of acquiring some morphemes is more or less the same, because there is a universal or natural order which regulates that process. He even gives a list: 1- case – word order; 2- singular copula –singular auxiliary – plural

auxiliary- progressive; 3- past irregular –possessive (’s) – 3rd person singular (-s), etc. (Ellis 1986: 56-57).

Roger Brown studied how some children acquired some of the morphemes of their mother tongue, and he also provided a list of the possible natural order: 1-present progressive; 2- prepositions on/in; 3- plural (-s); 4- irregular past, etc. (W. Littlewood 1984: 22).

We should realise there is no complete coincidence in that natural order of acquisition when learning a language. In addition, they also mention the influence of the mother tongue in the learning of a foreign language, and that errors, which will appear in both cases, learning the mother tongue and learning a foreign language, are part of the learning process. Moreover, we also have to refer to “over-generalisation”, that is when the learner applies a general rule to all the elements of a language and thus commits errors, which constitutes a step in the learning of L1 and L2. (e.g.: from “foot” they make *’foots”).

Comparing the mother tongue and foreign language, Rod Ellis (1986: 22) comments that “*differences between the first and second language create learning difficulty which results in errors, while the similarities between first and second language facilitate rapid and easy learning*”. Therefore, all these considerations should be borne in mind when teaching young children.

2.1. GENERAL POINTS

Before describing the cycles and their characteristics, I must clarify that I interviewed some teachers from different schools in the area, basically because I did not know exactly how Primary Schools function as far as English language teaching is concerned. Thus, my personal thanks go to Lucía Moreno from “CEIP ‘‘Àngels Garriga” of El Vendrell, Francesca Mestres and Teresa Alonso from “CEIP Salvador Espriu” de Roda de Berà, and M^a Luisa Forján from “CEIP Antoni Roig “ de Torredembarra.

First of all, we have to clearly establish the different periods of learning:

- P3, P4, P5, which correspond with the age of the children and could be considered the “Nursery School” period. Some schools have started with English as a foreign language in a basic, oral form. They mainly work with stories, vocabulary, orders and simple questions of per-

sonal identification.

- Primary Cycle, which is divided into 3 sub-cycles: Initial, Medium and Superior. So, it makes a total of 6 school years, starting at the age of 5 or 6 and finishing at the age of 11 or 12. During this period, there are usually a frequency of 3 sessions of English language per week. They usually last 60 minutes, sometimes 45 minutes (when in afternoon sessions), and once a week the group is split between two teachers in the group, or half the group has another academic subject.

2.2. SPECIFIC POINTS / PROBLEMS

- In general, teachers do not complain about the size of the groups. They feel satisfied with current figures: 20/23 students per class; 11/12 when splitting groups.
- Teachers try to use only English in class, and claim they make a lot of physical effort to draw their students’ attention. Sometimes they feel like “clowns” or “magicians”.
- Teachers do not appreciate any difference between monolinguals and bilinguals as to the level of proficiency attained.
- It is a common fact that motivation lessens when students get older. Teachers note a sense of shyness in the last period of the Primary Cycle and, consequently, students become more reluctant to do oral activities.
- It is commonly agreed upon by teachers that their formative curriculum at University is poor. They complain that the part of the curriculum devoted to their preparation to become teachers of a foreign language is completely insufficient. Consequently, they have to resort to extra lessons, courses, University degrees, etc., to be prepared for teaching L2.
- Students who do well in general are usually good foreign language learners. This seems to be a truism but in the world of learning it is a recurrent fact.
- Those students who take extra lessons – i.e., private language schools, parents’ help with audiovisuals, summer courses, etc. do much better in class than the rest. Thus, their contact with English outside the school context is clearly beneficial.
- There is a tendency to write things as they are pronounced and teachers tend to correct and make them repeat the task.
- With newly-arrived students there are no specific problems, except when they join the system in late stages.

- In early stages, teachers tend to use stories and gradually introduce sounds and vocabulary. Students learn new vocabulary, which even might seem difficult for a foreign learner – e.g. “skittles” appears in a story at a basic level.

2.3. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- There should be an improvement in the University curriculum, basically devoted to deepening the level of proficiency in foreign languages. Special attention should be given to oral skills in foreign languages.
- There is the possibility of trying immersion programs, which means that some school subjects could be taught in L2.
- More attention should be focused on the late stages of the Primary Cycle to guarantee an acceptable level of proficiency in all the skills, especially in the oral skill.

3. COMPULSORY SECONDARY EDUCATION (“ESO”)

This is probably the most controversial period we shall be dealing with. Initially, we have to assert that it consists of four school years, divided into two cycles, and usually covers the teenage period of twelve to fifteen-year-old students. Exceptionally, some students do it in 5/6 years when they do not reach the general scheduled basic objectives. Unfortunately, we have to confirm that almost 30% of our students do not attain the general certificate at the end of the cycle.

3.1. GENERAL POINTS

It goes without saying that this period coincides psychologically with the “worst” teenage period of young people. Thus, we encounter one of the worst stages for teenagers to learn any academic subject, basically 2nd and 3rd ESO courses. In fact, their general attitude is usually negative.

Consequently, we shall try to enumerate some of the problems we face when teaching these teenagers:

- Diversity and mixed-ability students in a class-group of 25/33 students.
- Some students’ reluctance/refusal to learn anything.
- Lack of study habits and willingness to do homework.
- Difficulty of classroom management by non-expert teachers: sometimes they resort to traditional grammar lessons and over-controlled ses-

sions to avoid discipline problems.

- Class/group “bullying” of some students who try to comply with everything in the school: the ones who prepare for tests and regularly do their homework.
- Constant “trickling in” of newly-arrived students from other countries, Morocco, Central and South America, Eastern Europe, which constitutes a problem for the general level of the group as a whole.
- Surprising though as it may seem, there is usually a group of students who do not worry at all about marks, exams, textbooks, etc. They simply “attend lessons”, and you, as a teacher, or magician, or police officer, or “guru”, or any other term you want to apply to yourself, have “to entertain” them. In general, you have to foresee a special set of photocopied materials and offer your product to those students who, sometimes, behave like “part of the furniture of your classroom”.
- Some stressed and non-expert teachers can spend nights or weekends without sleeping properly just thinking about those difficult groups they are going to encounter the following week. They spend time and energy to produce a “miraculous recipe” for facing the battle of teaching 3 or 4 sessions. On the contrary, veterans know that the first three/four weeks is the period when the group, together with the teacher, establish the overall running for the whole school year. Nonetheless, sharing these problems with colleagues is vital for all cases.

3.2. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS RELATED TO ENGLISH TEACHING

- Some sort of aversion to English as an academic subject.
- Great deal of difficulty in practising oral production in class. Perhaps the best period is when groups split, which happens once a week..
- Some students never use the L2 in class, not even to address the teacher or peers.
- In some cases, teachers cannot give a complete lesson in the L2, and, more often than not, they have to switch to Catalan.
- Many general curriculums and classroom tasks are only directed towards the preparation of the written end-of-term and final tests. So, frequently, materials are shaped towards test preparation.
- Teachers’ obsession with sequencing the school year into grammar units. There can be a feeling of frustration when they realise that students forget previously and supposedly mastered/studied elements.

Sizes of groups to which to teach a foreign lan-

guage: there should be a maximum of 14/16 students.

- In general, students perform better in mechanical and memory tasks, (vocabulary and grammar), and worse in active/creative tasks (written and oral production).
- Average/good levels of intelligence favour better results in English language learning, as they usually do in other school subjects, but they are not a guarantee since they sometimes depend on the psychological maturity of teenagers.
- There is gap between classroom practice and real-life situations where students have the option of using the L2. However, in our context, it cannot be tested since teachers are not witnesses of that possible situation. What is only tangible is the fact that they can master, to a certain extent, some grammar elements in a unit context, and, surprisingly they make mistakes when they eventually have to use those elements in free/open oral and written production.
- The general timetable also influences classroom motivation and students' attitudes. Afternoon lessons are usually more tedious.
- With dialogues, information gap activities, pair/group tasks, etc., and with clear instructions that they are to be performed in the L2, teachers have to over-control the small groups so as to avoid their using the mother tongue. Students tend to switch to the L1 as soon as they realise that the "controller" is not paying attention to them. This childish attitude should be negotiated in the class context.
- The teacher's mood may also affect the general running of the class, as happens in any human activity. In fact, it is understandable once we consider that our job implies "working" with real people (so far).

3.3. A CASE STUDY: EVALUTATING ENGLISH AT 4TH ESO

In this section we shall try to describe what we found out through the research paper carried out by N. Bocanegra in 2004, and which constitutes one of reasons why we became involved in this enterprise.

In the first place, we have to state that it was a 2nd Batx. research paper carried out by Noemí Bocanegra, and tutored by me. We slightly followed the parameters and instructions/guidelines of three experts: D. Nunan (1992) and H. W. Seliger and E. Shohamy (1989).

As for the Secondary Education Schools which took part in our research, there were four: "IES Baix Penedès", "IES Andreu Nin", " IES Torredembarra" and "Col.Legi Sagrat Cor del Vendrell", a private school. The research was done on only one group of 4th ESO in each school, and the oral part to 2/3 students in those groups.

Firstly, there was a previous questionnaire, in which the students were asked about the degree of difficulty they felt about the different skills when learning English, and also about their personal contact with English outside the school/classroom context.

The items they considered the most difficult were: listening comprehension, written expression and oral production. We have to indicate that they answered the questionnaire before doing the general test.

With reference to their external contact with L2, the most outstanding results are the following:

1. Extra-learning in private English schools: 24,86 %.
2. using English on the internet: 32,20 %
3. using cds, dvds, watching films, plays, TV, etc.: 25,67 %

Thus, we can compare our results with those given by the Catalan Dept. of Education:

	OUR STUDY	DEPT. EDUCATION
1	24,86	27,6
2	32,20	24,7
3	25,67	31,5

The core of the research was the test, which was divided into different sections:

1. Written production: multiple choice grammar questions; multiple choice everyday English; vocabulary chains and composition (circa 80-100 words).
2. Written comprehension: students had to summarise an adapted authentic press article, which was adapted also had some vocabulary clues with the Catalan translation. They also had the option of doing it in Catalan, Spanish or English.
3. Listening comprehension: 10 multiple-choice questions from a listening exercise in a 4th ESO textbook.
4. Oral production: an oral interview to 2/3 students, chosen randomly. Two oral tasks were proposed:
 - a. personal information, identification, likes, etc. (teacher-student)
 - b. description of two pictures different from each other (student-student).

With regard to the marking system, Noemí assigned the following: grammar 30%; everyday English 10%; vocabulary 10 %; composition 20 %; written comprehension 10 % and listening comprehension 20 %, which makes a total of 100 %. That criterion was exclusively adopted by the student, but, personally, I would have increased the degree of importance of composition and written comprehension items, and consequently decrease that of grammar. On the other hand, the oral test was not included in the marking system because it was only taken by a few students.

As for the results, we can note the following:

- grammar: 5.52 out of 10 (a bit higher in the private school: 6.8).
- everyday English: 4.87 out of 10.
- vocabulary: 6.82 out of 10.
- composition: 4.03 out of 10.
- written comprehension: 3.4 out of 10 (private school: 2.2 out of 10!).
- listening comprehension: 7.75 out of 10 (perhaps it was too simple).
- final mark: 5.14 out of 10 (private school: 6.26).

In regard to the written comprehension question, we should specify that almost 60% of the students did not do the exercise. The remaining 40% breaks down as follows: 24% chose the translation in Catalan, 8% in Spanish and the other 8% in English.

The oral tests were carried out with 2/3 students of each target group and the results were better in the first part of the test. In general, the students were able to answer the questions of the first part, and the interviewer felt some lack of vocabulary and hesitations in the second part. As for pronunciation, it cannot be evaluated because the teacher was a student who is not a native speaker and, in spite of the fact that she has a good command of English, she is not capable of examining students' pronunciation level.

As a general conclusion, we can corroborate the degree of difficulty of written comprehension, written expression and oral production for our students. It can also be noted that the students of the private school did a little better than those in the public sector. To be honest, we observed that the students of the private school had more contact with English outside the classroom than the rest.

3.4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

- As was said before, there is a serious deficiency in productive skills: written and oral.
- There should be a reinforcement in oral production and it should be evaluated at the end of each cycle.

- Authentic materials, newspapers, subtitled films, DVDs, e-mails, internet chats, etc., should be systematically used in class.
- Out-of-school contact with English, whenever possible, should be fostered.
- Using English in the general school context should be exploited: school magazines/booklets, swapping letters among groups, preparing sketches and short plays for the end of the term, attending drama shows in English,...
- Fostering the participation in programs offered by the educational authorities: Orator, Comenius, contact with other schools from other countries, European projects, etc.
- Systematic use of Computer-Assisted Language Learning is basic.
- Immersion programs as part of the general curriculum. The starting point should be in the Primary Cycle and should continue in the "ESO" cycle. It seems to be sensible not to be applied to all groups, but only to those capable of following academic subjects in English.
- In the case of splitting groups, which at the moment happens once a week, there should be special programming to make the most of it. Consequently, the curriculum should be analysed at the end of each term with a follow-up and some reflection sessions. These lessons with fewer number of students should be focused on the reinforcement of oral skills.

4. "BATXILLERAT" CYCLE

To begin with, we should establish that the current two-year cycle is insufficient, and it seems necessary to lengthen the "Batx." up to three school years in order to complete the preparation for University studies.

4.1. GENERAL PROBLEMS

Basically, we encounter pedagogical problems in the first year, mainly due to the gap between ESO studies and BATX., which is sometimes a profound transition for some students. Some of them have to take three to four school years to achieve their certificate and others simply drop out.

4.2. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS WITH ENGLISH

- In English language teaching we perhaps feel a lack of school working habits. We also detect some deficiency in the initial position of the students, which may derive from the previous cycle.
- There is also a tendency to design a curriculum biased towards preparation for the University Entrance Test, "PAUU", above all, in the second year of the cycle. So, all the effort and tasks cle-

arly go in this direction.

- We also detect a lack of communicative tasks, probably due to the fact that this skill is not a requirement in the official exam. Yet, some teachers practise them in order to improve the students' oral proficiency.

4.3. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

As it can be easily deduced from the previous comments, we advocate lengthening the cycle and paying more attention to oral skills. We hope that, eventually, there will be a part of University entrance exam which will include some oral production.

Immersion programs in some subjects constitute a possibility which can be exploited, but taking into consideration the fact that the "BATX." curriculum is open and does not involve all the students in the same way.

5. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND PERSONAL PROPOSALS

- Acceptance of the fact that our students reach a poor level of proficiency at the end of the "ESO" cycle, and, on the other hand, refusal of some statistics which give a "watered-down" version and try to hide our reality.
- Foster the creation of commissions or groups of teachers to follow the situation of English language teaching. They should hold meetings regularly and plan objectives for three- or four-year periods.
- Confer more responsibility on the Head of the Foreign Language Department in each school, so that s/he has more authority in terms of exam preparation, general objectives, real curriculum goals, etc.
- Provide more teachers and assistant teachers in order to split up groups, which will allow teachers to work with smaller groups in all the lessons, and not only once a week as it is now.
- Increase the acceptance of schools to new programs, such as Orator, so there is an increase in their budgets and equipment dedicated to new technologies.
- Try to influence our social reality to intensify and guarantee the presence of the English language outside the school (cinemas, TV, etc.).
- Channel some sabbatical time to the study of these daily problems we face when teaching English, as it is an open question and we "are still in hot water" in this field.

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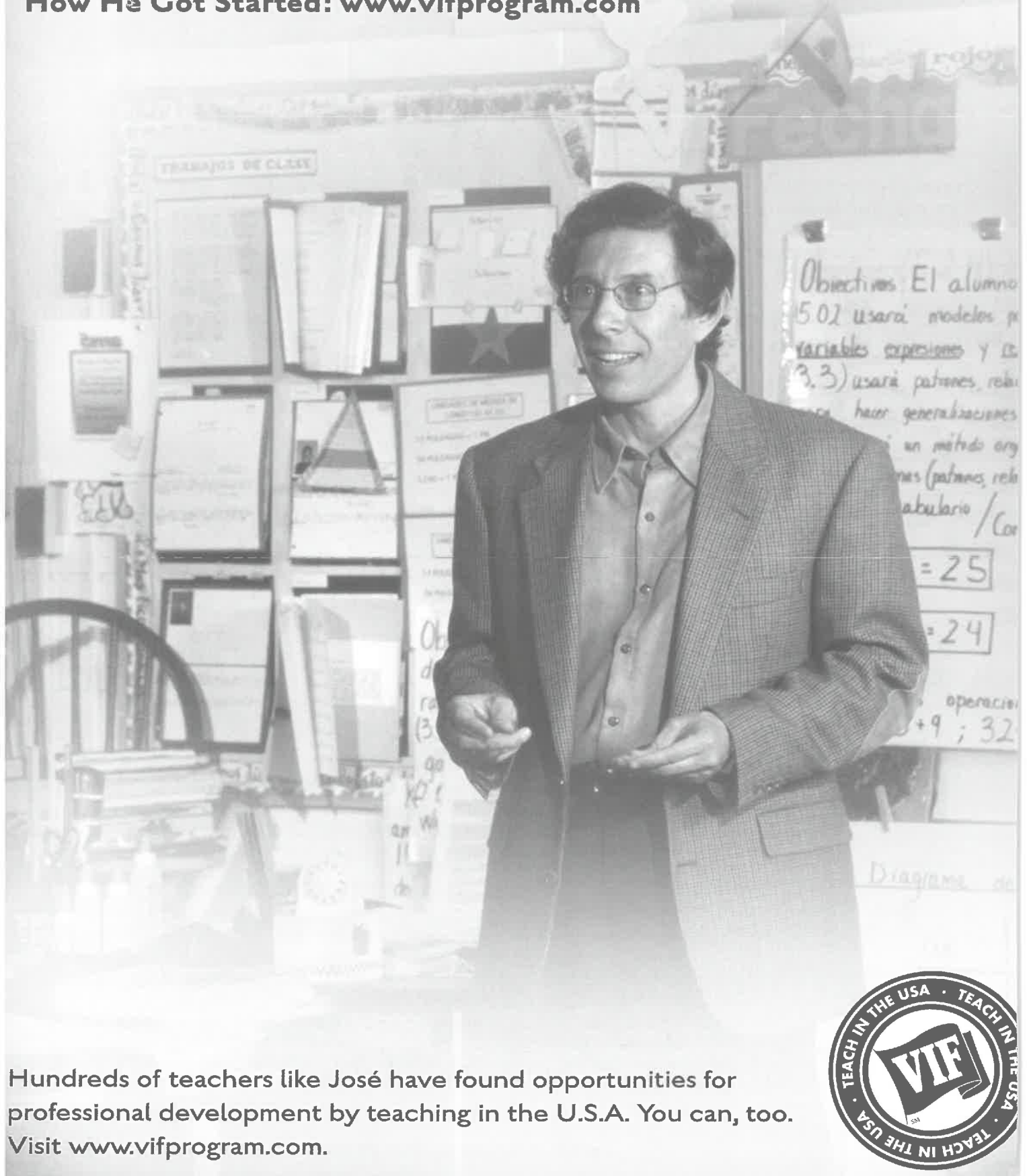
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by Joana Angrill Farreny

1. Introduction

E-learning has become an increasingly useful educational methodology, fostered by the widespread implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Even if some universities have established distance courses that do not require the attendance of the student at all, this type of education may still be considered a mere complementary learning activity in the Batxillerat and ESO learning schedule, combining the physical presence of the student in the classroom with the on-line activity 24 hours a day¹.

E-learning has many advantages, both for teachers and learners. Needless to mention, the legion opportunities of the computer and the net as a resource, students become the focus of attention and are presented with varied learning situations

that respect diversity and that allow them to progress according to their own learning rhythm, thus enhancing learner autonomy and social realization both through individual and collaborative participation in a multimedia, interactive and flexible environment. Teachers, on the other hand, are decentralized from their information supply status so as to adopt the role of learning oriented tasks/material designers and guides, thanks to synchronous and asynchronous communication tools. Through different e-activities, learners are to become active and conscious recipients of their learning process. These are some of the principles that lay behind the constructivist approach, which can be summarized in the following figure:

¹ When talking about this type of learning we will refer to it as blended learning or blended instruction.

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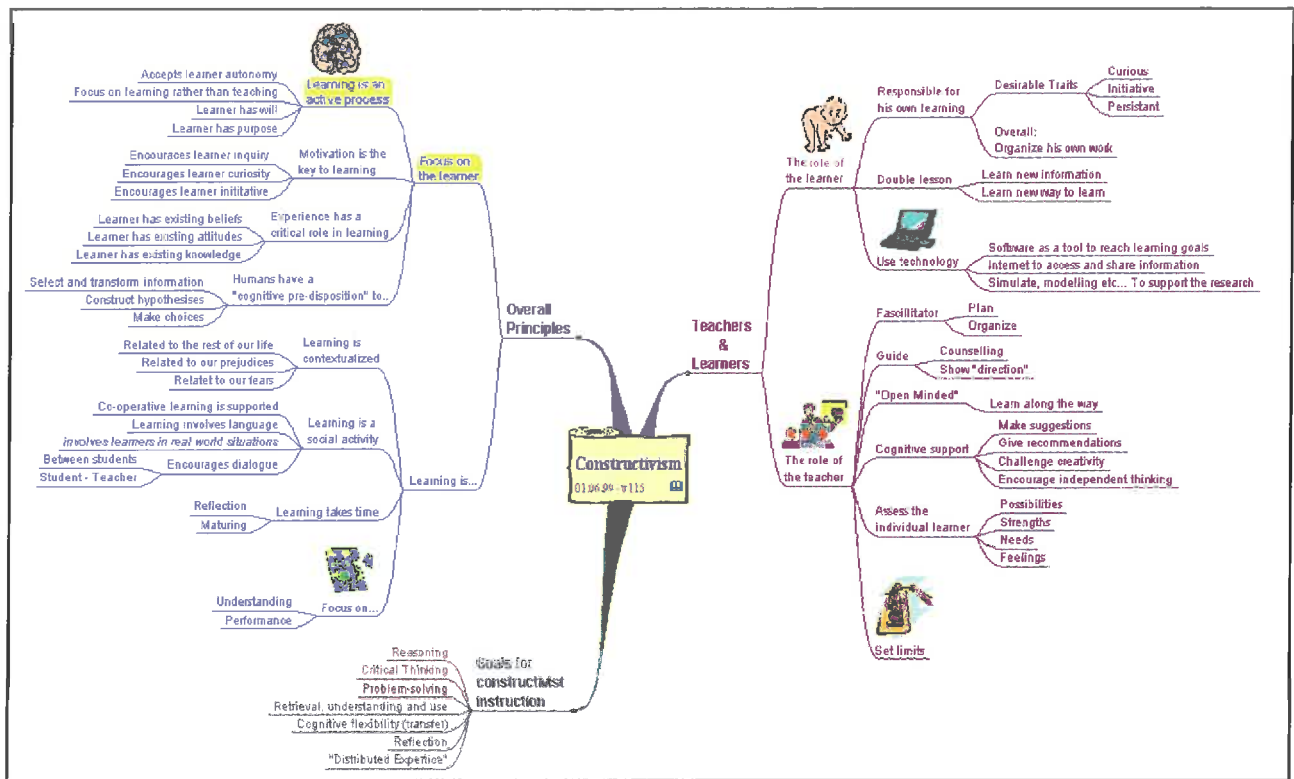


Figure1. Constructivism mind map. Extracted from http://uib.no/People/sinia/CSCL/HMM_Constructivism.htm

As a social phenomenon, learning is encouraged when students feel a sense of community where reasoning, critical thinking, experience-sharing activities, etc. take place. Educational platforms or learning management systems (LMS) are software packages that allow on-line education around a framework which reproduces the opportunities the real classroom offers into a dynamic virtual environment. This new type of learning, already accepted in distance learning environments, is becoming highly valued in traditional learning, as it permits extending the classroom into the web. Moodle was designed and developed from a socio-constructivist and student-centred perspective and, since 1999, when Martin Dougiamas launched it for the first time, statistics show how the community of users is increasing worldwide, particularly for educational purposes.

2. Moodle

Moodle is an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. It is a software package that allows teachers to create a virtual teaching-learning environment (VLE), a virtual campus that enhances intercommunication and fosters student participation. To Moodle is also a verb, meaning to dawdle aimlessly, to idle time away or it may also refer to the process of lazily meandering through something while doing things as they occur. Both meanings are used to talk about the way in which

this educational platform evolved and the way in which a teacher or a student may approach this new teaching-learning methodology.

As an open-source software package, Moodle is distributed free of license fee and code source, thus allowing its modification under the same free redistribution terms. The latest version of the package is

1.5.4 is relatively new and is available from <http://moodle.org> and it may be supported by most operative systems (e.g. Windows, Unix, Linux, Mac OS X, etc.) and web host providers.

Some features that make Moodle use widespread are its easy installation, updating and content management and its friendly interface, which can be switched into more than 60 languages. Once it is installed, the teacher has all the privileges to create or modify a course. Courses are usually displayed either in the topic or in the weekly format. Moodle comes with good support and instructional help via tutorials, manuals and online courses so that the task of the manager/administrator is made smooth. It acts as a storeroom to save documents while it allows one to integrate on-line resources into a single web site. For our specific EFLT purposes, Moodle has an additional value as it offers a battery of useful, controlled, educational tools on the same platform.

Moodle has also been adopted because of the advantages for both the student and the teacher. Students are provided with a personalized working

environment which requires an individual password: learners are granted restricted access to portions of the site. Its clear interface facilitates navigability and enhances communication. Learners are presented with varied learning resources as well as individual and group activities. Moodle does not involve high technical knowledge or advanced computing skills and it assists teachers in ordinary tasks such as adding educational resources, creating activities, communicating with students, following learners' progress, evaluating activities, etc.

3. Moodle for language learning/teaching purposes

As mentioned before, e-learning in a Moodle environment is constructed on a modular basis, where modules act as software tools and templates with which users can interact. In fact, Moodle displays a learning-blocks structure, where the content of the course is located in the middle block (cf. Figure 2), whereas blocks on both sides may be arranged and created according to the teachers' preferences. The language teaching/learning process may take great advantage of these modern technological facilities in

a way that both teachers and students learn together. The Moodle interface includes communication, content material and activities modules.

As enriching and enhancing interactivity among students and teachers are basic principles of e-learning, effective communication tools are essential. Moodle provides e-mail, forums and chats on the same platform. Content material modules serve the function of presenting information in different formats and degrees of interactivity according to the teacher's criteria. In this category there are many elements that may act as a resource: texts, internal or external web pages, documents in different formats (e.g. ppt, pdf, doc, etc.), images, executable files, a glossary, etc. Contents in Moodle are structured in a very simple and friendly way: information may be organized by topic or into chapters, like units in a book. The former is not subject to time boundaries, whereas the latter presents its own weekly different activities. The activities modules refer to those tasks students are to perform, and they encompass the problems, exercises, etc. teachers consider most suitable for learning their subject. Moodle offers teachers the opportunity to easily design activities in multiple formats: questionnaires,

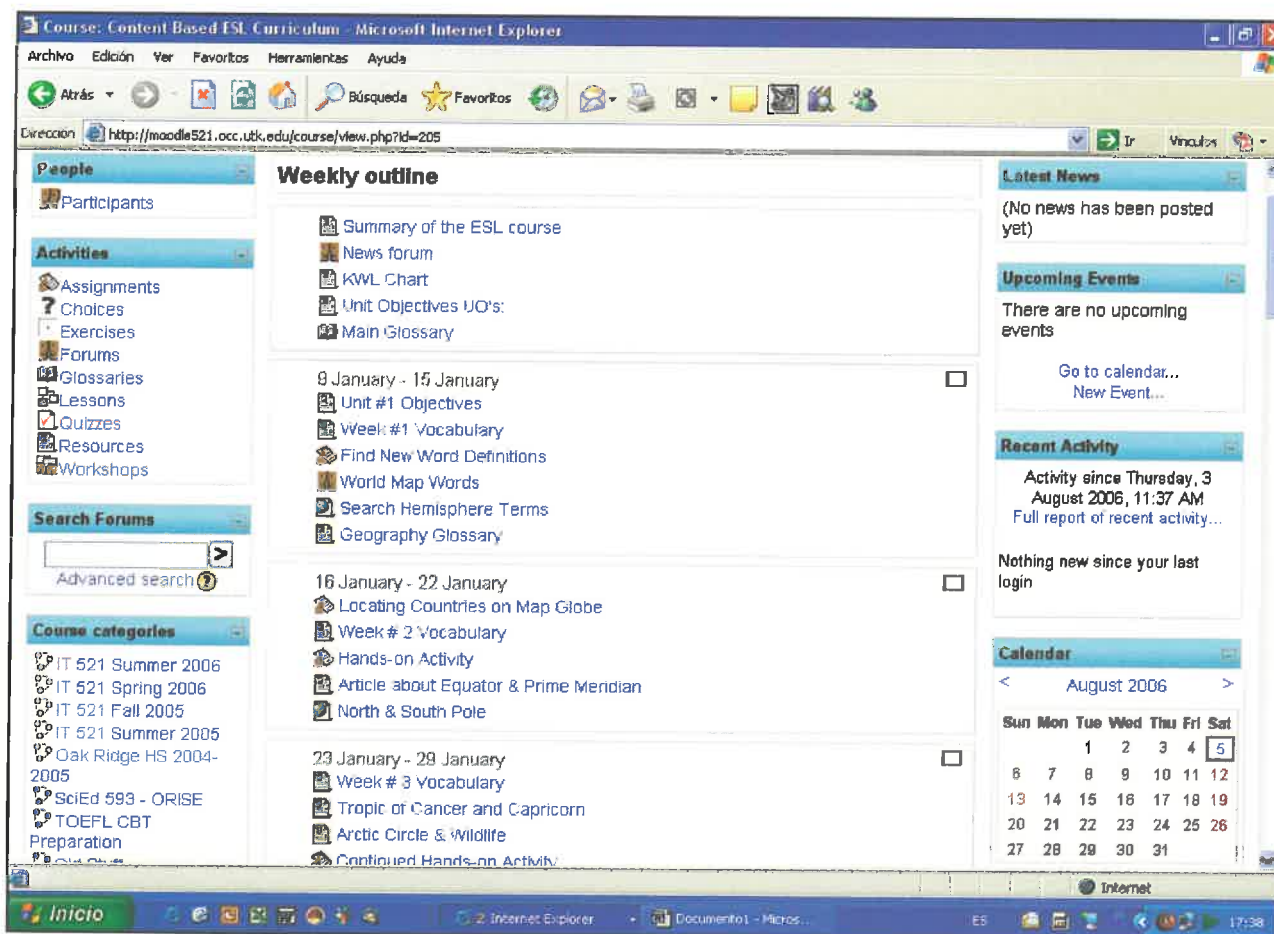


Figure 2. Screen capture of an ESL course supported by Moodle

diaries, tasks, surveys, quizzes, lessons, workshops, interviews, etc. A calendar may be configured to notify the students of the deadlines by which the activities need to be submitted.

Apart from creating materials and devising activities, teachers may take advantage of Moodle as a tool for evaluation assistance. All activities may be subject to qualification, as it keeps a record of all movements in the participants' log: it allows teachers to track what materials learners have accessed, to collect their marks in the activities they have undertaken, to check which students have completed all the activities and how long they have been working on a task, to extract backup copies of students' work through templates, etc. In turn, teachers are able to retrieve valuable information from the activities they posted, since the activities modules may not only be used to design the learning tasks but they also permit teachers to have a greater control over students' assessment following the principles of continuous evaluation more consistently.

4. Moodle for EFL purposes

Taking into account the communicative and functional approaches of language learning, the use of a unique web platform may be beneficial for EFLT purposes. Indeed, foreign language learning derives mostly from the use and practice of language in authentic communicative situations and less from traditional theoretical sessions on the language or exercises on paper. In a recently conducted survey (Whelpton and Arnbjörnsdóttir, 2006) the most effective method in a classroom for language teachers was "negotiation of meaning through conversation" and "collaborative tasks". Language in a virtual environment is seen as a tool for real communication and, for this reason, emphasis should be placed on providing communicative contexts rather than focusing on learners' performance accuracy. In this sense, interaction and collaboration are the basic elements that a virtual environment should focus on for language teaching.

The use of Moodle may contribute to students' improvement in the performance of their language skills. In many ways Moodle lends itself to writing, reading, listening and, though to a lesser extent, speaking. Despite the factual use of the platform for skills practice and drilling in isolation, Moodle is thought to be deployed in an integrated fashion in which content and communication are key strategic concepts.

For many years of traditional teacher-centred education, English language teaching relied on grammatical analysis: the practice of many drills, repetition

and memorisation in order to acquire a competence in the target language. Indeed, knowledge of the language may be considered as another skill, along with communication abilities, still necessary and to be considered in EFL learning. In this sense, the teacher's focus should be placed on learners' progress rather than on their performance on a linguistic test. Moodle may be a useful tool to cover this in the different areas of language learning.

4.1. Grammar and Vocabulary

With the introduction of technologies such as CDs and websites, grammar instruction was the first skill to be practised in an on-line environment, due to its proved effectiveness in students' achievement in this field (Sado, 2005). However, we should not think of the role of technology as that of a substitute teacher but as a learning tool which is supplementary to face-to-face classroom instruction: teachers can either create their own material or facilitate direct links to relevant grammar websites with further explanation, examples, quizzes, etc. Besides, grammar software may be uploaded into Moodle for students to have direct access to exercises without having to abandon the main Moodle framework. Some of this software may adopt the form of freeware or shareware or may require the acquisition of a license, either by each student independently or through an institutional common contract. Considering on-line grammar instruction as a new way of learning, it tends to boost learners' motivation and self-esteem. Indeed, in the survey mentioned above, translation and grammar exercises were found to be among the activities most enhanced by computers. The numerous techniques computing offers, such as colour highlighting, animation and sound-effects, make lessons more attractive than their paper version. Moreover, immediate response to a learning situation is a highly valued feature that increases students' satisfaction, as it provides them with a wide range of additional grammar practice with instant feedback. Moodle allows teachers to extract significant information about the students' progress throughout the term via statistical analysis of the on-line activities, which are presented in full detail and in real time in each participant's log.

4.2. Reading

Most course material and information is narrative, so students spend a great deal of their time reading: learners read presentations, opinions in the forum module in order to reply, traditional books to present an assignment, teachers' instructions and resources with information, etc. Bearing this in mind, teachers are challenged to find and design varying ways of presenting readings, especially when long screen

reading seems to decrease students' attention and interest. In this sense, interactive media, taking the form of investigation and knowledge exploration, endows teachers with facilities to create new materials or to refer to existing ones to which learners may positively react. At this point it should be worth mentioning teachers may benefit from an existing misconception on the use of computers: learners are intrinsically motivated when lab time comes, because they tend to associate computers with leisure and fun rather than with work.

As members of the so-called "information age", our students are witnesses to the emerging global society, which will demand a different set of thinking skills that allow them to interpret and discriminate information. With web-based material stemming from a single platform, traditional reading skills such as scanning, skimming, reviewing and selecting information are highly promoted.

Student motivation for reading is one of the main challenges teachers have to face up to. In fact, not only are students engaged in reading what they like, but also adults tend to read what interests them most, rather than what an outsider imposes them. Singhal claims the Internet "promotes literacy for authentic purposes" because of the intrinsic motivating and useful nature of authentic materials (Young, 1980). Using this type of material (e.g. foreign newspapers, travel brochures, shopping sites, pictures, weather forecasts, artists' biographies, encyclopaedias, etc.), and through students' involvement in its selection, their interest in reading may be enhanced. The Internet has become the most valuable source to quickly extract authentic material at an extremely low cost. Besides, as already mentioned above, Moodle just becomes a supportive and pleasant multimedia learning environment with which teachers are encouraged to create their own materials. Timothy Takemoto proposed some guidelines for the creation of shared English teaching

23	English as a Global Language: A good thing?	<input type="checkbox"/>
		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task Description The routes of English Video on English as a Global Language Listening File: Global English Questions for Listening Task Organising your essay 	
24	No disponible	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Storytelling and Myths and Legends	<input type="checkbox"/>
		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Irish storyteller Eddie Lenihan A webquest on folk tales "If You Believe in Fairies, Don't Bulldoze Their Lair" Open Country Radio programme 	

Extracted from <http://dfm.unileon.es/moodle/course/view.php?id=3>

materials as regards texts and on-line questions. He advocates the use of simple grammatical forms while continuously introducing new vocabulary.

4.3. Writing

The writing skill is the ability which can be best exploited through a virtual environment, where communication takes place, mostly, in a written mode: chatting, e-mailing, discussing, etc. require practicing the writing skill. As a computer-mediated communication (CMC) educational medium, Moodle allows students to use the language in authentic contexts and, thus, focus on a meaningful use of language.

The Journal and Assignment modules may be used to encourage student writing. Whereas journals allow learners to maintain a private individual textual conversation with the teacher which may be graded, the assignment module permits students to upload files with their work for assessment rather than handing in printed material. For example, students may be asked to report weekly on a book they choose as well as some personal comments or to explore a member of a musical band of their choice by gathering web information and writing a presentation in the Journal module (refer to Klaus Brandl for more learning tasks based on Moodle tools). Apart from grading their work, the role of the teacher is that of

a feedback provider and learning stimulator. In its turn, the Glossary module may become a useful tool not only for creating a list of definitions but also for building a major class booklist where the key concept is the title of the book, band, etc. and a short informative review as in a library card catalogue.

The Forum module also boosts learners' writing, as it permits free expression of their opinion on certain topics. Each theme may be structured into subtopics which simplify content organization while encouraging students' will to express their own view in their real class community audience, that is, a motivator for writing. Unlike the Chat function, the Forum module is a valuable tool that leaves room for learners' reflexive thinking, thus reducing uncertainty and providing an opportunity for students to express themselves without being intimidated by mistakes and misunderstandings. The abuse of this activity, though, is time consuming, as it requires the teacher to act as a moderator, and weak students may be reticent to participate as they might feel unable to follow the thread of discussion.


Not only are learners the centre of the teaching-learning process when expressing themselves to a real audience, but they may also become active creators of content material in a completely wide sense. As members of the dotcom generation, familiar with multimedia information, learners are intrinsically motivated to improve their ICT skills, as working with technology may pose a real challenge for minds that are more readily susceptible to the introduction of new technologies. With relatively easy software tools, designing and editing web pages for a clear audience can be seen as a potential source for appealing to students to engage in a creative writing process.






4.4. Listening

As an integrative platform, Moodle allows image and sound files to be uploaded and integrated in the development of the course, in the form of standard quizzes and Hot Potatoes activities, which can be imported into Moodle. Apart from submitting listening exercises from the textbook, teachers may find a great deal of listening resources² on the net as well

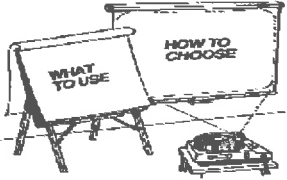
as create their own learning materials. With the quiz module, teachers are allowed to create quizzes that make use of audio and video technology quite easily. For instance, teachers may create a variety of dictation exercises in which students are to write down the usual whole text, listen for specific infor-







21 Listening to English at Home



-  Task: Listening to English at home
-  Life in London
-  Download realplayer here
-  Listen to radio programmes
-  podcasting for your mp3

22 Topics for Class Presentations



-  Task Instructions for making presentations
-  Global Issues website
-  News about Britain
-  Hot Topics: The science behind the news
-  From our class discussion: Band Aid
-  More resources on British Culture

mation in a gap-filling exercise, etc., with a timer for the quiz.

4.5. Speaking

Most literature on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) appraises the potential of course management systems in order to facilitate a unique platform where language learning may take place in an authentic situation and, thus, for meaningful purposes. Yet, there is an increasing concern among language teachers about the lack of functionalities that simulate face-to-face communication. The practice of the speaking skill seems to be limited to classroom performances with a presentation on some project or topic which may be recorded and uploaded onto the course site. Some authors have already complained about the dearth of specific language learning modules, mainly referring to the simplicity of the real time communicative media, with a lack of voice chat and sophisticated audio modules for direct and synchronous oral practice. Teachers have recently been working hard to implement Moodle or devise alternative functionalities. For audio and video sessions, free software tools such

² English listening activities classified by topic that can be incorporated into the lesson through hyperlinks can be found in [ELLO](#), [StoryCorps](#) or [The History Channel](#). There is no need to mention the possibilities of radio channels that allow one to connect in real time and download past programmes.

as Audacity, Skype, MSN, MP3myMP3 or chat pal talks may be used to serve these ends.

5. Limitations

With the opportunities and advantages offered by the introduction of ICT in a single educational environment, there are some factors which, if not adequately considered, could restrain the benefits mentioned above. If changes in learning and didactic strategies have been produced over the last decades, institutions should also respond to the new educational context with new assessment and organizational models that keep in mind a lower teacher-learners ratio for effective web-based instruction to take place, especially regarding foreign language e-learning, where much has still to be done to appropriately implement Moodle. Setting technological and financial difficulties aside, one of the drawbacks teachers may experience when introducing on-line work into their lessons is students' lack of maturity in their responses, even at higher levels, mostly when working with communication tools. If on-line learning is not part of the curriculum and, thus, not evaluated, learners will be prone not to participate or they may display disruptive conduct. For this reason, rules for using the on-line course should be made clear from the very beginning. Last but not least, as the internet is such a vast repository of information without organization, teachers should be specially cautious with issues concerning material ownership and copyright, as the line between original production and plagiarism is sometimes blurred. Teachers should also be aware of the guidelines and copyright amendments as regards technology and learning media (e.g. printed materials, videos, illustrations and photographs, music, computer software, television programming, etc.) as well as take into account the restrictions of use of their own material. Following the philosophy of the open source software of the community behind Moodle, many authors are presently publishing their works under the Creative Commons License, by which they can be reproduced and publicly distributed, with this being clearly referenced and for non-commercial purposes.

6. Conclusion

As a tool for course management, Moodle is an easy web-based platform, built on the socio-constructivist premises, which may be valuable to foster a student-centred learning approach both in a virtual environment and in blended instruction. CALL has reached an integrative phase where computer-mediated communication for authentic use of the

language is dominant. Moreover, learning a foreign language with web-based instruction while improving ICT skills raises students' intrinsic motivation. Although there is a widespread claim for Moodle to be implemented for language learning purposes, there may be a common feeling that the use of technology ends up as a mere projection of the traditional methodologies used in the classroom into an on-line environment. Teachers' integration of new technologies in the classroom depends highly on the socio-institutional context and their own conception of language teaching (e.g. behaviourist, communicative, etc.). Despite the glamour of technology and higher results in grammar practice, its use in language teaching does not guarantee students' success in skills acquisition if not properly worked into a task-based learning framework and a warm atmosphere that triggers the learners' responsible attitude to participate. All in all, it is important for students to develop a sense of autonomy. The role of teachers is to find different methods of learning and provide learners with opportunities to develop their thinking skills.

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PROJECT WORK

by Salvador Montaner Villalba

What is project work ?

According to Haines (1989), "Projects are multi-skill activities focusing on topics or themes rather than on specific language targets. Of crucial importance is the part which the students play in the initial choice of subject matter and in the decisions related to appropriate working methods, the project timetable and the end product. Because specific language goals are not prescribed, and because students concentrate their efforts and attention on reaching an agreed goal, project work provides students with opportunities to recycle known language and skills in a relatively natural context."

Similarly for Legutke and Thomas (1991), "It is a theme and task mode of teaching and learning which results from a joint process of negotiation between all participants. It allows for a wide scope of self-determined action for both the individual and the small group of learners within a general framework of a plan which defines goals and procedures. Project learning realises a dynamic balance between a process and a product orientation. Finally, it is experiential and holistic because it bridges the dualism between body and mind, theory and practice, experience and thinking."

In project work, students work together to achieve a common purpose, a concrete outcome (e.g., a brochure, a written report, a bulletin board display, a video, an article for a school newspaper, etc.). Haines (1989) identifies four types of projects: information and research projects, survey projects, production projects, and performance organisational projects. What these different types of projects have

in common is their emphasis on student involvement, collaboration, and responsibility.

Ideas that support project work

- It is student-centred and not syllabus-centred.
- It is co-operative rather than competitive.
- It is skill-based not structure-based.
- It allows people to learn from other people within the group.
- It caters for interdisciplinarity, since being a topic-related activity it allows for all kinds of contacts with other subjects.
- It is connected with reality.
- It allows students "to learn through doing" and to learn how to learn, since they have to plan their own work and draw from their own personal skills.

Characteristics of Project Work

We have worked out a decalogue of characteristics that can clearly summarise the potential of this approach to language teaching and learning. Project work must be...

1. **Interesting:** the topic, the teacher's approach and attitude.
2. **Productive:** the final goal is a product in some way or another.
3. **Active:** Students do = Students learn. It is also interactive and student-centred. The students are an essential ingredient in the Project Work recipe.

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4. **Coherent:** For the students and for the school. It must be internally coherent and levelled with the students' knowledge.

5. **Integrative:** Of the four linguistic skills, also communication skills, information skills, group skills, individual skills and procedural skills for learning and autonomy.

6. **Obtainable:** It must be oriented to success, but still be a challenge to maintain students' spirits high.

7. **Authentic:** in language, in context and interaction.

8. **Useful:** For the student, for the teacher and for the school. Most final products can be used as stepping stones for future projects.

9. **Motivating:** It has to be a challenge and get students involved.

10. **Flexible:** Adaptable, it must allow for evaluation and modification in progress.

STAGES

There are three main stages to project work: Planning, doing and evaluating.

Planning

1. Creation of a context in which everybody feels well and not a competitive atmosphere. Teachers have to be good at "selling the idea" to students.

2. Negotiation of rules and course of action (e.g., agree that most of the interaction has to be in English).

3. Training of students. It is useful that the students have had some practice in classroom language, sentence order, how to use a dictionary, how to use a reference grammar book, brainstorming, brain mapping, decision taking, letter writing, giving short talks, writing questionnaires, conducting an interview and note taking, to mention a few aspects that are worth training.

4. Be open to students' suggestions and allow a maximum of freedom.

Doing

Project Work has to be done inside and outside the classroom, but this aspect depends on the actual plan devised by students. We suggest the following steps:

Selection of topic

Group discussion

Plan: checklist of things to be done.

Timetable.

Materials: List of materials that will be needed

Distribution of work.

Do project (linking and fusing work as Ribé and Vidal (1993) put it):

Plan presentation.

Presentation to the class.

Evaluating

Self-evaluation: Students, together with their products, hand in comments about the process: how they have felt, problems they have had and solutions they have found and also about the result, what they have learnt. They can also devise and fill in their own self-evaluation sheets. Look for mistakes, correct them and comment on them: why they made them, etc.

Peer evaluation: Colleagues study products from fellow students and hand in comments, marks, ranking lists, etc., according to preferences. Mistake hunting can be an interesting and rewarding activity.

Teacher evaluation: the teacher analyses strategies and problems, gathers, categorises and values different comments and prepares feedback for the class. S/he also analyses general mistakes and prepares likely remedial work for the future.

If **diaries** (both teacher's and students') have been used, they can be studied at this stage and conclusions discussed.

Benefits to students

Haines points out six important benefits to students.

1. **Contact with reality.** Projects provide contacts with real world subject matter, which requires students to apply and adapt what they already know. (But they can also deal with imaginary and creative topics).

2. Projects are participatory activities. Students' involvement in making choices and decisions tends to increase their motivation and interest.

3. Projects cater for all abilities within a class. They enable and encourage students of different abilities to work co-operatively on tasks of equal importance. Those who are relatively weak with regard to their formal linguistic achievement may be able to use other talents which are as valuable to the success of the projects the writing of good English or the understanding of complete texts, etc.

Most projects include some of the following non-linguistic tasks:

- Design (leaflets, posters, displays)
- Illustration (photographs, cartoons, graphs)
- Organisation (of people, materials, tasks and time)
- Equipment (video, cameras, tape recorders, PCs)

4. Projects re-integrate language. Language is usually separated into discrete items for teaching purposes, but project work provides learners with a natural context in which they can put language learnt this way back into place.

5. Projects establish a context which balances the need for fluency and accuracy.

6. Projects are a break with routine and allow students to relax.

What students do:

- They create tools: devise, use and evaluate grids, questionnaires, charts, etc.
- They handle information: compare, sort, analyse, transfer and summarise it.
- They improve their socialisation skills: people skills, individual skills, participation in different kinds of interaction.
- They do a lot of language work: practice all four skills in the process. They talk, read, listen and write.

What teachers do

- They prepare students for working independently in groups
- They prepare a resource bank and handle timing of projects.
- They identify and provide information needed or help students find it on their own.

- They identify and provide language needed or help students find it on their own.
- They define roles.
- They provide and train students in skills for dealing with information, generating ideas, presentations, etc.
- They listen before they give advice.
- They are supportive and never destructive, respecting students' work and initiatives.
- They develop their capacity for being flexible and being able to re-conduct projects.
- They participate in the evaluation process.

Legutke and Thomas (1991) claim that project work recognises the emergence of "educational values" based on a holistic, interactive and reflective pedagogy. Such a notion of project work greatly extends the roles of both the teacher and the learner. Instead of being a teacher of "language", the new teacher of project work is also a teacher of learning and of the learner.

This way of working fits perfectly well with guidelines established by the new educational system. Speaking from experience, I strongly recommend this type of work in the foreign language classroom.

A short list of possible projects to start with

- Class survey on pets
- Students' heroes
- Teacher age chart
- My ideal room / neighbourhood / house / city / planet, etc.
- Our favourite recipe
- The songs we like
- Pollution in the area
- Tourist guide
- Classroom magazine
- Radio program
- Create an advertisement for television

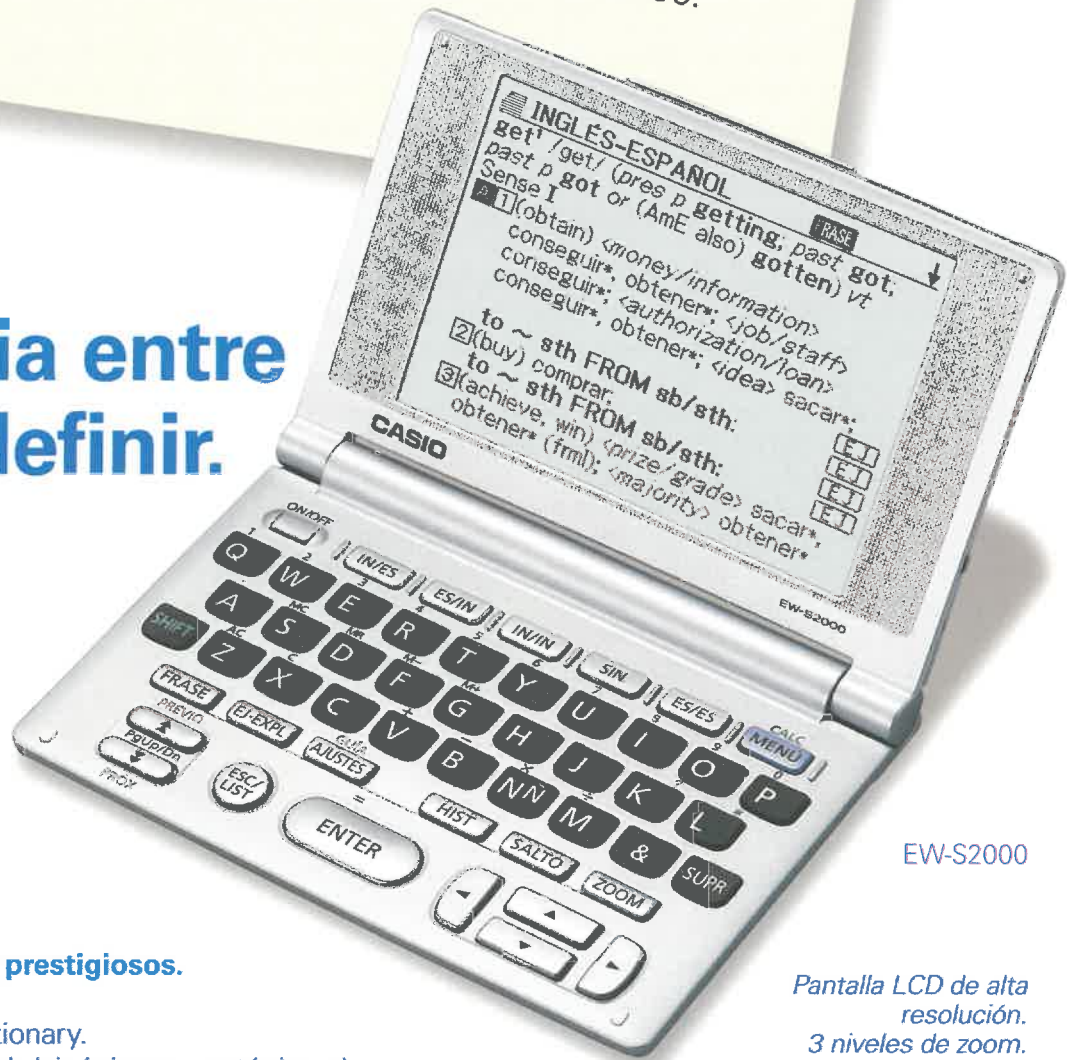
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- a rayas with a striped pattern. C. (fig) description, deception.
 dic.: ABR. de diciembre. DEC.
 dicción: NF. (Gen) diction.

diccionario electrónico: Que define todas las palabras de un idioma. Que propone sinónimos y frases hechas y muestra las palabras en un contexto práctico. Que encuentra ejemplos de frases completas. Que, a diferencia de la traductora, explica con claridad y precisión el significado de las palabras.
 Ejemplo: Diccionarios electrónicos Casio EW-S100 y EW-S2000.

La diferencia entre traducir y definir.



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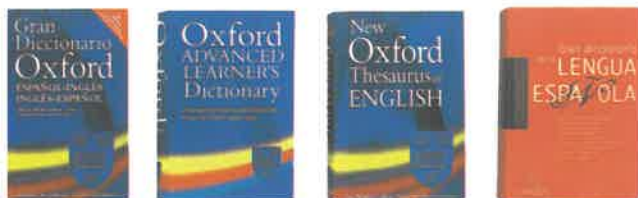
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BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Intercultural Activities for the Primary Classroom

by Nina Lauder

"It's an educational matter, and you should have freedom of education no matter what colour you turn out to be. You are still a person, same organs, maybe the skin stuff is a little different, but that shouldn't have anything to do with it."

A 10th grade African American student

With the changing composition of the student population today, the need to develop programmes and activities that address the complex issues related to cultural diversity has become increasingly important. It is critical that cultural diversity in the school environment not be understood as being accomplished by a one-day multicultural fair or a poster with photos of children from different countries. Not only do students need to learn new social skills and readjust their concepts of tolerance and cooperation, but also become cognoscente that it is an enhancement to the school environment. As educators, we are inevitably implicated in this learning process.

Factors that Influence Integration

There are a number of factors which influence the integration of students from other cultures or backgrounds in our classrooms. Some of these factors include:

- Student's mother tongue
- Parent's education and background
- Parent's attitude toward schooling
- Student's previous academic experience
- Resources at home (encyclopaedias, dictionaries, maps, computers)
- Attitude towards education at home
- Attitude of other students

- Socio-economic level of the school environment
- Socio-cultural context of the learner and their family
- Educator's awareness of cultural biases and stereotypes
- Selection of appropriate testing methods

To Interpret Cultural Diversity, Start with Similarities

In trying to cultivate tolerance, acceptance, and finally appreciation of cultural diversity, educators should keep in mind that all people share the same basic needs and values, but differ in how they meet those needs and express those values. Remember that cultural awareness does not revolve around drawing attention to differences or only highlighting special events and holidays. When dealing with different cultures, it is much more effective to emphasise similarities between people, rather than differences.

Practical Activities

Granny

Young learners are often fascinated by 'everyday' things that they can relate to. For example, ask children to say or write down what they call their grandma. Nan? Yaya? Amama? Gran? Abuela? When they have finished, ask them to compare their answers. See how many children coincide on the word they use for their grandmother.

Groups

When developing tolerance and acceptance it is important for children to work with different mem-

NINA LAUDER HAS A B.A. IN HUMANITIES FROM BISHOP'S UNIVERSITY, QUEBEC, CANADA. SHE HAS BEEN TEACHING ENGLISH TO LEARNERS OF ALL LEVELS AND AGES SINCE 1990 AND HAS LED TEACHER TRAINING SESSIONS IN CEPs ALL OVER SPAIN FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS. SHE CURRENTLY WORKS FOR RICHMOND PUBLISHING AS A TEACHER TRAINER AND WITH THE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT DEVELOPING AND ADAPTING MATERIALS FOR PRIMARY. SHE IS THE CO-WRITER OF ZOOM 1 (2003) AND STORYTELLERS 1 AND 2 (2004), BOTH FROM RICHMOND PUBLISHING.

bers of the class. In this activity, students form groups according to 'random' criteria. For example, students form groups according to their shoe colour, the month their birthday is in, birth order (only child, oldest, youngest, middle etc.). These groups can be formed and changed quickly or the group can be given a 'task' or questions to ask the other members of the group. This activity shows students that they can be part of the majority or the minority group according to random circumstances.

Skin-Colour Match-Ups

Set out a number of stockings in various shades (tan, black, white, pink, yellow, and red) on tables or desks. Encourage children to try them on their hands and arms. Ask questions to help the children increase their awareness of skin colour. For example, "Can you find a stocking that is the same colour as your skin?" or "What colour is that stocking you have on your arm?" Ask the children to "Try the _____ stocking. Is it lighter or darker than your own skin?" Tell the children no one's skin colour is really white, pink, yellow, or red. This activity emphasises that skin-colour differences are interesting and desirable.

I am Different

I am different from my head to my toes,
I am different from my eyes to my nose,
I come from a place that is far and wide,
A place where we smile instead of cry.
I am very different as you can see,
But I have a lot of love in me!
(from C. Kenyetta, Watson Avenue Daycare, USA)

Act out this poem with children encouraging them to think about all the ways people are the same and different.

Meeting the changing needs of the school population is a challenging but should not be seen as overwhelming. Cultural awareness and tolerance building activities, if introduced on a regular basis, can be rewarding for students and teachers alike and can help to break down barriers in our class.

Good luck!

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Cullberg Ballet

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Àngel Guimerà

Versió i direcció: Sergi Belbel

Del 3 al 14 de gener

Tranvies Circus
Lluís Llach, Lluís Danés i Marta Carrasco

Direcció i creació: Lluís Danés

Del 18 de gener al 4 de febrer

Play Strindberg
Friedrich Dürrenmatt
Teatro de La Abadía

Traducció al castellà: Miguel Sáenz
Direcció: Georges Lavaudant

Del 15 de febrer al 18 de març

Don Gil de las calzas verdes
Tirso de Molina

Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico

Versió i direcció: Eduardo Vasco

Del 19 d'abril al 10 de juny

El ventall de Lady Windermere

Oscar Wilde

Traducció de l'anglès: Joan Sellent
Direcció: Josep Maria Mestres

Del 26 al 30 de juny

Il ventaglio
Carlo Goldoni

Piccolo Teatro di Milano
Direcció: Luca Ronconi

Sala Petita

Del 28 de setembre al 19 de novembre

Valentina
Carles Soldevila

Dramatúrgia: Jordi Galceran
Direcció: Toni Casares

Del 7 d'octubre al 3 de desembre

Impressions: 3 moments Frederic, i tu què fas?
Marduix, 30 anys

Direcció: Jordi Aspa

Del 20 de desembre al 7 de gener

El llibre imaginari
La Baldufa i Luis Zornoza

Direcció: Luis Zornoza

Del 31 de gener al 4 de març

Primera història d'Esther
Salvador Espriu

Direcció: Oriol Broggi

Del 7 de febrer al 4 de març

Avui sortim!
Búbulus Dansa

Direcció: Carles Salas i Àngels Hugas

Del 14 de març al 8 d'abril

Tornar a casa
Harold Pinter

Centre d'Arts Escèniques de Reus - CAER

Traducció de l'anglès: Joaquim Mallafré

Direcció: Ferran Madico

Del 3 de maig al 17 de juny

Arcàdia
Tom Stoppard

Traducció de l'anglès: Màrius Serra
Direcció: Ramon Simó

Del 28 de juny al 8 de juliol

Mies
Nats Nus Dansa

Creació i direcció: Toni Mira

Sala Tallers

Del 18 d'octubre al 26 de novembre

Uuuuh!
Gerard Vázquez

Direcció: Joan Font

Del 13 de desembre al 28 de gener

El gran secret
El petit secret

Albert Espinosa i Joan Font
Comediants

Direcció: Joan Font

Del 8 de febrer al 4 de març

Temps real
Albert Mestres

Direcció: Magda Puyo

Del 15 de març al 8 d'abril

En defensa dels mosquits albins

Mercè Sarrias

Direcció: Carol López

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Viatges a la felicitat

Sis coreografies a partir d'*El viatge a la felicitat*
d'Eduard Punset

Coordinaçió: Sol Picó

Del 14 de febrer al 30 de maig

Sis veus de dona

Dolo Beltrán

14 de febrer

Mayte Martín

28 de febrer

Ester Formosa

21 de març

Mariona Sagarra

11 d'abril

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23 de maig

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otel-lo de william shakespeare direcció carlota subirós	14/09 a 15/10
un matrimoni de boston de david mamet direcció josep maria mestres	15/09 a 19/11

.OCTUBRE 06

otel-lo de william shakespeare direcció carlota subirós	14/09 a 15/10
un matrimoni de boston de david mamet direcció josep maria mestres	15/09 a 19/11
al llarg de kurt de damià barbany i vicky peña	1,8,15 i 22/10
JOVEM NOITE PROTUGUESA 1 woyzeck de georg büchner direcció nuno cardoso	18 i 19/10
JOVEM NOITE PROTUGUESA 1 o'questrada	18 i 19/10
sin noticias de gurb d'eduardo mendoza direcció rosa novell	23/10
affonso vilallonga & the cabaret rose live	25/10
JOVEM NOITE PROTUGUESA 2 diário de mafalda arnauth	27/10
european house creació i direcció àlex rigola	31/10 a 12/11

.NOVEMBRE 06

un matrimoni de boston de david mamet direcció josep maria mestres	15/09 a 19/11
european house creació i direcció àlex rigola	31/10 a 12/11
i apologize creació i coreografia gisèle vienne	10 i 11/11
metamorfosis de franz kafka direcció i dramaturgia àlex ollé - javier daulte	14/11 a 3/12
la baraque creació i direcció volière dromesko	22/11 a 3/12
el fervor de la perseverança creació i direcció carles santos	23/11 a 3/12

.DESEMBRE 06

metamorfosis de franz kafka direcció i dramaturgia àlex ollé - javier daulte	14/11 a 3/12
la baraque creació i direcció volière dromesko	22/11 a 3/12
el fervor de la perseverança creació i direcció carles santos	23/11 a 3/12
la cantant calva & la cantant calva al mc donald's d'eugene ionesco i lluisa cunillé direcció joan ollé	14/12 a 14/01
körper coreografia i direcció sasha waltz	15 i 16/12
a.aimée - p.noiret / love letters d'albert r. gurney direcció sandrine dumas	22 i 23/12

.GENER 07

la cantant calva & la cantant calva al mc donald's d'eugene ionesco i lluisa cunillé direcció joan ollé	14/12 a 14/01
mòbil de sergi belbel direcció lluis pascual	10/01 a 18/02
pere arquillué diu gabriel ferrater direcció pere arquillué	15/01
das paradies experiment de roger bernat dram.ignasi duarte direcció r. bernat	18 a 28/01
assaig obert des-connectin'people dram. anna torres direcció anna e. armero	20 i 27/01-3/02

.FEBRER 07

mòbil de sergi belbel direcció lluis pascual	10/01 a 18/02
assaig obert des-connectin'people dram. anna torres direcció anna e. armero	20 i 27/01-3/02
he de ser castigat per no haver estimat mai ningú de carles santos	5,12,19 i 26/02
una còpia de caryl churchill direcció jordi prat i coll	7/02 a 4/03
assaig obert el factor luxemburg dram. pere riera direcció victor muñoz	10,17,24/02-3/03

orion coreografia i concepte cesc gelabert	22/02 a 4/03
.MARÇ 07	
una còpia de caryl churchill direcció jordi prat i coll	7/02 a 4/03
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assaig obert el factor luxemburg dram. pere riera direcció victor muñoz	10,17,24/02-3/03
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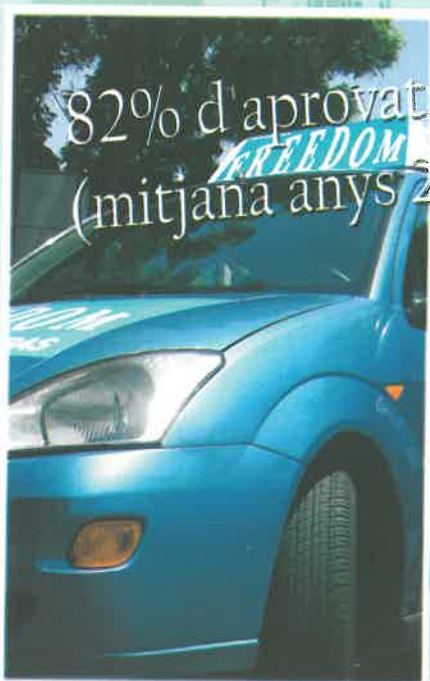
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AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TEACHING LITERATURE IN THE EFL CLASSROOM

THIS ARTICLE CONSIDERS THE REASONS WHY TEACHERS OFTEN REGARD LITERATURE AS INAPPROPRIATE TO THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM. THESE VIEWS REFLECT THE HISTORIC SEPARATION BETWEEN THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE AND THE STUDY OF LITERATURE, WHICH HAS LED TO THE LIMITED ROLE OF LITERATURE IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM. HOWEVER, THE USE OF LITERARY TEXTS CAN BE A POWERFUL PEDAGOGIC TOOL. THIS ARTICLE DESCRIBES VARIOUS APPROACHES TO TEACHING LITERATURE AND PROVIDES A RATIONALE FOR AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO TEACHING LITERATURE IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM BASED ON THE PREMISE THAT LITERATURE IS LANGUAGE AND LANGUAGE CAN INDEED BE LITERARY.

by Christine Savvidou

Introduction

As teachers of English as a Foreign Language our main concern is to help learners acquire communicative competence. For this reason we tend to focus on teaching standard forms of linguistic expression. However, despite acquiring linguistic accuracy, it is apparent that EFL speakers still have difficulties in comprehending the nuances, creativity and versatility which characterise even standard and transactional forms of English, as these humorous public notices demonstrate:

- We take your bags and send them in all directions. – Copenhagen airline ticket office
- Would you like to ride on your own ass? – Advertisement for donkey rides in Thailand
- You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid. – Japanese hotel

(<http://koti.mbnet.fi/neptunia/english.htm>)

Communicative competence is more than acquiring mastery of structure and form. It also involves acquiring the ability to interpret discourse in all its social and cultural contexts. For this reason, the use of literature in the EFL classroom can provide a powerful pedagogic tool in learners' linguistic development.

rate in the EFL classroom can provide a powerful pedagogic tool in learners' linguistic development.

Focusing on Literature

Language, both spoken and written, comes in a variety of discourse types and, as teachers of language, we attempt to introduce our learners to as many of these as possible. The variety and types of discourse are perhaps best represented by Kinneavy's communication triangle (1983). This classification of discourse types includes **expressive**, which focuses on personal expression (letters, diaries, etc.); **transactional**, which focuses on both the reader and the message (advertising, business letters, editorials, instructions, etc.); and **poetic**, which focuses on form and language (drama, poetry, novels, short stories, etc.). Indeed, all these discourse types already play a significant role in teaching various aspects of language such as vocabulary and structure, or testing learners' comprehension.

However, there is often reluctance by teachers, course designers and examiners to introduce unbridged and authentic texts to the EFL syllabus.

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There is a general perception that literature is particularly complex and inaccessible for the foreign language learner and can even be detrimental to the process of language learning (Or, 1995). Indeed, it is difficult to imagine teaching the stylistic features of literary discourse to learners who have a less than sophisticated grasp of the basic mechanics of English language. This perception is also borne out by research (Akyel and Yalçin, 1990) which shows that the desire to broaden learners' horizons through exposure to classic literature usually has disappointing results. The reasons why teachers often consider literature inappropriate to the language classroom may be found in the common beliefs held about literature and literary language. Firstly, the creative use of language in poetry and prose often deviates from the conventions and rules which govern standard, non-literary discourse, as in the case of poetry where grammar and lexis may be manipulated to serve orthographic or phonological features of the language. Secondly, the reader requires greater effort to interpret literary texts since meaning is detached from the reader's immediate social context; one example is that the "I" in literary discourse may not be the same person as the writer.

The result is that the reader's "interpretative procedures" (Widdowson, 1975) may become confused and overloaded. What this means is that the reader has to infer, anticipate and negotiate meaning from within the text to a degree that is not required in non-literary discourse. Thus, in our efforts to teach our learners' communicative competence there is a tendency to make use of texts which focus on the transactional and expressive forms of writing with the exclusion or restriction of poetic forms of language – i.e. literature. There is a perception that the use of literary discourse deflects from the straightforward business of language learning, i.e. knowledge of language structure, functions and general communication.

Why Teach Literature in the Language Classroom?

The classification of discourse types in this way would seem to suggest that there are distinct differences between literary and non-literary discourse. This reflects a historic divergence between language and literature, which Short (1996) refers to as a 'border dispute over territory' between linguists and

literary critics. This divergence has resulted in the teaching of the two subjects as 'disconnected pedagogic practices' (Carter and McRae, 1996: xxiv). This is not to say there is no difference between literary and non-literary discourse; however, Carter and Nash (1990) suggest that rather than perceiving literary discourse as separate and remote from non-literary discourse, we ought to consider the variety of text types along a continuum with some being more literary than others. This view is part of the idea that the separation of literature from language is a false dualism since literature is language and language can indeed be literary. It is not difficult to find instances of standard transactional forms of discourse which make use of a whole array of literary devices. Headlines and advertisements are common examples of discourse which exploits literary language. The following examples make explicit use of alliteration, assonance, register, imagery, ellipsis and rhythm - stylistic devices which are more commonly associated with literature than with standard, transactional language.

- Headline: King Khan Goes for Gold (The Scotsman, 28.08.2004)
- Headline: Bookies' bonanza comes at a price (The Scotsman, 28.08.2004)
- Advertisement: You'll never put a better bit of butter on your knife - Country Life butter
- Advertisement: Have a break, have a Kit Kat - Kit Kat chocolate
- Advertisement: Put a tiger in your tank – ESSO

The boundaries which are thought to exist between literary and non-literary discourse are not so distinct. Indeed, as Widdowson (1979) suggests, the procedures which are used to interpret literary discourse are essentially the same for interpreting any type of discourse.

Approaches to Teaching Literature

Having decided that integrating literature into the EFL syllabus is beneficial to the learners' linguistic development, we need to select an approach which best serves the needs of EFL learners and the syllabus. Carter and Long (1991) describe the rationale for the use of the three main approaches to the teaching of literature:

The Cultural Model

This model represents the traditional approach to teaching literature. Such a model requires learners

to explore and interpret the social, political, literary and historical context of a specific text. By using such a model to teach literature we not only reveal the universality of such thoughts and ideas but encourage learners to understand different cultures and ideologies in relation to their own. This model is largely rejected by those in TEFL since not only does it tend to be teacher-centred but there is little opportunity for extended language work.

The Language Model

The most common approach to literature in the EFL classroom is what Carter and Long (1991) refer to as the 'language-based approach'. Such an approach enables learners to access a text in a systematic and methodical way in order to exemplify specific linguistic features e.g. literal and figurative language, direct and indirect speech. This approach lends itself well to the repertoire of strategies used in language teaching - cloze procedure, prediction exercises, jumbled sentences, summary writing, creative writing and role play - which all form part of the repertoire of EFL activities used by teachers to deconstruct literary texts in order to serve specific linguistic goals. Carter and McRae (1996) describe this model as taking a 'reductive' approach to literature. These activities are disconnected from the literary goals of the specific text in that they can be applied to any text. There is little engagement of the learner with the text other than for purely linguistic practice; literature is used in a rather purposeless and mechanistic way in order to provide for a series of language activities orchestrated by the teacher.

The Personal Growth Model

This model attempts to bridge the cultural model and the language model by focusing on the particular use of language in a text, as well as placing it in a specific cultural context. Learners are encouraged to express their opinions, feelings and opinions and make connections between their own personal and cultural experiences and those expressed in the text. Another aspect of this model is that it helps learners develop knowledge of ideas and language - content and formal schemata - through different themes and topics. This function relates to theories of reading (Goodman, 1970) which emphasise the interaction of the reader with the text. As Cadorath and Harris point out (1998:188) "text itself has no meaning, it only provides direction for the reader to construct meaning from the reader's own experience". Thus, learning is said to take place when readers are able to

interpret text and construct meaning on the basis of their own experience.

These three approaches to teaching literature differ in terms of their focus on the text: firstly, the text is seen as a cultural artefact; secondly, the text is used as a focus for grammatical and structural analysis; and thirdly, the text is the stimulus for personal growth activities. What is needed is an approach to teaching literature in the EFL classroom which attempts to integrate these elements in a way that makes literature accessible to learners and beneficial for their linguistic development.

Rationale for an Integrated Model for Teaching Literature

According to Duff and Maley (1990), the main reasons for integrating these elements are linguistic, methodological and motivational. **Linguistically**, by using a wide range of authentic texts we introduce learners to a variety of types and difficulties of English language. **Methodologically**, literary discourse sensitises readers to the processes of reading e.g. the use of schema, strategies for intensive and extensive reading etc. And, lastly, **motivationally**, literary texts prioritise the enjoyment of reading since, as Short and Candlin assert (1986), 'if literature is worth teaching...then it seems axiomatic that it is the response to literature itself which is important'. Interpretation of texts by learners can bring about personal responses from readers by touching on significant and engaging themes. An integrated model is a linguistic approach which utilises some of the strategies used in stylistic analysis, which explores texts, literary and non-literary, from the perspective of style and its relationship to content and form. This involves the systematic and detailed analysis of the stylistic features of a text - vocabulary, structure, register etc. in order to find out 'not just what a text means, but also how it comes to mean what it does' (Short, 1996). This suggested model (O'Brien, 1999) integrates linguistic description with interpretation of the text although for the benefit of the foreign language learners it is not as technical, rigorous or analytical as the stylistics approach. With the careful selection of the text, it can be adapted for all levels.

Stage 1: Preparation and Anticipation

This stage elicits learners' real or literary experience of the main themes and context of text.

Stage 2: Focusing

Learners experience the text by listening and or reading and focusing on specific content in the text.

Stage 3: Preliminary Response

Learners give their initial response to the text - spoken or written

Stage 4: Working at it - I

Focus is on comprehending the first level of meaning through intensive reading.

Stage 5: Working at it - II

Focus is on analysis of the text at a deeper level and exploring how the message is conveyed through overall structure and any special uses of language - rhythm, imagery, word choice etc.

Stage 6: Interpretation and Personal Response

The focus of this final step is on increasing understanding, enhancing enjoyment of the text and enabling learners to come to their own personal interpretation of the text. This is based on the rationale for the personal growth model.

Conclusion

There are many benefits to using literature in the EFL classroom. Apart from offering a distinct literary world which can widen learners' understanding of their own and other cultures, it can create opportunities for personal expression as well as reinforce learners' knowledge of lexical and grammatical structure. Moreover, an integrated approach to the use of literature offers learners strategies to analyse and interpret language in context in order to recognize not only how language is manipulated but also why. An integrated approach to the use of literature in the language classroom offers foreign language learners the opportunity to develop not only their linguistic and communicative skills but their knowledge about language in all its discourse types. The use of literary texts in the language classroom can be a potentially powerful pedagogic tool.



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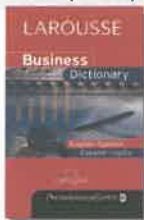


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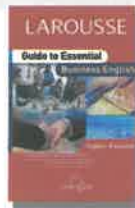
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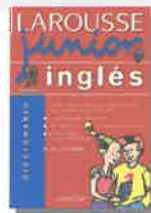
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