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- **Multiculturalism in the Secondary English Classroom**  
by Paloma Sarbadhikari
  - **Reflective Teaching: Insights on Practice**  
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**BritLit**

## ELT CONVENTION 2006

- **Explaining Phrasal Verbs Comprehensively and Dynamically**  
by David Mason
- **Drama Techniques in Secondary Education** by R. Fernández and M. Oliba

All of us professionals in the English-teaching field are aware of the fact that the effort we make in preparing classes is not always matched by the results obtained. We go to conferences, read articles, and share concerns with our colleagues in the search for possible solutions.

In support of this quest, this issue of quarterly journal presents a series of articles that aim to help teachers more or less directly, from the interesting reflections by N. Lorenzo on the meaning of learning in the computer age or the ones on our daily practice by S. Guilana and E. Romo to activities more directly applicable in the classroom, such as the work on phrasal verbs by Mason, the drama techniques presented by R. Fernández, the song work by A. Gala, and the use of novels by contemporary authors described in the article by F. Romeu.

There is one aspect that marks our school context nowadays that, far from being considered a hindrance, should be accepted as an element of enrichment: multiculturalism. This phenomenon is dealt with very well in the articles by P. Sarbadhikari, M. Lord and S. Martin.

In addition, for some time now the British Council has been sponsoring groups of teachers who work on a certain British author and can rely on his or her presence. This initiative was presented last year in the 2006 APAC ELT Convention in Barcelona, and it will be continued in 2007. BritLit – Literature for Language Learning describes the experience of the programme in Poland, which can easily be extrapolated to our schools.

Finally, and exceptionally since it is written in Spanish, we include the article by N. de Salvador, who analyses the role of the action, e-Twinning, by the European Union in the acquisition of key competencies for learning. The large number of URLs that this article presents will most probably be useful to many teachers.

We would like to remind you that in the upcoming issues we will be presenting articles based on the presentations and workshops given in the 2007 APAC ELT Convention. We hope that the contents of this issue help all of you in the quest to have your efforts rewarded with the results you are striving for, and that you enjoy reading the articles.

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Dear colleagues,

If you are reading this you might as well be making last minute plans to make your way to the 2007 APAC-ELT Convention at Universitat Pompeu Fabra. Our motto this time has an echo of his Majesty's most celebrated agent: "License to teach". Teaching, though, is not only about obtaining a "license" (see inside the polemic we reproduce amongst native speakers teaching in Catalonia). A seal of approval on our initial qualifications signals but the beginning of a long process that involves a lot of teaching and a lot of learning. At APAC we believe in well qualified teachers who are wise enough to keep on learning. Our limited resources are totally devoted to offering opportunities to people in the TEFL profession to exchange views based on common experience and to know more about recent research on the field. Our convention this year has plenty to offer if you see your job in this spirit. The new *Conseller d'Educació*, Mr. Ernest Maragall, will speak in the opening ceremony and the whole thing will get started with a piano show with jazz chants by the legendary American teacher Carolyn Graham. In the keynote session Professor Ronald Carter will offer a lot of food for thought after having completed his ten year research project on the grammar of spoken English. These are but three flashes on day one: a view from the administration at top level, a contact with the most vigorous Lady in the business, a reflection on the latest relevant research... But there is, of course, much more not to be missed (check it out on APAC's website) including the largest ever display of pedagogical materials. Still, I'd like to highlight a couple of special but related events that should add to the ongoing debate over the role (and proficiency) of English in our society. We have invited representatives from our twin organisation in Portugal to tell us why it is common knowledge that the Portuguese speak better English than the Catalans. And our traditional roundtable will be a discussion of the situation in Catalonia with the participation of Mr. Joan Badia, *Director General d'Innovació* and Parliamentary members of various political parties including Ms. Irene Rigau, former *Consellera d'Educació*. A real debate about the poor standards of English in Catalan society in the age of global communication has finally sparked. It involves politicians, journalists, parents, teachers, economists... APAC is here to encourage it.

Let me just end with a more prosaic note to inform you of an agreement we've reached with Banc de Sabadell that will result in lower production costs for APAC and includes some interesting discounts for new members who might wish to use some of the bank's services.

Do please help in making APAC bigger by registering to this year's convention. I have no doubt that you will not regret it. And if you think I am being overoptimistic consider, at least, that being pessimistic is much too easy. Or, as good old George Orwell used to put it: "The pessimist has many more opportunities of saying *I told you so* than the optimist". So come and enjoy it. Give this President a chance to break the rule and let him get away with it so that his next letter can begin with a confident: "I told you so".

As ever yours,

**Miquel Berga** - President



" El president d'APAC,  
Miquel Berga, i la directora de  
Col·lectius de Banc de Sabadell,  
Conxa Oliu, formalitzen l'acord  
de l'entitat bancària  
amb la nostra associació."



## TEFL: A POLEMIC

*These articles were recently published in CATALONIA TODAY*

### THE GREAT SHAME OF THE TEFL WORLD

By **STEVE DODD (DIP TESOL)**  
English teacher **PLATFORM**

I came into teaching full of passion and excitement. Twelve years on I still have that passion but my excitement has edged away due to the lack of respect in the profession.

Time and time again teachers have to endure all manner of professional shortcomings from not being given a legal contract, to verbal threats from devious school directors. This is partly due to the fact that English teachers have no specialised and independent union to turn to for help.

In other professions when an employee has a problem they know they can turn to their union representative for advice. The Confederación Sindical de Comisiones Obreas ([www.ccoo.cat](http://www.ccoo.cat)) can help out but how many teachers are even aware of their existence?

Sadly, teachers have to go on tolerating their current work situation because there is not much choice and fierce competition which largely comes from teachers with little or no experience who are undermining the market. This leads me to English teaching qualifications.

The CELTA (Certificate for English Language Teaching to Adults) is a four-week training course on which teachers are taught the basics of how to teach English. The course has many pitfalls not least the fact that there are very few hours dedicated to teaching children and this clashes with the jobs newly-qualified teachers find teaching young learners.

There is the DipTesol or DELTA (Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults) qualification but at around 2000 is expensive. Is the bottom line really that English teaching courses such as the CELTA have turned into a "cash cow"?

If the CELTA course was made more appropriate and extended, our profession could free itself of the less professional teachers. The whole industry would gain respect and conditions would improve for all.

I think some of the responsibility lies with the students themselves as they are too easily hood-winked by schools that employ native speakers who have little or no experience. Therefore, students need to be

much more careful and ask many more questions about their teacher's experience and qualifications.

After many years teaching you do know what works with you and your students, you understand why it works, your beliefs on how people learn are solid, you finally have a huge command of both English and your students' first language and, above all, you feel comfortable in what is sometimes a very difficult job. So my question is this: if there is a gigantic wealth of experience out there in the hands of more experienced teachers, why cannot this be harnessed and built into a syllabus on a new CELTA type course?

It should be possible to take teachers and in a short time teach them the "tricks of the trade". I understand that there is no substitute for hours spent in class, but at least they would have a decent head start and be on the right track.

The Generalitat would like Catalonia to be trilingual with English as the third language. Yet how can this be achieved when the current level of professionalism is so low? If trilingualism is to become a reality I strongly believe that the whole TEFL industry is in urgent need of huge reform.

That reform could happen if a teacher union - run by teachers for teachers - was created to guarantee the quality of teaching and if more teachers moved into state schools. There is too much red tape involved and the whole process of who can teach and where they can teach needs a shake-up. It does however, seem obvious that with such an army of native English speaker teachers here in Barcelona, the Generalitat's desire to create a trilingual Catalonia could come true if this potential was harnessed.

A sea change is needed in the TEFL industry. In an ever-changing world full of all sorts of political and social problems, English teachers are the hinge pin with the world's much needed ability to communicate effectively in a common language. It is only a great shame that to be involved in such an important profession with such wide-ranging ramifications should be so full of pitfalls, negligence and professional misconduct.

You can contact Steve Dodd at:  
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[steve@easyenglish.es](mailto:steve@easyenglish.es)

## THE TROUBLES WITH TEFL: A SUGGESTED REMEDY.

By IAN SMITH - moffatsmith06@yahoo.co.uk

Steve Dodd (The great shame of the Tefl world, Catalonia Today, December 7, 2006) is understandably disillusioned with the current state of EFL (English as a second language) teaching. It has suffered for years from the "back packer syndrome," in which 20 somethings, with or without a degree and a bit of nous, could end up teaching abroad in what might loosely be called a language school. This is perpetuated by adverts from TEFL schools encouraging young people to "see the world as an EFL teacher." Hardly likely to quickly change things, but of course it's a nice earner with no shortage of applicants. This is also the reason why many EFL teachers endure low rates of pay as the job is seen as a breeze.

Having gone through the mill of the teaching experience from engineering to management training and, during the past eight years EFL, I would agree with Steve that the four week CELTA course is less than adequate preparation for becoming a classroom teacher. The 16-week Further Education teacher training course that I was subjected to was not ideal, but certainly better than the four-week CELTA course. This should be at least six weeks long and preferably eight, with much more hands-on classroom teaching. This teaching should be increasingly unsupervised with assessment by a hidden camera.

Teachers should gain experience teaching at all levels and all ages. Structured teaching techniques, use of games, adult conversational classes and some English for special purposes should be all part of the package. This would give the student teacher experience of almost anything that might be thrown at them in a language school. More attention should be given to testing, marking and assessing students, an important but unenjoyable part of teaching. With the plethora of teaching books available, some assistance in deciding which books to use and how to use them effectively should also be part of the course. I appreciate that much of the foregoing is being done in the more enlightened teacher training courses, but there is

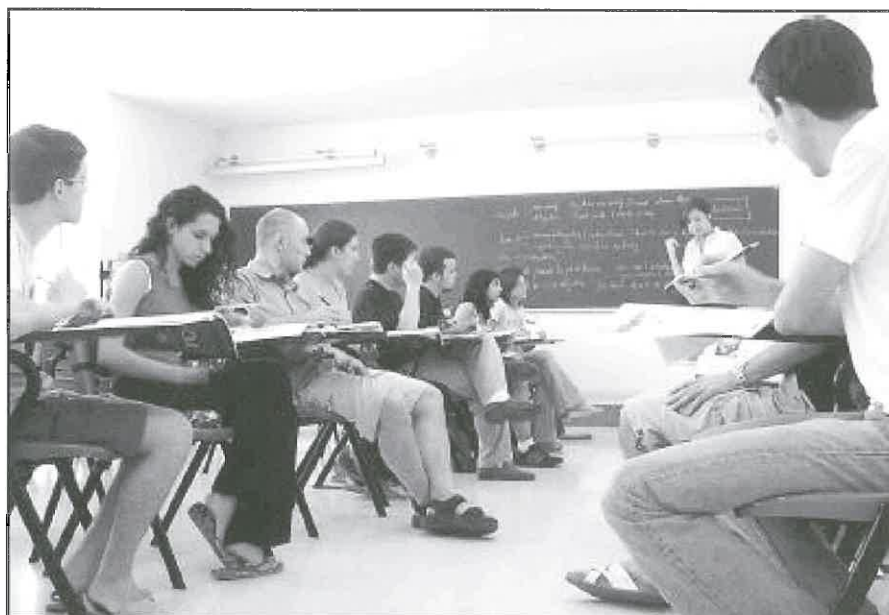
simply not enough time in four weeks to do all these areas justice.

With regard to the candidates for the CELTA course, I do not believe a degree should be the main criteria for a person's suitability as a teacher. A degree only indicates a certain level of knowledge in a subject, not the ability to impart that knowledge. Even worse, it appears now that any degree will suffice to teach English. I don't think so!

While subject knowledge is important, personality should also be assessed. Let's not kid ourselves, teaching is not easy, as anyone who has faced testosterone-fuelled teenagers will testify. If the teacher doesn't have the necessary attributes they will be neither doing themselves nor the student any favours. If you don't believe me, just think back to your own school days and to the teachers who inspired you. Enthusiasm and an ability to motivate are prerequisites for a good teacher.

These suggestions will obviously increase the cost of the training and in some way might "weed-out" the less committed potential teachers. If someone is willing to invest the time and the money in an eight-week course, then maybe they could be the right material.

The sea change Steve is hoping for will be a long time coming unless some of the above issues are addressed. Although I'm at the end rather than the beginning of my career, I have thoroughly enjoyed my teaching and training days, especially EFL teaching. It would indeed be unfortunate if the shame of the TEFL world cannot be resolved sooner rather than later. I'm optimistic, however, and am encouraging one of my sons to take it up. I hope he gets as much enjoyment out of it as I have.





## A TEFL TWENTY-SOMETHING

By **CLAIRE AUBREY** -  
clairemarieaubrey@yahoo.es

Having completed a CELTA course this summer I have to agree with both Steve Dodd (The Great Shame of the TEFL World) and Ian Smith (The Troubles with TEFL: A Suggested Remedy) that the teacher that is finally produced remains unprepared. It seemed almost impossible to fail the course even though one trainee frequently ran out crying and others failed to learn grammar rules before teaching them, ultimately complicating rather than clarifying important points. It was with a certain horror that, at the end of the course, I realised that I had only taught for six hours in total. This, coupled with the distinct lack of marking criteria, left a bad taste in my mouth.

There is no doubt that increasing the length of the CELTA course would certainly relieve the frustration of skimming the surface of a vast array of subjects. The CELTA is more the tip of the iceberg than the steady foundation on which TEFL teaching is built. However I can not seriously understand the benefit in making the CELTA more expensive. Surely this would not "weed out" the less committed potential teachers" but rather attract a certain type of 'little rich kid'. While it would leave no place for people like me who could not afford a higher price yet a few thousand euros for eight weeks, it would still look like a fairly cheap holiday to others.

The CELTA therefore is not nearly as much of an issue as the type of teacher who is recruited into the business, as Ian Smith draws attention to.

"Personality should also be assessed" as the one constant that does not change with experience. Experience can not possibly be the only prerequisite of TEFL teaching as everybody has to start somewhere and it is unreasonable to suggest that the profession can only be built on experienced teachers.

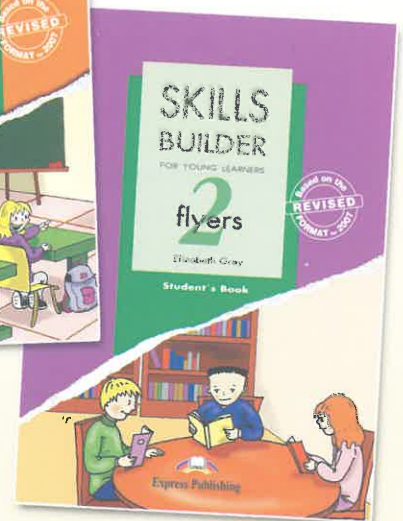
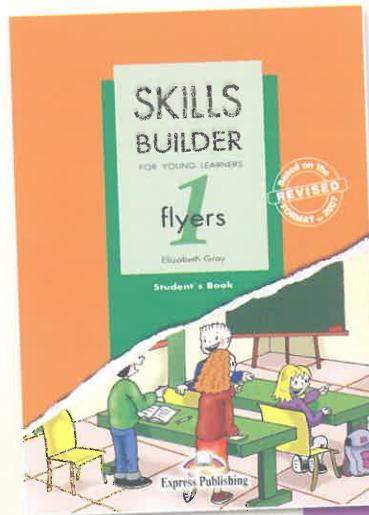
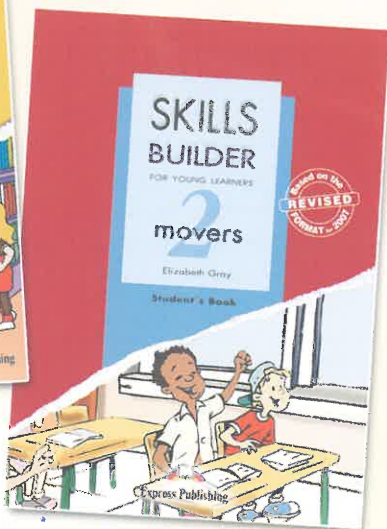
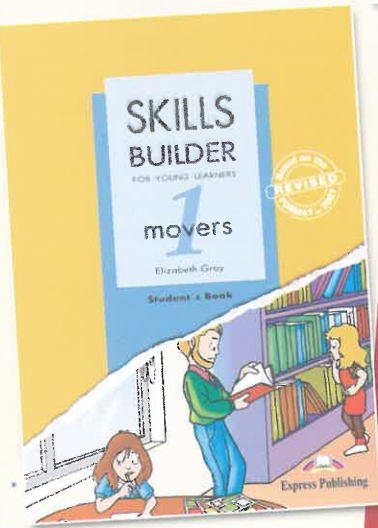
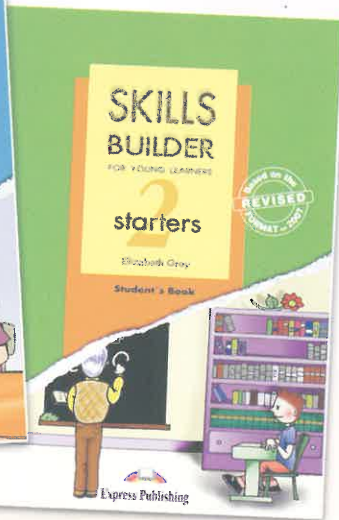
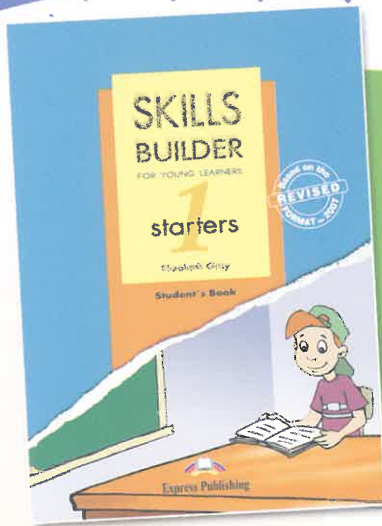


It may be true that many young people use TEFL to travel around the world, but the reality is that there are "twenty-somethings" like me who are seriously forming a solid career and it is unfair to say that "teachers with little or no experience...are undermining the market". Young teachers have a bad reputation before they even start working and this can damage their sense of involvement in a school. There are advantages of 'knowing how things work' but it is disheartening to think that there are established, experienced teachers who are simply going through the motions year in, year out. My only hope is that despite generalisations, people are open to the benefit that younger teachers may hold for the future of the TEFL industry.

...

<http://cataloniatoday.info>

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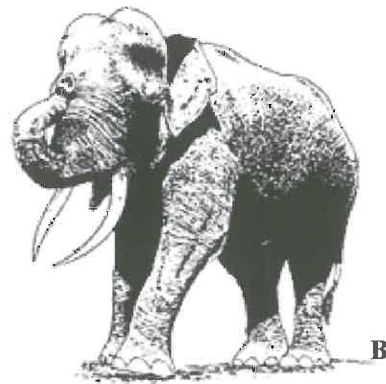
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## AFRICAN OR ASIAN ELEPHANTS?

### *Reflections on diversity for Digital Age teachers*

by Neus Lorenzo

#### 1. WARMING UP

Can you identify a picture of an Asian elephant? Do you know the difference between an Asian and an African one?

Our ESO students would have a quick answer: Let's look it up in Google Images! Well, try it and you'll get maps, landscapes, gogo-boys... and elephants, of course. But how can you be sure that those elephants are really Asian?<sup>1</sup>

The google generation is ready to accept everything they find on the Internet. It's amazing how "it's on the Internet" and "they say so on the Internet" seem to be the knowledge authority for thousands of youngsters who read more than ever –but only on

the computer screen. Further reflection is not a common skill. Our Secondary students will see the first man's step on Mars, the use of the animal genome for human medical treatment, and probably the first human clone. Our teenagers will be adults in a polluted world, climate-threatened, very complex, too accelerated and full of ethical paradoxes and cultural crossings.

But most of all, they will have to face and fight the information gap between those who'll have access to the virtual window, the Internet, and those who will never enter in the parallel world of communication, virtuality and teamnet working. Are information and communication technologies (ICT) going to widen social gaps, dependencies and inequity?

<sup>1</sup> Picture A is an African elephant and B is an Asian one. If you really want to find the answer in Google, it is not enough to search "Asian elephant" as image, but to look for a page where they really show how to know the differences between both: It's the difference between receiving the gift of a fish and learning how to fish for yourself. Try looking up (in Google), "What are the differences between African and Asian elephants?" and visit the explicit chart from "Elephant Encyclopedia" at [http://www.upali.ch/differences\\_en.html](http://www.upali.ch/differences_en.html)

NEUS LORENZO (PhD) HEADS THE AREA OF CO-ORDINATION AND SUPPORT FOR NETWORKS IN THE SUBDIRECCIÓ GENERAL DE LA INSPECCIÓ D'EDUCACIÓ. SHE IS INVOLVED IN TRAINING FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS AND IN PROJECTS ON ACCOUNTABILITY, BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY, COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE BUILDING, AND COMMUNITY BUILDING.

WITH MORE THAN 20 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION, SHE HAS BEEN A TEACHER IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, A UNIVERSITY LECTURER, AN ICT ON-LINE TUTOR AND DOES TEACHER TRAINING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OF THE GENERALITAT DE CATALUNYA. SHE HAS BEEN A RESEARCHER AND COLLABORATOR IN SEVERAL PROJECTS WITHIN THE CATALAN OFICINA DE COOPERACIÓ EDUCATIVA I CIENTÍFICA INTERNACIONAL AND WITHIN THE CENTRE DE RECURSOS DE LENGÜES ESTRANGERES.

SHE IS CURRENTLY COLLABORATING IN THE DESIGN OF MATERIALS FOR HEADMASTERS' TRAINING COURSES AND IN THE DESIGN OF ON-LINE EVALUATION TOOLS FOR GLOBAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT (AGD). SHE IS ALWAYS INVOLVED IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING AND IN NEW METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES FOR LEARNING AWARENESS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATION.

## 2. MAIN STATEMENT: INEQUITY MAY GROW IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The main menace for equity in our society could end up being the possibility or the incapacity to access a whole hidden universe of information, communication relationships, conceptual causes and consequences, and networking that exist inside the frame of the Internet. New professions are growing on the net, innovation strategies are being developed in webs, and different human approaches to language, science, and knowledge-building are being established in forums<sup>2</sup>, wikies<sup>3</sup>, blogs<sup>4</sup>, moodles<sup>5</sup> and webs of enterprises, virtual universities, associations and *cyber-cafes*.

Many movements of *free-software* and - since 1998 - so-called "*open-source software*" (OSS) are oriented towards building nets of information exchange, volunteer work on the Internet and team activities for knowledge building. All of them can be especially useful in class, to generate new collaborative strategies with *realia*.

Children and young people will have the challenge to learn, acquire and develop at school those subjects, skills, strategies and attitudes that will help them to adapt to this accelerated and uncertain world. We, teachers, have the responsibility and somehow the privilege of sharing growing processes and knowledge-building with the new generations. Our professional development is closely tied to our role as educators, facilitators of research, coaches of inquiry, innovators of thinking processes and leaders of social transformation at school. There has not been a great deal of reflection on this subject.

Are our students getting what they need at school to be able to fit into this society, so changing and ephemeral? Are we helping them to develop competencies for living, sharing, working and relating to others? Are they learning to know, learning to do,

learning to be?<sup>7</sup> Are they able to find, at school, the skills they will need to grow in knowledge and wisdom? Are they ready to succeed in their legitimate search for happiness?

... Just ask them. Ask their parents. Ask the teachers that go to school under the social pressure of doing a job that needs urgent changes. Ask the headmasters that have the responsibility of managing educational communities where the daily routine doesn't allow them to innovate, to focus on useful changes and to plan for strategic decision making. The new evaluation cycle in the Catalan schools<sup>8</sup> includes the opinion and the participation of families, students, teachers and headmasters to have a wider picture. But the answer is somehow discouraging: in every school we find some students who don't like studying and some teachers who are not happy with the way they are dealing with their classes. What can we do to stop frustration and to elicit best practices?

It's easy to say that schools have to change, families ought to better appreciate the educational opportunities for their children, curriculum should be revised, and teaching/learning strategies must become shared discovery processes... those reflections tend to be pointing mainly to "others' responsibility", not ours. Is there really nothing we can do, or is it just a comfortable way of justifying our own lack of time, motivation and will? Are we sufficiently up-to-date in our field, or are we deep in an overwhelming inertia?

Many educational approaches and teaching sequences are being suggested in order to face and change the climate of poor motivation at school, to open international collaborative research to young learners and to start citizen actions and community building projects with young students through the Internet. Bernie Dodge's Webquest sequence<sup>9</sup>, Treasure Hunts<sup>10</sup>, Subject Sample acti-

2 Many Forums are platforms for exchanging information.. They become knowledge forums when the information circulates in nets and allows people to do things. Pay a visit to the Catalan COMConèixer project to see how this application can allow a process of shared construction of knowledge in the school: <http://www.xtec.es/ofinternacional/COMcconeixer/eng/index.htm>

3 For more information, visit WikiPedia, the Free Encyclopedia at: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications>

4 To know more, visit: <http://www.blogcat.net/>, "El teu directori de blogs en català"

5 Moodles are very useful designs for educational purposes, and allow sharing resources in simultaneous courses and projects. For more information visit: <http://moodle.org/login/index.php> and [http://docs.moodle.org/es/Manuales\\_de\\_Moodle](http://docs.moodle.org/es/Manuales_de_Moodle)

6 The original "free software" term was changed into "open source" by Eric S. Raymond, in 1998. He wrote the manifesto "Goodbye, "free software"; hello, "open source". To see the manifesto, visit: <http://www.catb.org/~esr/open-source.html>

7 Competencies for the 21st century. Jacques Delors, 1999. To know more, visit: <http://www.unesco.org/delors/utopia.htm>

8 The new Catalan Avaluació Global Diagnòstica de centre (AGD) has incorporated on-line questionnaires that allow families, students and teachers to express their opinion about school processes, classroom procedures, results, resources and contexts of their school. For more information, read "L'avaluació de centres", by Salvador Pallares & Ramir Bullich, Quaderns d'Avaluació-5, April 2006 Ed Consell Superior d'Avaluació del Sistema Educatiu, Departament d'Educació, Generalitat de Catalunya.

9 Bernie Dodge is the creator of the Webquest and is now working on scaffolds, simulation tasks, social games and collective educational productions. He came to Catalonia on 22 October 2004, for the V Jornades d'Educació i Telecomunicacions de IEARN, (Callús, Bages). For more information about Webquests, pay a visit to <http://webquest.sdsu.edu/webquest.html> and to know about Webquest courses on-line in Catalan, visit: [http://jasper.xtec.net:7451/cdweb/dades/actu/actual\\_matform/materials/td109/index.htm](http://jasper.xtec.net:7451/cdweb/dades/actu/actual_matform/materials/td109/index.htm)

10 Treasure Hunting is being developed as a good practice to explore information on the net, and to get target results through jumping reading, extensive reading and browser reading. For more information, read Jordi Adell's web: [http://www.uam.es/personal\\_pdi/stmaria/jparedes/doctorado/adell.htm](http://www.uam.es/personal_pdi/stmaria/jparedes/doctorado/adell.htm)



vities<sup>11</sup>, Maze adventures<sup>12</sup>, Role-Play enterprises<sup>13</sup> and Sustainable-growth-oriented Projects like PECE\_MED<sup>14</sup> are some of the proposals in education that incorporate meaningful approaches, Learning-by-Doing, Constructivism<sup>15</sup> and social knowledge-building<sup>16</sup> using Internet.

But what about us teachers? Is it enough to update our ICT skills, and introduce one session a week in our Lesson Plans in the computer classroom? Do we have to adapt too? How can we change to fit into a future educational environment full of e-learning courses, lifelong learning processes, ICT non-formal educational associations and international on-line schools?

Well, here's a clue: those who have problems recognising the activities just mentioned above, are probably good candidates for an urgent update. Let's sign up for a non-presential training course in education techniques for the 21st century!<sup>17</sup>

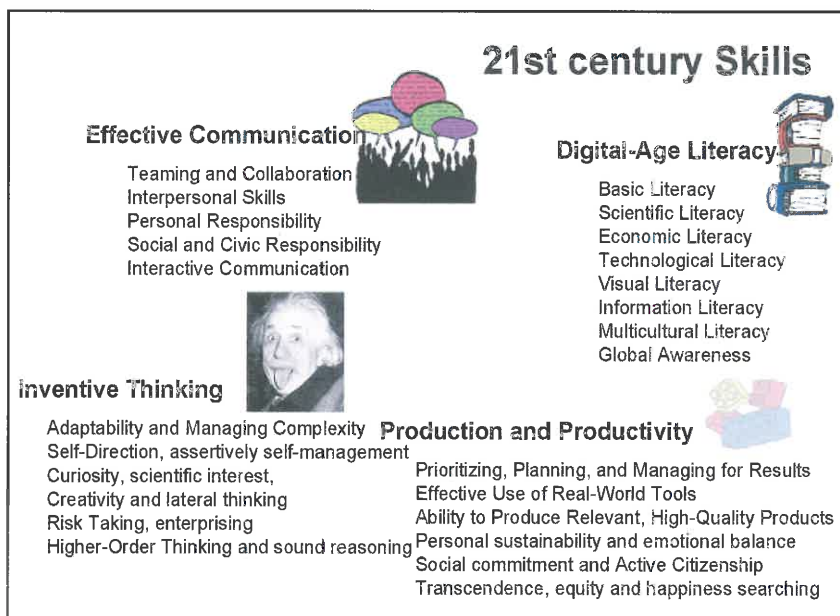
Our students will need abilities and skills for learning and communicating, for creating and innovating, and moreover, they will need strategies and skills for sharing, living in complex communities and choosing their sustainability in this world of change and ephemeral targets.

As specie, human beings are living longer than ever, and we have to add attitudes and projects in life that were not necessary when human beings died at 40 or 50, right after educating their children. Lifelong learning and values for transcendence will become part of the 21st century skills, if we want to provide our children and youngsters with resources for becoming responsible citizens.

In a summary chart, we could emphasise the following essential skills for the 21st century for effective citizenship, according to enGauge, a new Web-based framework developed by NCREL with Metiri Group:<sup>18</sup>

### 3. REFLECTION: NEW SKILLS FOR DIGITAL AGE STUDENTS

Digital-Age literacy needs basic skills in languages, maths and sciences, but it also needs effective communication skills, such as collaboration and team working, and high-level thinking processes connected to decision-making abilities and risk-taking attitudes. Certain background awareness and multicultural approach are also going to be necessary in a world of information and knowledge.



11 For these and other resources, visit the web of the Centre de Recursos de Llengües Estrangeres del Departament d'Educació, at <http://www.xtec.es/crle/05/05.htm>

12 "Mazes" are adventure projects oriented to decision making, with games, situations and puzzles where choices are involved. To know more, visit: <http://www.astrolog.org/labymth/algrithm.htm>

13 Many simulated enterprises at school have become real educational situations with real enterprises involved. To see an example of good practice of these techniques, visit: <http://www.young-enterprise.org.uk/pub/>

14 PECE\_MED projects are production-oriented international projects that require participation of schools from at least three countries from the Mediterranean area. They are supported by the Departament d'Educació de la Generalitat de Catalunya ("projectes transnacionals de cooperació escolar, dins del programa euromediterrani de cooperació educativa PECE-MED". ORDRE EDC/9/2006, de 17 de gener, DOGC núm. 4555 - 20/01/2006. For more information, read Order from January 2006, at: <http://www.gencat.net/diari/4555/06017168.htm>

15 To have a wide picture of many branches and approaches, visit the personal Wiki of Martin Ryder at [http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/itc\\_data/constructivism.html](http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/itc_data/constructivism.html)

16 Knowledge Building theory was created and developed by Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia in order to describe what a community of learners need to accomplish in order to create knowledge. The theory addresses the need to educate people for the knowledge age society, in which knowledge and innovation are pervasive (Marlene Scardamalia & Carl Bereiter, 2003).

17 In the US, 21st century skills are being developed by Universities and educational enterprises. To know more: <http://www.ncrel.org/engage/skills/exec.htm>

18 Visit to <http://www.ncrel.org/engage/intro/intro.htm> & <http://www.ncrel.org/engage/skills/skills.htm>

Five years ago, Douglas Rushkoff, (cyberculture analyst, author of *Playing the Future*) said, "Children are native to cyberspace and we, as adults, are immigrants."<sup>19</sup> Our students were born in the world of remote controls, cell phones, and mp3 music. Are we, adult teachers from the age of typewriters and mimeograph machines<sup>20</sup>, able to provide information, knowledge and competency acquisition within the context of today's technological environment?

We really have to make an effort to stop and reflect on our own practice. It is not only necessary to know well the subjects we need to teach, but also the technologies and the tools that our students will have to deal with in their learning process.

Moreover, it is essential to face the problem of youngsters' motivation and emotional involvement: it is not true that they are not interested for anything, it's just that the gap between their life inside and outside school is getting wider and wider. Do we really know what is bothering them? Let's try a quick survey in the secondary school classes and you'll be surprised of what our ESO students are worried about: family quarrelling, friendship relations, exclusion, not-fitting in groups, love, growing pains, uncertainty for the future, fear...It is not easy to grow up in our modern Digital-Age world!

It is a well-known utopian view that teaching and learning should be seen as two-faces of the same coin, where teamwork, committing and mutual exchange would push the process further into knowledge-building. But how can we get there?

#### 4. REFLECTION: NEW SKILLS FOR DIGITAL AGE TEACHERS

Re-thinking school and educational aims is a challenge that requires a vision of the future. If we keep doing what we have done until now, we can only get the same or even worse results. Teachers, headmasters and schools with a sense of responsibility for the future deserve resources and a certain degree of autonomy at school to develop their project. The Catalan Department of Education is now

offering special support for those schools that are ready to start their own strategic planning, and it is helping them to carry out their innovative approaches with network teams and leadership training for managing projects<sup>21</sup>.

Nevertheless, nothing will be achieved if there is not a shared sense of common project. Feeling the school as a learning community is something that has to be worked out, encouraged and consciously promoted with collaborative techniques in class, cooperative attitudes in the school and collective decision making strategies with students, families and colleagues. Do we really know how to do it? Is teacher training providing competencies for dealing with professional development in education?

The main answer is in *Reflective Practice*<sup>22</sup>, the first step for a Culture of Quality. Let's think for a minute, and try to discover our teaching profile with some simple activities to reflect on our daily practice.

#### ACTIVITY 1.

What support do we, teachers, need for developing professional competencies?

According to a common definition, competency is defined as "a behaviour or set of behaviours that describes excellent performance in a particular work context (e.g., job, role or group of jobs, function, or whole organisation)"<sup>23</sup>. In education, competency is commonly described as the capability to put into practice integrated knowledge, skills and values that allow one to know, to learn, and to perform actions in different contexts from the ones in which they were originally trained<sup>24</sup>.

Hans Siggard Jensen's *Manifesto*<sup>25</sup>, focused on knowledge-building in technological societies, considers that "something is only knowledge when it circulates in networks, and only when knowledge facilitates action... then it becomes competency". His third statement defends the idea that "The competent person is a person who can transform information through judgement into knowledge."

Professional development in education requires competencies connected to the famous Competency Chart: Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes.

19 To know more, read the 21st Century Literacy Summit (2002). Available at: [www.21stcenturyliteracy.org/white/WhitePaperEnglish.pdf](http://www.21stcenturyliteracy.org/white/WhitePaperEnglish.pdf).

20 Thirty years ago, I started doing "copies" of exams with fish-glue, and spirit duplicators (còpies amb cua de peix i amb cyclostils de carbó). Now I am able to connect directly to the NASA and offer their Kid's page activities to a whole class, from the screen of a computer.

21 UMCE-OSAC (Departament d'Educació) is the educational unit to give help to schools involved in Strategic Planning and Organisational Autonomy. The Inspection of Education provides networks, support and assessment for detecting needs in the educational community throughout a Global Diagnostic Assessment (AGD) and offers continuous support from nets and forums.

22 The Department of Education in Catalonia has program of training based on reflective Practice: [http://pie.xtec.es/formacio/practica\\_reflexiva/formacio.htm](http://pie.xtec.es/formacio/practica_reflexiva/formacio.htm), Programes de formació permanent del professorat fonamentats en la pràctica reflexiva (inscripció oberta fins el 10 de Gener 2007).

23 Frequently Asked Questions on Competencies: [http://www.schoonover.com/competency\\_faqs.htm#1](http://www.schoonover.com/competency_faqs.htm#1)

24 The Department of Education in Catalonia defined competencies in 2001, within the Resolució de 29 de maig de 2001, que dóna instruccions per a l'organització i funcionament dels centres: "Per competència s'entén la capacitat de posar en pràctica de forma integrada, en contextos i situacions diferents, els coneixements (sabers), les habilitats (procediments) i els trets de personalitat adquirits (valors i actituds)."

25 Open-Ended Manifesto on Research and Learning, by Hans Siggard Jensen

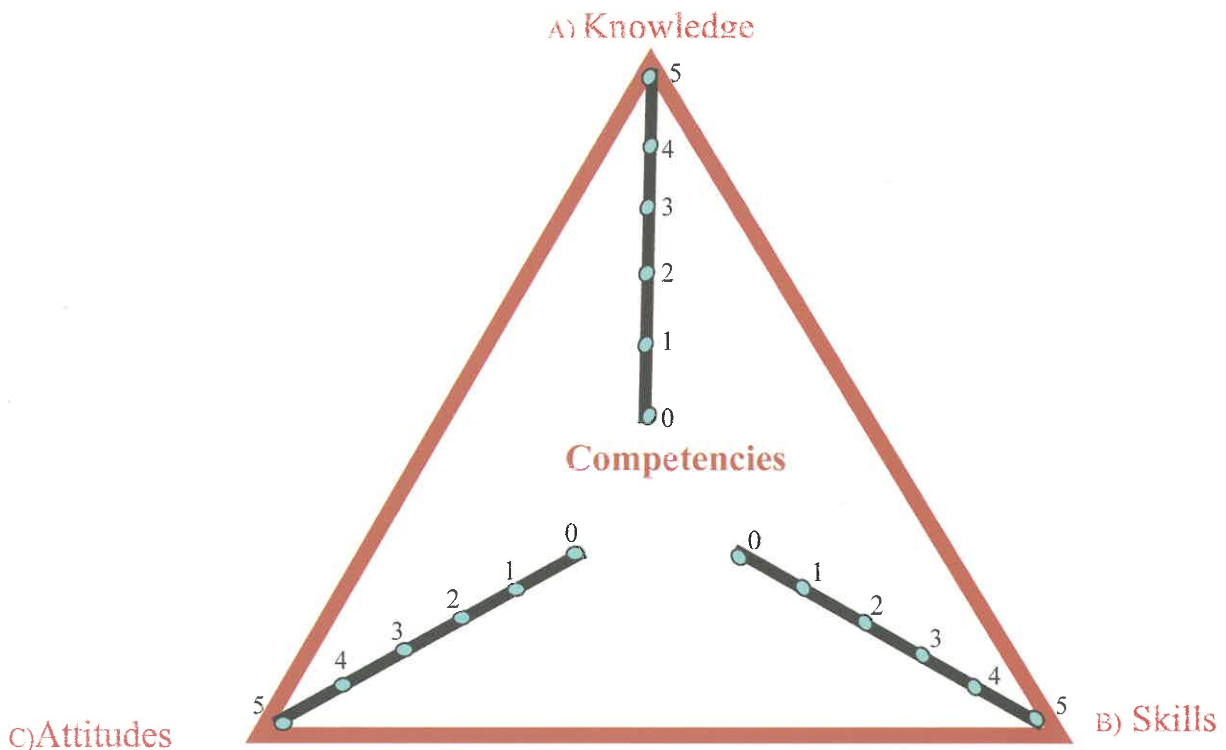


## African or Asian elephants? by Neus Lorenzo

Where are you now? Assess yourself from 0 to 5 (0 never; 1 rarely; 2 sometimes; 3 often; 4 usually; 5 always)

	0	1	2	3	4	5
A) Do you master knowledge in your teaching fields?						
B) Do you have skills to communicate and practice teaching?						
C) Do you have motivating attitudes and the will to do your job?						

Represent your personal profile on this Competency Chart, drawing a triangle. Reflect on it, and find your strengths and weakness:



If you are member of a team or a department, try to compare your profile with your colleagues and find what are the common needs and weaknesses: it is

always useful to know the organisation's deficits and demands in order to ask for a proper training and support programme.

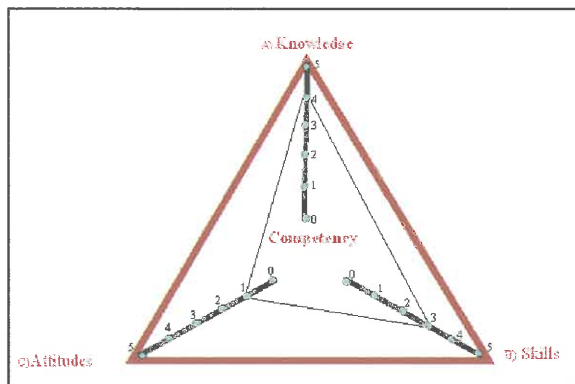


Chart 1

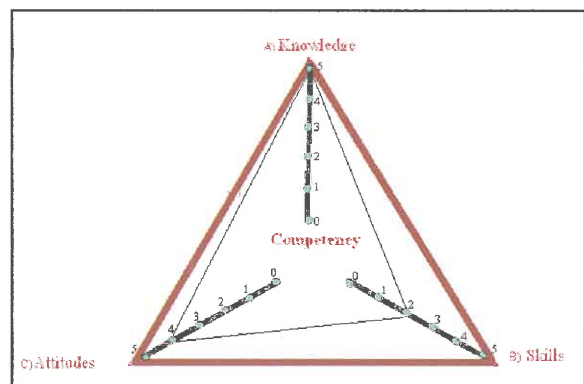


Chart 2

Reflection:

Chart 1: Support is needed to exchange good practices with your colleagues, to learn new teaching techniques and to put more effective communication skills in practice.

Chart 2: Support is needed to develop will to change, transformation vision, and emotional involvement in your job.

Other Charts: Looking at the competency chart, think of what support would you need in order to increase your professional competencies.

**ACTIVITY 2.**

What do we, teachers, need to be effective in our jobs?

Professional quality in teaching requires personal involvement and lifelong updating. Whatever one considers to be the main characteristics of a good teacher, it is necessary to make an effort to maintain good interaction with students, efficient energy investment and effective communication in class.

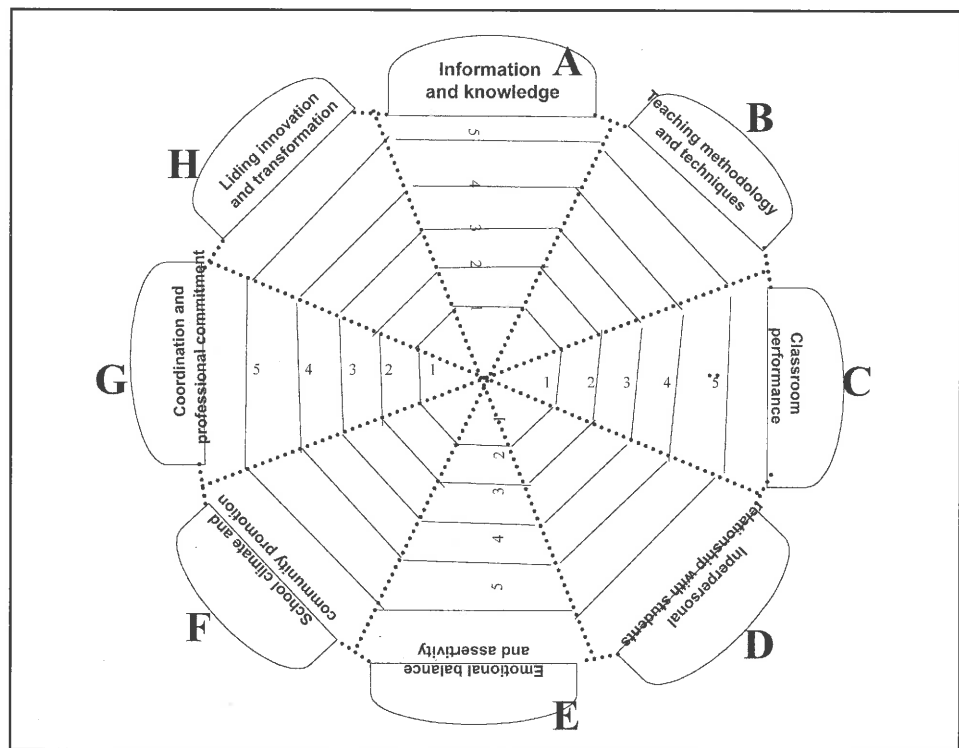
Let's make a list with what you consider the best skills to be a good teacher. Chose a list of 8 or 10 abilities...

we can consider, for example, those related to classroom procedures, school processes and subject mastery. Assess yourself on the skills you have selected, from 0 to 5 (0 never; 1 rarely; 2 sometimes; 3 often; 4 usually; 5 always). For example: →

	0	1	2	3	4	5
A) Are you up-to-date with information and knowledge?						
B) Do you know new teaching methodology and techniques?						
C) Do you perform easily in the classroom?						
D) Do you have good interpersonal relationships with your students?						
E) Are you emotionally balanced and properly assertive?						
F) Do you promote a good school climate and proper sense of community with students and their families?						
G) Are you committed professionally with your colleagues, and do you co-ordinate and share projects with them?						
H) Do you participate and collaborate in leading innovation and transformation in the school?						

Reflect on your own practice, copy your personal values and skills in a chart like this one, and represent your professional profile filling in the different characteristics in the Professional Wheel (note that 0 is in the centre of the wheel, 5 at the exterior level).

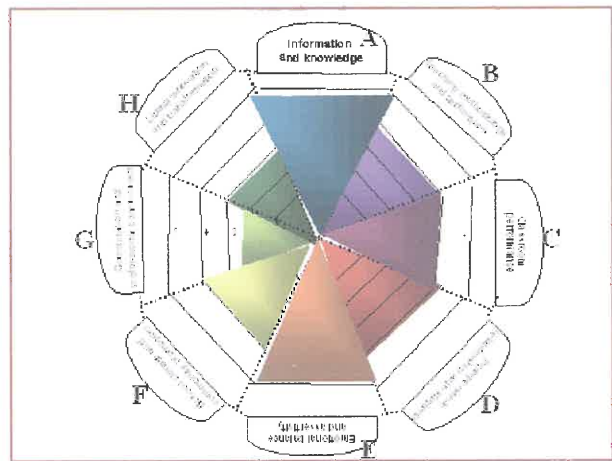
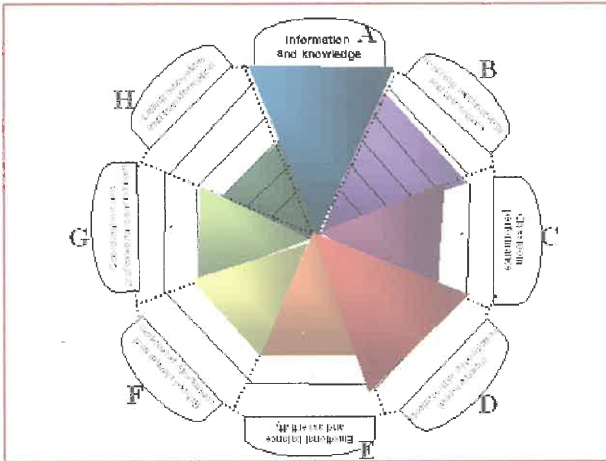
It is important to notice that each teacher can have a different wheel of effectiveness: diversity in education – for students and teachers – always has to be an added value to succeed in working together and summing up forces. Reflect on it, and find your strengths and weakness:





Reflection:

Compare your effectiveness with your colleagues in your department or your school: find the different features you have stressed, the common skills you consider meaningful and the general teacher profile you are stressing.



Note that different results may become a collective benefit, when it generates interactive support and mutual awareness. Team teaching will benefit from diverse teacher profiles, if they collaborate in a common educational project. Common strengths become opportunities for the group, and must be used to reduce common lacks and shared weaknesses.

**5. CONCLUSION: DIVERSITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE IS NOT A PROBLEM TO TREAT, BUT A PATRIMONY FOR NETWORKING**

Sometimes we forget that it is only since 1990<sup>26</sup> that all children up to the age of 16 officially have the opportunity of going to school in Spain. Before that date, those who couldn't pass the exams either entered professional studies or –most commonly– stopped studying after the age of twelve. For the most vulnerable children, in the best cases, only those who could pass the exams had post-compulsory studies beyond the age of fourteen.

In the last fifteen years, every child has been officially able to stay at school until sixteen... but schools have not evolved enough to deal with all the “failing”, “not-fitting”, and “different” profiles: dealing with diversity in class is commonly the main concern in our schools

The new legislation (LOE)<sup>27</sup> introduces approaches that can help change the paradigm: it focus the teaching and learning process onto development of competencies with explicit references to individual and social, intellectual, cultural and emotional skills. This global awareness responds both to new neuroscientific concepts of intelligence<sup>28</sup> and to new policies in the Council of Europe for citizenship education<sup>29</sup>.

New collective approaches to knowledge-building allow the emergence of aims and objectives in education which are closer and closer to attitudinal values, merely complementary in the traditional academic world. Remember how, ten years ago, “treating diversity” was used to mean special care for physically handicapped children; how it also became, a few years later, the compensatory education for psychological problems; how it was used to refer to specific care and special educational support for children with social disabilities and behavioural pathologies...

Recently, diversity has stopped being a pathology to be treated, and has become a universal characteristic of human beings. Under this approach, it only needs special care if it puts the child in vulnerable situations, social marginality or explicit risk: our legislation offers added specific support in school when children are in transitory situations of weakness or disadvantage<sup>30</sup>.

Being diverse has moved from individual “belonging

26 “LEY ORGÁNICA 1/1990 de 3 de octubre, de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo. BOE nº 238 de 4 de octubre 1990”

27 “Texto definitivo de Ley Orgánica de Educación (LOE), 20 de abril de 2006, BOE 106 de 04/05/06. Corrección de errores: BOE de 21/4/06”.

28 Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences in 1987 and 2001; Daniel Goleman’s Emotional Skills in 1999.

29 2005 was the European Year of Citizenship through education. To know more, visit: <http://www.coe.int/T/E/Com/Files/Themes/ECD/>

30 For example: “Aula d’Acol·lida per alumnat nouvingut sense domini de la llengua”, “Unitats de Suport a l’Educació especial (USEE)”, Aules Obertes per alumnat amb rebuig a l’escolarització tradicional”, etc.

to a group" (passive and contextual) to collective "becoming part of a group" (active and optional). The main menace is not to be different, but to be deprived of your right to choose to change, keep, remain in or share any sort of difference.

In a more positive connotation, individual diversity brings biological, psychological, social and cultural features that allow specificity, identity, singularity, specific behavior and richness development. Collective diversity enlarges structural possibilities in collaboration, co-operation, adaptation, emergent growing autopoiesis, networking, and free choice. Cultural possibilities -enlarged with diversity- bring better "becoming option" and optimality in language usage, life style and professional orientation. As a whole, both individual and collective diversity is a common patrimony that we have to appreciate and to care for.

Following this vision, school projects are starting to involve different levels and ages in research, real community building and interaction<sup>31</sup>. Activities in class should become actions and enterprises for collective creation and real production, with the benefit of different approaches, skills, abilities and values.

At an individual level, passing from input to intake in networking with ICT will develop competencies. At a collective level, scaling up from single to multiple views will stimulate reflection, comparison, debate and enrichment via diversity in the classroom and on the Internet.

Teachers' professional development should focus on common collaborative knowledge-building: interactive exchange of ideas in a common project will transform classroom procedures and school processes. Further reflection on shared visions may allow ever-

yone to find his or her personal way to professional learning and improvement.

What's necessary now, is for us, teachers, to realise how we are engines for transformation at school. It is necessary to commit ourselves in effective shared projects to be developed in collaboration, at national and international levels. It is necessary to focus on innovation, leadership in education and community building, through professional learning and development. Further reflection on this theme is also necessary.

#### Further readings:

- UNESCO: Task Force on Education for the Twenty-first Century  
<http://www.unesco.org/delors/>

"For the title of its report, the Commission turned to one of La Fontaine's fables, The Ploughman and his Children:

Be sure (the ploughman said), not to sell the inheritance

Our forebears left to us:

A treasure lies concealed therein.

Readapting slightly the words of the poet, who was lauding the virtues of hard work, and referring instead to education - that is, everything that humanity has learned about itself - we could have him say:

But the old man was wise

To show them before he died

That learning is the treasure."

Jacques Delors  
Chairman of the Commission

<sup>31</sup> Social Knowledge Forum in Catalonia: Carl Bereiter and Maria Scardamalia (Toronto University) had been collaborating in the Catalan COMConèixer project (co-ordinated by the Oficina de Cooperació Educactiva i Científica Internacional, 2004-2006 with the support of Consell Superior d'Avaluació de Catalunya). Visit the web of the project at: <http://www.xtec.es/ofinternacional/COMconeixer/cat/index.htm>

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## REFLECTIVE TEACHING: Insights on Practice

by Eva Romo and Sònia Guilana

### Why Reflective Teaching?

Constant and rapid change prevails in the society of information we live in. As teaching professionals, where do we stand? We believe that the new teaching development strategies have to offer us teachers tools to meet this great challenge.

Reflective Teaching escapes from traditional training or ready-made tips which do not often respond to the changing needs of our classes. By contrast, Reflective teaching is a “problem-focused” method. This teaching often arises from a specific need in our daily practice and through a systematic reflection, individual and with peers, teachers achieve a practical outcome for class. In this sense, RT is an instrument for a tailor-made change.

### What is Reflective Teaching?

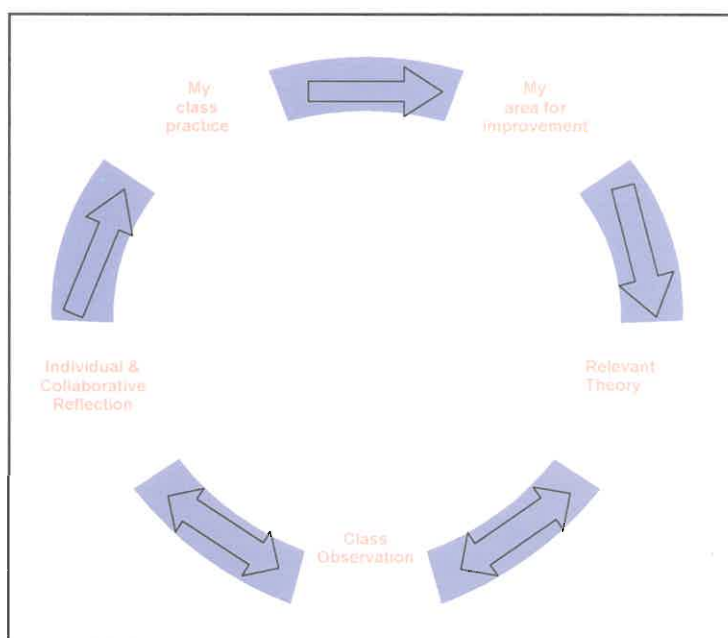
RT is a structured process to enhance our learning/teaching by following a scientific methodology. The basic steps are:

1- Identifying and narrowing down an area for improvement: What do you want to improve in your teaching practice? This will be your research question.

2- Collecting data through observation: What evidence do you find in your class in relation to this topic?

3- Reading theory: What do experts state about your question that gives you a new insight on how to approach your current practice in class?

4- Analyzing and reflecting on data: Looking back on your action individually, with the help of other colleagues and theory: What are your conclusions for your class practice?



(figure 1- Based on ALACT Model by Korthagen, 2001)

Let's now analyze each step a bit further.

#### Step 1- Identifying and narrowing down an area for improvement

EVA ROMO AND SÒNIA GUILANA HAVE BEEN TEACHING AT STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR 10 YEARS. THEY ARE ALSO TEACHER TRAINERS ON THE REFLECTIVE TEACHING PROGRAMME (PRÀCTIVA REFLEXIVA) RUN BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION.



In our experience, finding an area of improvement poses some difficulty at first. In response to “what do you want to improve in your teaching practice?” answers may vary from “everything”, to “I don’t know” or specifically “the use of L1 in pair work.”

Through given tasks, teachers gradually reflect upon which specific areas they want to focus. Here are some examples of resulting research questions from our courses around the general topic “**The Speaking skill in Secundària**”:

- How can English become the common language in the oral activities?
- Why do students want to speak?
- How can I assess oral interaction in pairs?
- How can we use our own written texts to foster oral production?
- If we use guided language activities, will our students produce more output?
- How can I motivate my students in the 2nd ESO mixed-ability group to produce real-life conversations?

Other research questions suggested by Andrew Finch (2003) are:

- How much time do I spend talking in class?
- How do I correct errors?
- How much feedback do I give to learners?
- How do I provide this feedback?
- How much time do I allow for my learners to interact with each other?
- How can I improve my classroom management skills?
- ...

Once our focus of interest is narrowed down, we start observing our class performance on that issue.

### Step 2- Collecting data through observation

As William Burroughs put it, “nothing exists unless or until it is observed.” Observation is the first step to awareness of the events that occur in class and often go unnoticed simply due to the lack of time to reflect on a regular basis.

There are several instruments to collect data effectively and it is advisable to use some of them simultaneously for a higher reliability of the results. Depending on your research question and your own learning style, you may use a teacher diary, a learner diary, a colleague’s observation of our class, ques-

tionnaires, self-assessment and peer-assessment forms, video recording, sound recording, grids etc.

### Step 3- Reading Theory

We tend to read articles, journals or attend seminars for teaching development in a general, unfocused way. In Reflective Teaching, we look for specific Theory to throw light on our previous ideas of the area we want to improve. New discoveries may put our preconceptions into question or provide a new insight into our teaching. This is why this focused reading is more relevant to our practice and therefore more effective so as to foster a change in our teaching both on a short and long term basis.

### Step 4- Analyzing and Reflecting on data

Although an improvement in our teaching practice must necessarily arise from the individual need and motivation as teachers, the support and collaboration from peers enhance our research dramatically. Sharing ideas, concerns and previous experiences provide different perspectives as to how to tackle our topic and help us reflect in more depth than we would do just by ourselves.

It is essential to structure all these reflections in a sequenced method to move beyond empathic or therapeutic discussions among colleagues. The use of a Teaching Portfolio throughout the whole process contributes to systematize our research, the observations and findings to promote the individual reflection.

## The Benefits

When it comes to professional development, any attempt to improve is beneficial. However, what is special about RT is that you are in charge of your own development. You build your own theory from your own observation in your own context. This process might seem harder than assisting to teacher training conventions, or reading journals, but the benefits are much more long-lasting, because the methodologies you choose respond to your particular need, instead of the lecturer’s. Also, there is an intellectual challenge in scientific research which you cannot achieve by simply collecting a set of previously tested formulas. These might help you in particular situations of the day-to-day practice but they will not produce a change on your methodology,

These might help you in particular situations of the day-to-day practice but they will not produce a change on your methodology, on your view of things.

A common objection to RT is that an experienced teacher is already acquainted with this “looking back on the action” procedure and follows it in an intuitive way. Of course intuition is always a good tool for professional development, but you can make it more powerful if you structure it in a scientific way. Besides, if you share your research and observation with a team of teachers who are doing their own research themselves, the profits are more effective.

Intellectual challenge together with social interaction provide a good machinery to set the teaching practice into motion.

## The Risks

There is no progress without any risks. And the greatest risk of RT is hitting the bottom of permanent questioning, especially after abandoning old preconceptions. It looks as if anything could undergo harsh criticism. However, this is also true for any scientific discipline which seeks development. For that reason it is good to learn how to discriminate between good teaching practice and poor teaching practice under the light of your own hypothesis in order to grow your self-esteem. Just as Descartes himself did, you have to give birth to your own “cogito ergo sum” which will stand behind your practice as the permanent grounds for future development.

As professionals, we always have to decide whether to trust or not other hypothesis and theories. Scepticism often arises when these theories do not match one’s own preconceptions. The easiest response to this situation is to reject the unsuitable theories instead of changing our old preconceptions, but this might not be the honest thing to do, even if it causes anxiety at the beginning.

## Conclusion

In a world in constant change with overwhelming amounts of information, it is difficult to persuade anybody about the benefits of one particular experience. However, the experience of AR is one which is particularly helpful to find our own way through endless bibliography and to analyse the reality of the classroom in the light of scientific research. Maybe we cannot change everything, maybe some things should

not be changed, but one needs a great deal of idealism to be a teacher, and it is a challenge to try to keep it. Once you think your research is over, so is your idealism.

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## NOT ONLY TEA... WITH THE HELP OF ICT

by Sara Martín Díez

THIS TALK FOCUSES ON TWO IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF CURRENT REALITY WITHIN THE EFL CLASSROOM. FIRST OF ALL, WE HAVE TO ASSUME THE FACT THAT WE CANNOT LIMIT OUR PRACTICE TO MERELY TEACH ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE. WE CANNOT WASTE THE HUGE OPPORTUNITY OF USING ANY TOPIC OF INTEREST TO TEACH THE LANGUAGE, WHAT ALLOWS US TO PROMOTE VALUES.

ON THE OTHER HAND, OUR STUDENTS COME FROM DIFFERENT PLACES, SO THEY ARE CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE, AND THAT IS WHY WHEN TEACHING ENGLISH WE SHOULD NOT ONLY CONCENTRATE ON BRITISH CULTURE AS A LEARNING GOAL. MY PROPOSAL IS NOT TO FORGET 5 O'CLOCK BRITISH TEA IN OUR TEACHING PRACTICE, BUT ALSO TO REMEMBER THE

EXISTENCE OF OTHER DRINKS AND REALITIES. FROM CANARIAN BARRAQUITO, ARGENTINIAN YERBAMATE, COLOMBIAN BLACK COFFEE OR JAPANESE HOT SAKE, TO MOROCCAN AND INDIAN DIFFERENT TEAS AND CEREMONIES, WE SHOULD CONTRIBUTE WITH OUR TEACHING TO HELP ALL THAT MULTICULTURAL RICHNESS TO ONE DAY TRANSFORM OUR SOCIETY INTO A REAL INTERCULTURAL ONE. IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL USING ALL THE MEANS WITHIN OUR REACH, WE WILL SHOW HOW ICT MAY BECOME VERY USEFUL FOR OUR PURPOSE.



SARA MARTÍN HAS BEEN AN EFL TEACHER FOR TEN YEARS AND HAS SIMULTANEOUSLY WORKED AS A TEACHER TRAINER IN ICT FOR EFL TEACHING AND LEARNING. SHE HOLDS AN "EXPERT IN EDUCATIONAL ICT" DIPLOMA (UNED), AND IS THE WEBMISTRESS OF ELREBUMBIO.ORG. SHE CURRENTLY WORKS AS A TEACHER ADVISOR REGARDING INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AT A LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA I TEACHERS' TRAINING AND RESOURCE CENTRE.

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*If you have ever entered a classroom and felt that you have mistakenly slipped in a UN General Assembly Plenary Session ( a Junior one, of course), get this straight: it has been your first, and not*

*last, face-to-face encounter with one of the greatest 21st century educational challenges you will have to stand up to as a teacher, that is to say, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students altogether in the same group. But don't fret... you are not alone!*

Perhaps that sounded a bit highly coloured, but in fact it is a phenomenon which has been taking place for years in most schools placed in the Southern areas of the Canary Islands. Lately it has begun to spread to other places within the Archipelago, and soon we will have a similar degree of diversity in every single school.

However, neither you nor me were prepared to face that sort of situation. Obviously you did expect your students to be different as individuals, but let's be honest: did it ever come to your mind when you were a teacher trainee, that some day you would have more than ten different nationalities in the same EFL group? I don't think so, but if it did ,I really bow down before you.

The fact is that all teachers should learn how to deal with Cultural Diversity in Education. However we even get tangled with terminology, as there are a lot of similar words. So first of all we'll try to cast light on some essential concepts, but don't worry! Nothing could be further from my intentions than writing another theoretical article on this topic! Just a few useful definitions will be more than enough.

### Clarifying some key concepts

The latest fashion is the usage of terms such as *Pluriculturalidad*, *Multiculturalidad* and *Interculturalidad*. Although all of them derive from the concept of **Culture**, which can be defined in a simple way as "all the knowledge



and values shared by a society", they differ in essential aspects despite being used indistinctly.

*Multiculturalidad* refers to an undeniable fact: the **existence of different cultures**. On the other hand, *Pluriculturalidad* may be defined as *the most characteristic feature of modern cultures* , given that our present culture (all those knowledge and values) have been compiled throughout centuries of contact with different cultures, and have become a whole, shared by a society.

And last, but not least, **Interculturalidad** implies **interaction among different cultures on the basis of equality and respect**.

But how do these differences affect Education? Well, schools are obviously multicultural but it's Interculturalism what should be fostered and, as I've already mentioned, nobody prepared us for such a task, so what happens in real schools? Let me suggest taking a secret virtual trip. Why not having a quick peep into a day at a multicultural school and see whether Interculturalidad is achieved? There we go!...

### A day at a Multicultural School.

8:00 The bell rings and students cross the doors in a mad rush towards their classrooms. From



this moment onwards they will spend their next six hours in a different world, where sometimes there is no place for some of their traditions, customs, languages, etc. 800 students from 32 different countries sharing the same building, the same school café, the same classrooms and perhaps ...exactly the same lessons, with identical exercises and explanations?

But if so, what about **Vladimir**, the Russian boy? It's his first day and he only speaks and reads Russian. Even the note where his group is written (2B) seems a mere drawing to him. "Of course he will be attending PADIC lessons" .-you may think. Yes, it's true, five hours a week. The other 25 hours... who knows?

9:00 **Ulrika** is copying down some chemistry formulae. She's Swedish but you'd only tell because of her physical aspect. She speaks Spanish with Canarian accent, and behaves like a Canarian girl in everything she does. She says she does not miss Sweden at all.



9:55 Now we can have a look at the corridors and see the different groups: the Germans, the Chinese, the British, the Moroccans... Among the British we catch a glimpse of **Aidan**. He's been at the school for three months now and he does not speak a single word of Spanish. He simply refuses to learn .He just wants to go back to his country.

10:30 We see **Hsin** through a window. He is very good at Maths. He learnt Spanish quickly and he is tolerated by his classmates, as most Chinese are, but he has no real friends.

10:45 **Break Time**. Students run towards the café to pick up their breakfasts. It's incredible but there are no communication problems, even though the café staff does not speak any foreign language. But eating is basic for survival, and necessity is the mother of invention! Nobody starves because of not speaking a language.

11:30 **Nahuel** does not like Literature lessons. He has no language problems as Spanish is his mother tongue. Sometimes there are some misunderstandings with his Spanish pals, because some expressions do not mean the same as in Argentina, but nothing serious. The only thing he hates is his nickname, "El Gaucho". He'd feel more comfortable if they called him Nahu or Nahuel.

12:30 **Kadira** feels a bit dizzy. She has not had any breakfast since she's fasting because of Ramadan. Her classmates have heard of it but they're not interested in asking her anything. They just know she cannot eat until dusk, and do not care about the reasons. They tend to think it's a stupid habit.

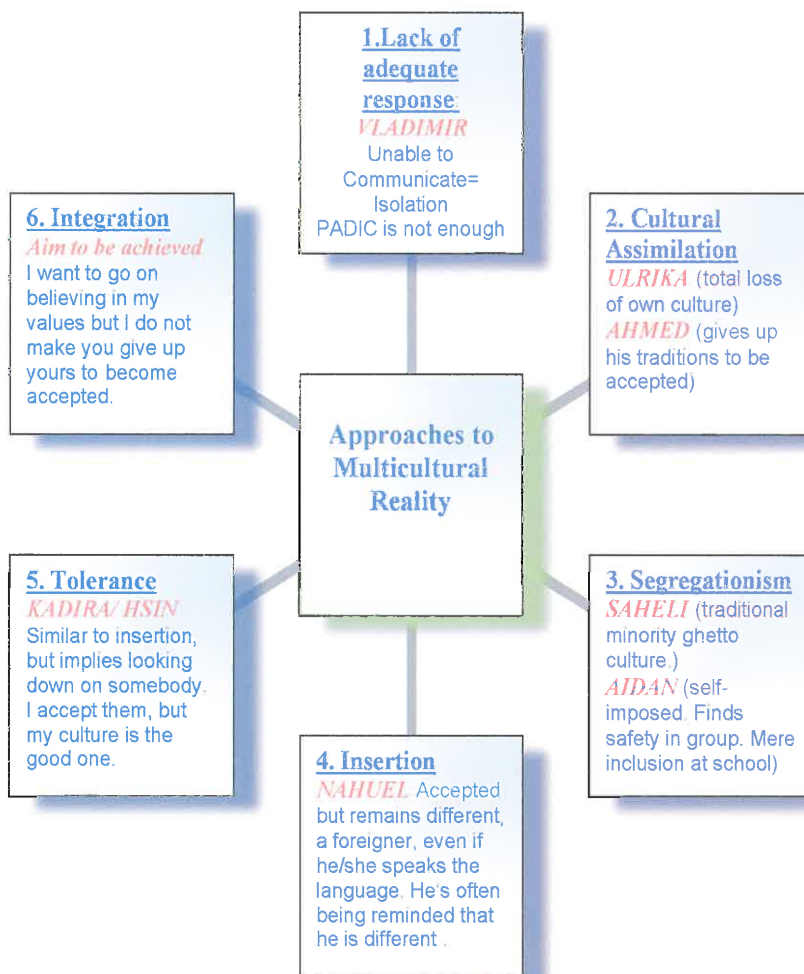
13:30 **Saheli** attends her History lesson. She's been at this school for three years but she has not made a single friend. She is not really interested as she has got lots of friends within the Indian community. She speaks fluent Spanish and gets really good marks.

14:00 The bell rings and students leave school until Monday. **Ahmed** meets his friends outside. He is 18 and this is his last year at school. They're going out that night, to some discotheque. He is the only Moroccan

within the group of friends, but he drinks as much alcohol as any of them, so he is one of the three in charge of buying the bottles. He's sure they'll have a great time.



From my point of view we can draw several conclusions from this brief virtual excursion: When immigration rates began to rise, the tendency in Education was promoting the so called Multiculturalism, presently considered an error by several authors. The attitudes and policies adopted towards foreigners, both within a social and an educational context approached multicultural reality from an inadequate perspective, and that is what the stories of these students try to show:



### Interculturality as a main goal

Now that we've realised that promoting Integration to achieve Interculturality in the long

run is not that simple, perhaps we should reconsider the best way and environment for success. Many schools have a PADIC programme, but 'though it proves to be helpful to promote Communicative Competence in Spanish, perhaps we are still fostering some kind of segregationism. After all, we have a reduced group of foreign students that learn to communicate in Spanish and are taught some cultural concepts. But is that the ideal approach? Most authors nowadays disagree, given that **Interculturality** is a process of **interaction among different cultures** on the basis of **equality and respect**. Thus, the concept of Communicative Competence has evolved into the idea of **Intercultural Communicative Competence**, given that becoming fluent in a language undeniably requires the ability to establish relationships with individuals from different cultural origins .

So Interculturality must be promoted from all the different subjects, since *"it's not possible to understand another culture without becoming aware of your own and the relativity of both of them"*. Therefore, not only foreign students should achieve Intercultural Communicative Competence, but also we as teachers, and obviously the rest of "native students". And we all know a perfect scenario to carry out this task: **the EFL Classroom**

### Promoting Interculturality from the EFL Classroom



At the EFL classroom a curious phenomenon takes place: all students find themselves in the same situation (obviously not taking into account those

whose mother tongue is English). All of a sudden, all of them should use a lingua franca, English in this case, and they do not feel confident anymore, they feel they cannot communicate, they have to face a different cultural approach... so it's the perfect moment to raise awareness among our "native students" about how it feels to be in a foreign students' shoes.

Apart from that, our subject allows us to deal with almost every topic, to promote dialogue, to compare different cultures, to work on Canarian Contents in order to become aware of our own cultural roots, etc. It would be too long to explain the huge list of activities that can be carried out at the EFL class-

room to favour Interculturalism, so I'm just commenting on some that have worked for me and my students. Most of them have been carried out integrating ICT, but you can also adapt them and use the old chalk and blackboard!

- **Place your bet!** I've used this activity to make students guess whether some "Canarian" words have an English origin, or to work with elder students of course, with taboo words, (and if anyone feels embarrassed, try to remember the first words you tried to look up in the dictionary when you were starting to study a second language!!) as they are deeply connected with cultural beliefs, and may serve the purpose of comparing different cultures and avoiding totally absurd translations!!! (British rougher swearwords are related to sex, whereas Spanish ones are often related to Religion, for example).

- **Webquests or Treasure hunts:** providing students with a Treasure hunt about British culture, and afterwards asking them to prepare one (in English, of course) about their country, for example, or if they are Spanish, about their region. They can use the generator provided at Aula21 .

- Jeopardy : great game I'm sure you've heard of, very useful to revise any type of content you want, or to promote culture awareness, if you use multicultural categories.

- **Blogs:** or Weblogs. They can be very useful (teacher-controlled, of course). Some times students feel shy and do not dare to ask about specific cultural aspects. You can promote each student creating a Weblog called "Ask me about...Finland", for example, and give marks for questions correctly expressed and also for completeness in answers. This way, you make all students search for answers and reflect about their own language and culture using English to do it, and also make them learn aspects of different cultures, so there you have your way towards Intercultural Communicative Competence.

### British in the EFL classroom!!

There are obviously many more activities that can be carried out, but I do not want to finish without mentioning a problem people do not often even think of, until it's under their very noses. It is connected with Multiculturality and we have to cope





with it in the EFL classroom: having English Language Proficient Students together with EFL students. They may be British or not. Quite often Scandinavian students have an excellent level of English too. And the question is...what shall we work on with them? I've always thought that at Multicultural schools the English Department should have a established programme for those students. However the main problem is the materials. You cannot just make them work with a higher level textbook, for example, because they may have a high language level, but probably if they are in their fourth form, they're not mature enough for certain types of activities or contents that are dealt with in a sixth form textbook. Sometimes I've seen them just having reading assignments, or even playing the role of language assistants. Obviously this is not how things should work, but more than often teachers do not find other alternatives.

I've bought on the Internet or when I travel, English language books from a first language perspective, but perhaps a good solution could be creating working groups to develop materials for those students, making linguistic adaptations, that is, something quite similar to what should be done with Spanish as a Foreign Language from the different subjects. But of course...let 's expect that sooner or later, as M. Tupper said, "Tomorrow's victory shall crown the conflict of today".

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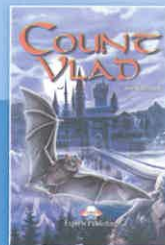
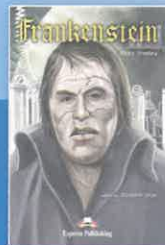
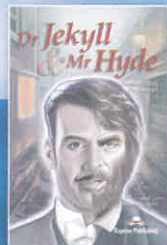
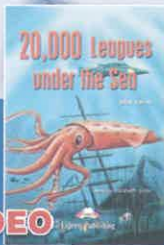
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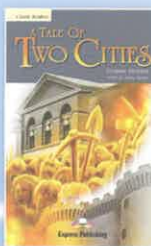
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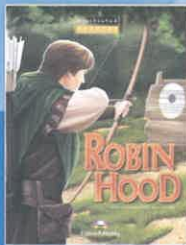
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## US AND THEM

THE PHENOMENON OF THE MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOM IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE COMMONPLACE IN THE CANARIES AS A RESULT OF IMMIGRATION. OBVIOUSLY THIS AFFECTS SOME AREAS MORE THAN OTHERS BUT NOBODY CAN IGNORE THE FACT THAT IT IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE URGENT TO ADOPT A COMMON STRATEGY TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT CAN ENTAIL HAVING DIFFERENT CULTURES AND LANGUAGES IN THE SAME CLASSROOM. HOWEVER, THIS NEED NOT NECESSARILY BE A PROBLEM AND CAN IN FACT BE PART OF AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE FOR TEACHER AND STUDENT ALIKE.

by Michael Lord

Perhaps the best place to start is by looking at examples of what not to do but first of all, let me provide the context. Fifteen years ago I taught English as a First Language in an inner-city school in an area in the north of England. About forty percent of the pupils came from different ethnic backgrounds, mainly India and Pakistan whose mother tongue was not English. As there were and still are historical differences between the two countries, India and Pakistan, there were also problems between the different communities. In the local area there were cases of gangs waiting outside schools to exact their revenge on their rivals and in one case a head teacher had intervened only to be stabbed to death. Fortunately, at my school no such acts had happened but it was certainly a sobering thought that there is always a first time and that that first time had happened at a school just around the corner. The most noticeable friction was between the Caucasian English pupils who had digested the racial prejudice of their parents and the Asian pupils who found themselves accused of stealing jobs and stinking of curry.



So what went wrong and how could it have been avoided? The occasion was the Pakistan festival of Eid which is roughly equivalent in terms of importance to Christmas. The Pakistani pupils asked me if they could decorate the classroom for the occasion since it had been decorated for Christmas. I assented to this thinking naïvely about racial harmony and the rich cul-

MICHAEL LORD CURRENTLY TEACHES ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT THE EOI IN ARUCAS, GRAN CANARIA WHERE HE HAS BEEN LIVING FOR THE LAST 13 YEARS. BORN IN DERBY, ENGLAND, HE HAS ALSO TAUGHT ENGLISH LITERATURE AND ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE AND FIRST LANGUAGE IN AN INNER CITY SCHOOL IN MANCHESTER, ENGLAND, AND IN INTERNATIONAL BILINGUAL SCHOOLS IN VALENCIA AND LAS PALMAS.

tural experience that this could provide. However, the bone of contention came from the fact that the pupils had decorated the entire noticeboard with the Pakistani flag. The result? Another noticeboard was covered with the Union Jack, the British flag, courtesy of one of the Caucasian English pupils and without even consulting me. My mistake? Taking it down, an action which I then had to justify to outraged suddenly patriotic pupils who interpreted my action as a betrayal to the nation. The pupils then went on 'strike' and en masse left the classroom refusing to return until I had

reinstated the Union Jack or taken down the Pakistani flag. My solution? To entice them back in to learn more about Eid and the Pakistani culture hoping this would provide more understanding and tolerance. Unfortunately, the Pakistani pupils could only tell the rest of the class that this festival involved getting lots of presents but were not able to elaborate why. What had been intended as an opportunity for openness and understanding ended up as an all-out verbal fight with insults flying in all directions: You lot are taking way our jobs! You don't even speak our language properly! You don't even know about your own culture! and so on. You would think that in the climate that I previously described there would be some kind of strategy or school policy to deal with potential racial confrontations. However, when I explained to the head teacher what had happened, he had nowhere to record this incident which could have been the first in a series leading to something major or could even have provided the context to racist bullying amongst pupils. Due to this experience, I realised the value of a school anti-racist policy. It is not just a piece of paper to be filed and to keep inspectors happy, but is in fact a valuable document that can chart developments, both positive and negative, and aim to guide the school towards racial harmony or at the least help prevent confrontations. Of course, I also realise as a more experienced teacher (that being my first year) that I should never have placed the Pakistani children on the spot to answer questions about their culture, but should have taken a more active role in informing the class about Eid and should have involved the whole class in the project.

The ideal school celebrates the different cultures that are represented by its pupils. Such information is unli-

kely to be imparted at home so each school has a unique position to try to promote understanding between different ethnic groups since ignorance leads to racism. The aim is to change shame and envy into pride. In a multicultural school, pupils should not just be proud of their own culture but of all the cultures represented at their school. Encouraging public displays of different customs and traditions such as through music and dance is certainly one way to achieve this. I recently attended a theatrical and musical performance at one of the islands' international

schools, The British School of Gran Canaria. Although it is certainly not fair to compare a private school to a state school, I could not help reflecting on the different approach to my experience of fifteen years ago. This school had managed to involve students from different cultures in a showcase performance that was framed by scenes from the musical Cabaret. One Korean boy break-danced as only an expert in taekwondo can and an Indian girl sang a western pop song while playing her sitar. The greatest moment of racial integration came in a representation of the ballroom scene from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet in which a group of Indian girls performed a dance in colourful saris as if they were performing in the latest Bollywood film. By involving pupils of other ethnic groups in the dance, cultural knowledge was shared and a greater understanding and tolerance was achieved.

It may seem like an uphill struggle when you are fighting against inbred prejudices but by planning ahead and with a whole-school strategy, the atmosphere can become not one of 'Us and Them' but simply, 'Us'.



**A SCHOOL ANTI-RACIST POLICY IS IN FACT A VALUABLE DOCUMENT THAT CAN CHART DEVELOPMENTS AND AIM TO GUIDE THE SCHOOL TOWARDS RACIAL HARMONY.**

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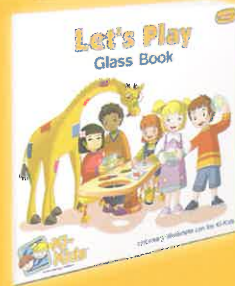
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## MULTICULTURALISM IN THE SECONDARY ENGLISH CLASSROOM

by Paloma Sarbadhikari

*"We are complimentary to each other, because of our different outlooks upon life which have given us different aspects of truth."*

*Rabindranath Tagore 1861-1961*

My name is Paloma Sarbadhikari. I was born in Calcutta to my Spanish (from Zaragoza) mother and Bengali father. At the age of two, our small family moved to Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada. Both my brothers were born there. I went to a Catholic school in Thunder Bay although my family wasn't Catholic (we could eat lunch at this school and that was convenient for my parents.) My parents gave us the opportunity to enjoy all the benefits of living in a Canadian small town. We skied, skated, played hockey, went to summer camp, ate at MacDonald's once in awhile (not as frequently as our neighbours, I observed); a very Canadian upbringing. I have lived in Madrid for 19 of my 41 years and if anyone asks (and they still do) -where are you from? I respond "Canada".



I have two dark memories of my childhood in Canada. For no reason at all, my brother was beaten up and called "paki". ("Paki-from "Pakistani", is the slang term used to insult immigrants with dark skin.) He was about 10 years old. I also remember being in a grocery store with my father when two young men whispered menacingly "go home, paki". It has taken me years to understand the connotations behind these two acts of violence.

Multiculturalism is a term coined in Canada. Pierre

Trudeau used it in the late 1960's.

It defines the citizen in a society in cultural terms. Culture refers to the customs, arts, social institutions and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group. Multiculturalism has also been defined as a reaction of minority groups of immigrants in fear of losing their identity in the dominant culture.

There has been a lot of debate about the progress towards the goal of multicultural equality and acceptance since the 7/7 terrorist attack in London, when "children of multiculturalism," individuals born and brought up in a country that had given them and their families protection and refuge from persecution and/or poverty and a guarantee of freedom and worship were involved in these bombings. This has led many people to believe that multiculturalism has failed. Others feel that the concept needs to be reviewed and replaced with the concept of "integration." I think that multiculturalism and integration are complimentary ideas and despite and because of all that has happened, I believe that multiculturalism is still a necessary goal and that with the immigration taking place in Spain, we need to work towards a new national identity. It will take courage and a lot of imagination on the part of teachers in the classrooms but it is a valuable and attractive tool that can be used to give students awareness to the reality of the multicultural society in which we live in today in Spain, as well as giving our students motivation to learn English, as this language becomes more and more universal each day.

Here are some practical activities that I have used with students from ESO to Bachillerato. The activities should be adapted according to the level of the class.

### A Multicultural Wall

As the name suggests, a wall can be used to put up maps, photographs, magazine pictures, recipes and postcards of the students' home countries or parents' country of origin. "Spanish" children often have parents or grandparents from different provinces in Spain and can participate by bringing in pictures of these places. If you use a large piece of paper then the "wall" then can be placed in a hallway or dining area.

Children will stop and take a look. Younger students generally become excited when they see something from their country or even their continent. They feel good that their language and their culture are being studied in a Spanish classroom. Studies show that students who feel that there is a positive attitude and interest in their background will be more motivated to achieve higher grades.

### Which Language?

Write out a box of words in English, Spanish and other languages of the students in the class. Individually or working in pairs students can put the words into the 3 language columns.

Language Box:

giraff	leon	tigre	dog	mono	cow	caballo
Kot	lion	chien	horse	gato	giraffe	
Krowa	lejon	cat	Tygrys	perro	KiHb	
	tiger	monkey	Matpa	vaca	jirafa	

Answers:

English	Spanish	Another language
lion	leon	lejon (Swedish)
giraffe	jirafa	giraff (Swedish)
tiger	tigre	Tygrys (Polish)
dog	perro	chien (French)
monkey	mono	Matpa (Polish)
cow	vaca	Krowa (Polish)
cat	gato	Kot (Polish)
horse	caballo	KiHb (Ukranian)

This is a fun exercise that can be easily adapted to the difficulty level of the class and to the vocabulary or language structures being studied. The objective

**CULTURE REFERS TO THE CUSTOMS, ARTS, SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF A PARTICULAR NATION, PEOPLE, OR OTHER SOCIAL GROUP**

is for the learners to review their English while becoming aware of some of the similarities (or differences) between languages. The students themselves can prepare the language boxes as well. Remember that just because a student is Chinese

or Bulgarian he/she may not speak or write the language.

### Tell your own story-box

A collage is made in a shoe box with magazine cut outs and photos to describe the individuals likes, hobbies and favourite things. A few "favourite" items can be placed inside the box. We can learn something about each other in this activity as well as learning about our ideas of identity as we proceed to express ourselves with this box. Often the result is that we have a lot in common! The boxes can be displayed in an exhibition for other classes to visit.

### Heroes

To truly be part of a culture, ethnic minorities must see themselves mirrored in the society. They should see their achievements, contributions and historical presence reflected in museums, archives galleries and school textbooks.

Students can be asked to define a hero or icon and then do a project on this personality. Another variation is for the teacher to look for heroes from different countries. A writing frame can be used to help students develop their writing skills.

### A World Map

Students research their family background and mark

their ancestors birthplace on the world map in the classroom- it is interesting to see how many places we are from and how most of us in fact are immigrants.

## The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Using this simplified version students can review these concepts while reviewing English structures. To warm up, in groups, students can be asked to write 10 human rights. Since secondary students tend to want to suggest "absurd" rights (no school etc) I usually have them write 5 serious rights and 5 silly rights. They then can check to see which of the rights that they suggested are in the Declaration of Human Rights. Here are some more exercises:

***There are some mistakes in the first 10 rights. See if you can find them.***

1. We are not all born free. We all have our own thoughts and ideas. Se shouldn't all be treated in the same way.
2. These rights belong to nobody, whether we are rich or poor, whatever country we live in, what sex or what colour we are, what language we speak, what we think or what we believe.
3. We all have the right to life, and to live in freedom and danger.
4. Nobody has any right to make us a slave. We can make anyone else our slave.
5. Everyone has any right to hurt us or to torture us.
6. We don't all have the same right to use the law.
7. The law is not the same for everyone. It must treat us all fairly.
8. We can't all ask for the law to help us when we are not treated fairly.
9. Everybody has the right to put us in prison without a good reason, to keep us there or to send us away from our country.
10. If we are put on trial, this should be in private. The people who try us should not let anyone tell them what to do.

***Two of the next ten rights are false. Can you find them.***

11. Nobody should be blamed for doing something until it is proved that they did it. If people say we did something bad we have the right to show this was not true. Nobody should punish us for something thaty we

did not do, or for doing something which was not against the law when we did it.

12. Nobody should try to harm our good name. Nobody has the right to come into our home, open our letters, or bother us or our family without a good reason.

13. We all have the right to go where we want to in our own country and to travel abroad as we wish.

14. If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we don't have the right to run away to another country to be safe.

15. We all have the right to belong to a country.

16. every grown up has the right to marry and have a family if they wantg to. Men and women have the same rights when they are married, and when they are separated.

17. Everyone has the right to own things or share them. Nobody should take our things from us without a good reason.

18. We can't believe in what we want to believe, we can't have a religion, or change it if we want.

19. We all have the right to make up our own minds, to think what we like, to say what we think, and to share our ideas with other people wherever they live, through books, radio, television and in other ways.

20. We all have the right to meet our friends and to work together in peace to defend our rights. Nobody can make us join a group if we don't want to.

***Fill in the blanks with one of these words:***

***enjoy, clothing, government, home, leaders, relax, primary, parents, order, protect, job, freedoms***

21. We all have the right to take part in the \_\_\_\_\_ of our country. Every grown up should be allowed to choose their own \_\_\_\_\_ from time to time and should have a vote which should be made in secret.

22. We all have the right to a \_\_\_\_\_, to have enough money to live on and medical help if we are ill. We should all be allowed to enjoy music, art, craft, sport and to make use of our skills.

23. Every grown up has the tight to a \_\_\_\_\_, to get a fair wage for their work, and to join a trade union.

24. We all have the right to rest from work and \_\_\_\_\_.

25. We all have the right to a good life, with enough food, \_\_\_\_\_, housing, and healthcare. Mothers and children, people without work, old and disabled people all have the right to help.



26 We have the right to education, and to finish \_\_\_\_\_ school, which should be free. We should be able to learn a career, or to make use of all our skills. We should learn about the United Nations and about how to get on with other people and respect their rights. Our \_\_\_\_\_ have the right to choose how and what we will learn.

27. We all have the right to our own way of life, and to \_\_\_\_\_ the good things that science and learning bring.

28. We have the right to peace and \_\_\_\_\_ so we can all enjoy rights and freedoms in our own country and all over the world.

29. We have a duty to other people, and should \_\_\_\_\_ their rights and freedoms.

30. Nobody can take away these rights and \_\_\_\_\_ from us.

dent can do. Don't call on them to perform alone or above their level of competence.

2. Pronounce newcomer's name correctly. Find out how to say the name and which part is the first name, which part is the last name. Write the name on the board (with phonetic version if necessary to help students.) Don't make jokes about the name.

If a behavior seems to be unwarranted, bizarre, rude, or in some way unexpected, try to see if this is a sign of cultural misunderstanding. Of course we can't know everything about all of the various cultures but by being aware of how much culture affects learning and behavior we can have interest and patience and in some cases compassion. We must remember not to interpret the behavior through the eyes of our own culture.

### A word about culture shock

Many students have been separated from family members, friends, school, their language and their culture. It is natural that the experience is confusing. They are in a strange place and have lost the power to communicate. Even the family may not be able to help as they too do not know what to expect.

There are 4 stages of culture shock:

1. Euphoria and excitement
2. Culture shock: feelings of anger, hostility and frustration.
3. Gradual recovery-the child gets used to surroundings and begins to feel comfortable.
4. Acceptance of new culture.

### Tips to making a student feel welcome

You can provide help and support by:

1. Focusing on the positive. Praise what the stu-

**ENGLISH BECOMES  
MORE AND MORE  
UNIVERSAL  
EACH DAY**

in Paris suburbs in response to the accidental deaths of two teenagers, Zyed Benna and Bouna Trarore. The youths responsible for the nightly riots state that their

rage is against "a system that excludes them from jobs, opportunities and a sense of identity."

As teachers we may feel powerless to find solutions to this social unrest. The answers are indeed complex. I suggest only that we do our best to welcome all our stu-

**WE MUST REMEMBER  
NOT TO INTERPRET  
THE BEHAVIOR  
THROUGH THE EYES  
OF OUR OWN  
CULTURE.**

dents and allow them the opportunity to explore and discover their social identities in order that they gain a sense of belonging. I hope that some of these activities offered here will be of help and I would be interested in knowing how you have used and adapted them to your classroom.

**APAC-ELT  
CONVENTION**

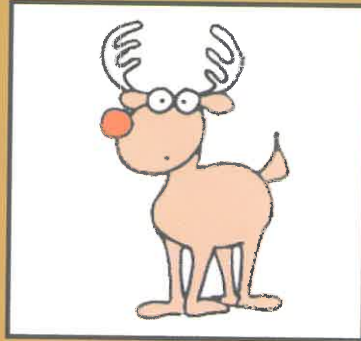
**2007**  
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# IPA: English theatre in education



Little Red



Rudolph



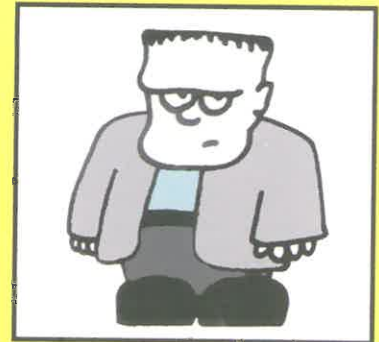
Robin Hood



Snow White



Tarzan



Frankenstein



A Christmas Carol



The Phantom  
of the Opera



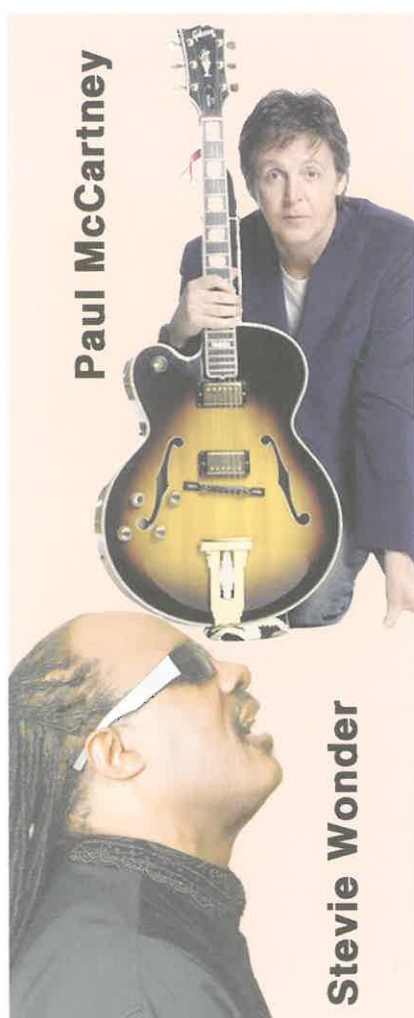
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## EBONY AND IVORY

by Alicia Gala



Working with songs can be very enjoyable. It is more enjoyable, though, if you can get this song through a video-clip and exploit the images it offers. One old song, but a very beautiful one, is “Ebony and Ivory”, by Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder. It is a song where we, as teachers, can design activities related to contents of concepts, procedures and attitudes. I designed some of these activities, and my students in the 1st year of ESO really enjoyed them. I also used this song with students in the last year of Primary and it was successful. The video-clip was recorded off of MTV, in a programme called “Hey, watch this!”<sup>1</sup>. In “Ebony and Ivory” the concepts worked on are the musical instruments, and other vocabulary. The procedures refer to comprehension (say if some sentences are true or false, put events in order). Finally, the attitudes have to do with positive words that students can associate with the video-clip when watching it. Editors’ note: This article contained a link to the video on internet, but the video has been removed from that web site. Interested teachers will have to search for the video themselves. We also suggest recording 3- or 5-hour blocks of videos from channels like MTV twice a year and creating your own personal archive. You’re likely to net a good number of popular videos through this kind of regular trawling.

<sup>1</sup> Editors’ note: This article contained a link to the video on internet, but the video has been removed from that web site. Interested teachers will have to search for it themselves. Amazon.com or e-bay may be good places to start. We also suggest recording 3- or 5-hour blocks of videos from channels like MTV twice or three times a year and creating your own personal archive. You’re likely to net a good number of popular videos through this kind of regular trawling.

ENGLISH PHILOLOGY DEGREE (1994-98). MASTER IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, WHICH WAS ORGANISED BY “THE AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE” AND ROVIRA I VIRGILI UNIVERSITY. I AM A SECONDARY ENGLISH TEACHER. I’VE TAUGHT FOR EDUCACIÓ SINCE 2002 IN DIFFERENT INSTITUTES: L’ARBOÇ, TORREDEMBARRA, PONS D’ICART AND COMTE DE RIUS (IN TARRAGONA). I’VE BEEN TEACHING ENGLISH IN GROUPS OF 25-30 STUDENTS AND ALSO REDUCED GROUPS OF 8-12 STUDENTS, WHICH WERE CONSIDERED DIVERSITY GROUPS. BEFORE STARTING IN EDUCACIÓ, I TAUGHT ENGLISH IN A PRIVATE ENGLISH ACADEMY CALLED BILL’S ENGLISH SCHOOL TO STUDENTS OF 4 UP TO 12 YEARS OLD.

**EBONY AND IVORY**

(Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder)

A) Put the events in order:

- \_\_\_ Paul walks along the piano keyboard.
- \_\_\_ Stevie claps his hands, laughing.
- \_\_\_ Paul opens the white curtain and fresh air comes into the room.
- \_\_\_ Stevie, Paul and other musicians play different instruments.
- \_\_\_ Two unknown people shake hands for a second time.
- \_\_\_ There are a lot of colours illuminating the musicians.

B) True or false?

When Paul and Stevie are sitting down in front of the piano...

1. Stevie is wearing a black shirt and a white waistcoat.
2. Paul is wearing a white shirt and a black waistcoat.
3. Paul is wearing a gold chain around his neck.
4. Stevie has got long, straight, fair hair.
5. Paul has got short, curly, black hair.
6. Stevie has got a moustache and is wearing glasses.

The first time they are sitting down on a giant piano keyboard...

1. Stevie is wearing black boots.
2. Paul is wearing white shoes.
3. Stevie is wearing a golden watch on his right wrist.
4. Paul is wearing a white jacket and a black shirt.
5. Stevie is wearing a white jacket and a black shirt.

C) Can you remember the instruments in the video? Put them into the correct column:

Electric guitar, flute, maracas, xylophone, electric piano, drums, tambourine, violin, classical guitar, clarinet, saxophone, bagpipes, cello, triangle.

🎵	🎵



**Ebony and Ivory  
By Paul McCartney**

Ebony and ivory live together in perfect harmony  
Side by side on my piano keyboard, oh lord, why don't we?

We all know that people are the same where ever we go  
There is good and bad in ev'ryone,  
We learn to live, we learn to give  
Each other what we need to survive, together alive.

Ebony and ivory live together in perfect harmony  
Side by side on my piano keyboard, oh lord why don't we?

Ebony, ivory living in perfect harmony  
Ebony, ivory, ooh

We all know that people are the same where ever we go  
There is good and bad in ev'ryone,  
We learn to live, we learn to give  
Each other what we need to survive together alive.

Ebony and ivory live together in perfect harmony  
Side by side on my piano keyboard, oh lord why don't we?

Ebony, ivory living in perfect harmony (repeat and fade)

D) The second time they are on a giant keyboard...

- What is Paul doing?
- What is he wearing?
- What is Stevie doing?
- What is he wearing?

E) Circle the words that you associate with this video clip:

HARMONY	VIOLENCE	WAR	PEACE
MAKE ENEMIES	TOLERANCE	EQUALITY	
HATE	FRIENDSHIP	RESPECT	



...ras de  
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emplos  
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2000.

- 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.



EW-S2000

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- New Oxford Thesaurus of English (sinónimos y antónimos).
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## MAKING THE MOST OF SET READINGS: WORKING WITH NICK HORNBY'S *About a Boy*

SET READINGS ARE USUALLY LINKED TO HOMEWORK AND STUDENTS OFTEN CONSIDER THEM BORING. HOWEVER, WE CAN ORGANISE CLASS WORK SO THAT DEALING WITH A NOVEL IS ENRICHING AND ENGAGING. WE CAN FOSTER STUDENT COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION AND WE CAN INTEGRATE CULTURE AND IT IN OUR DAILY CLASSROOM PRACTICE. ABOUT A BOY, BY NICK HORNBY, CAN SERVE THESE PURPOSES PRETTY WELL.

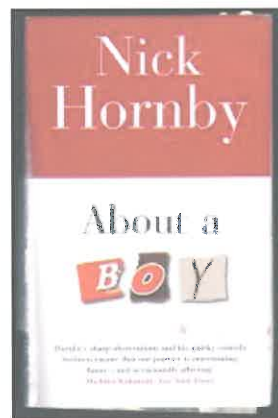
by Fernando Romeu

Many students usually associate set readings with tests and assignments. Reading a book in class does not always mean enjoying literature. Rather, it is often just more homework.

Literature is one great way to introduce students to the culture and the society which the language they are studying belongs to. Reading fiction should be a pleasure, rather than a bore or a problem.

Of course, a set reading is usually chosen by the teacher and therefore imposed, to a certain extent. However, by opting for a book for all the class, we can foster discussion on a common set of topics, we can create a shared universe. If we select a book which most people like, students are very likely to continue reading in the future.

After deciding which book to read, it is very important to have in mind how we are going to deal with it in class. Whereas suggested tasks are often based on individual reading comprehension and writing exercises, it may be much more beneficial, enjoyable and productive to tackle the different questions and language aspects raised by the book in group tasks during the class. This way, a set reading is not just extra homework, but one task among many others, possibly amusing and, of course, directly related to



the syllabus of the course. If group and class work is to be carried out, we should choose a book which allows us to set up different kinds of tasks and which catches the students' attention. *About a Boy*, by Nick Hornby, is probably a sure bet for an advanced-level classroom. The activities described in this paper can also be put into practice with intermediate students, since there is a "Penguin reader" edition adapted to this level.

*About a Boy* was first published in 1998 and it was the second novel by Nick Hornby, who is a best-selling author nowadays. The book shows us how two apparently very different lives are actually quite similar and end up merging. The two main characters in the book are Marcus and Will. Marcus is a twelve-year-old boy who is a bit strange: he listens to music from the sixties, looks after his mum and does not know anything about fashionable trainers or fashionable music groups. He is rejected and bullied by his schoolmates and seems not to know how to be a

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kid. Will, however, is 36 and does not know how to be an adult. He lives off the royalties of a song written by his father and acts like a teenager, reading magazines, dating women just for sex and rejecting any kind of commitment to anything. So Marcus will have to help Will to grow up and Will will have to teach Marcus how to behave like a teenager.

The book was adapted for the silver screen by the Weitz brothers and it became quite popular. Hugh Grant, Toni Collette and Rachel Weisz are the main stars in this Hollywood film which follows the plot of the novel except for the end.

Both the book and the film contain passages about some hot issues in today's western societies, such as education, school life, sports, mono-parental families, vegetarianism, psychological problems and support groups. The fact that all these topics pervade the story makes Hornby's work a great resource for fostering discussion in the class.

Once we have decided to work with the book, we should devise the strategy to follow. A good idea is to ask students to just read it first, with no tasks in sight. Once they finish, the teacher can put forward a proposal to work in groups. Each group will deal with a different aspect of the book.

Basically, we can set up three groups: one will carry out tasks related to the language in the book, another one will work with the references to social and cultural issues and the last one will devote their efforts to commenting on quotes about the characters in *About a Boy*.



Group work will be integrated in regular classes and will probably take up about twenty minutes per session. The teacher will give a worksheet to every group at the beginning of the class. This worksheet will contain some quotes from the book and starting points for work or debate.

Eight sessions will be needed to complete the tasks assigned to each group, which will be organised this way:

**LANGUAGE GROUP:** their worksheet contains sentences and excerpts with words and expressions which may be worth looking up in order to understand the contents of the book or which may be interesting to comment on because they exemplify or relate to vocabulary and grammar aspects explained during the course. Students thus look up the meanings of words and expressions, try to find synonyms and are invited to flick through reference books such as grammar and vocabulary books in order to find extra practice on what they have been working on. Items covered include, among others, multi-word verbs, idioms, negative inversion and slang.

An example of a task for this group would be:

Please read page 7 and try to understand the following passage:

"How are you, anyway, Chris?  
Oh, you know. A bit washed out.  
*Been burning the candle at both ends?*"

*Once you've deciphered what the expressions in italics mean, try to prepare exercises for your classmates. You may think about idioms or word lists related to the topic of stress. Any other ideas will be welcome.*

**CULTURE GROUP:** They look up and summarise information about socio-cultural references in the book, often obtaining images and other multimedia resources. *About a Boy* contains a wealth of examples of typical places in London, popular TV programmes, magazines and music heroes, as well as discussions on social issues such as family life or healthy eating. Understanding cultural references enriches comprehension of plot and characters and helps illustrate aspects of life in the UK nowadays.

This is a sample of some tasks:

Read the following passages in context and try to find the information requested.

“Once, years ago, when he was a kid, he told a schoolfriend (having first ascertained that he was not a C.S. Lewis fan) that it was possible to walk through the back of his wardrobe into a different world (...)” (page 46)

*Try to find information about The Chronicles of Narnia. Why was it important to ascertain that his friend was not a C.S. Lewis fan?*

“Will couldn't get a very clear sense of Ellie from Marcus's descriptions — he always ended up with the impression of an angry ball of black-lipsticked motion, an unimaginable cross between Siouxsie of the Banshees and the Roadrunner — but he could picture her well enough to see that Ellie and Rachel would not pass as twins.” (page 191)

*Try to get a picture of Siouxsie of the Banshees and of Roadrunner, just to imagine what Will thought Ellie would be like.*

**CHARACTERS GROUP:** Their work hardly involves reference materials. Rather, they have to think and speak. Their worksheets contain quotations which show what characters look like, think and do. The group's task is to talk about each excerpt, give their points of view on the topics which arise from the quotations and prepare questions and cues for class debate.

One of these exercises on quotations can be:

Please read the following passage and share your thoughts about it. You may like to think and talk about a recent and worrying phenomenon: bullying at school.

“That's what happened with Nicky and Mark: he had made them visible, he had turned them into targets, and if he was any kind of a friend at all he'd take himself well away from them. It's just that he had nowhere else to go.” (page 30)

In order to develop these tasks in class, we need to prepare some material. It is very important to have at least one computer with an Internet connection which students can access easily. Some classrooms already have desktop computers installed. If we do not have one, we can try to solve the problem by using a laptop.

We will also need dictionaries and advanced-level grammar and vocabulary practice books, so that the language group can select supplementary activities for their partners. Of course, we can encourage students to surf the Net in order to find extra practice and examples for the language items highlighted.

Finally, it can be a good idea to guide the culture group as they try to find information on the Internet, because sometimes finding information can be time-consuming and we should try to achieve that all groups finish their tasks more or less at the same time. Extensive use of Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org>) is advisable, along with a collection of links for the most difficult tasks. Some of these links can be found at <http://www.xtec.cat/~fromeu/english/cinque/index.htm#boy>.

Guiding the characters group does not require material resources, but we should be careful, because sometimes discussions tend to revolve around a hot topic and other possible ideas related to the quote in the worksheet are missed out. We should try to present as many viewpoints as possible, so that the class discussion ensuing from the group work suits as many students as possible.

By carrying out the above-mentioned tasks and sharing the outcome, students cover quite a wide range of skills and concepts. If one book is just read at home and discussed in class for one or two sessions, very few skills and concepts are dealt with. However, group work inside the class helps students acquire and develop many skills, concepts and values, some of which are listed below:

- Use of many kinds of reference materials, such as books, websites and magazines.
- Peer assessment.
- Popular culture: places in London, popular TV programmes in the UK, cultural icons, among others.
- Oral descriptions, explanatory texts and arguments.
- Vocabulary acquisition.
- Slang and non-colloquial forms of language.
- Strategies for learner autonomy and independence.



- Negative inversion.
- Word formation.
- Multi-word verbs.
- Collocations.
- Idioms.
- Colloquial lexis.

One of the most positive aspects of group work is that students can benefit from each other's efforts and speak in English extensively and fluently. Peer assessment ensures improvement in accuracy and group work fosters tolerance and diversity of ideas and viewpoints.

Also, reading *About a Boy* and working with it in class helps integrate culture and the use of IT into the dynamics of everyday classroom life. Both things are usually difficult to connect with the syllabus (in spite of the fact that they are part of it). Hornby's work contains lots of cultural references worth commenting on and the Internet is a wonderful source of authentic material to exemplify the cultural aspects in the novel.

Nevertheless, the use of IT is not limited to information searches. Students can use electronic and online dictionaries to look up words or to listen to how they are pronounced. They can post their messages about topics in the book in the class forum, which is accessible only to class members and which usually hosts lively discussions, initiated both by the teacher and students. They can even use a shared workspace to post the outcome of their work and make it available to everyone in the class. Finally, they can try to solve a webquest on the book.

As for culture, at least the following topics are discussed: music, food, eating out and entertainment, politics, TV, places and neighbourhoods in London, football, school life and bullying, Christmas traditions, books, English press and intertextuality.

As groups find information and discuss ideas, they write down what they have produced in order to share it with their classmates later on. The language group will create a language pack with references, explanations and activities about the language in the novel. They will not just hand in the package to their partners, they will also explain what they have found out and the exercises they have prepared. The culture group is quite likely to end up with a slideshow illustrating references to books, magazines, TV characters and many other cultural references. The characters group, however, will foster a lively discussion in class about what they have

been dealing with. Group work ensures the practice of reading and listening and also of writing and speaking.

Once students have finished thinking and talking about the novel, they can relax by watching the film and checking if what they imagined meets what the Weitz brothers portrayed. Also, they can become one of the characters in the book by solving the webquest which can be found at <http://www.xtec.cat/~fromeu/aboutaboy/index.html>.

### Conclusion

After reading this paper one may think that students end up working much more than if they deal with the book as is traditionally done. This is true. However, working in groups helps student relax by talking to their partners and expressing their opinions and viewpoints (even the language group has to decide on exercises to prepare for their partners, on what resources to use and so on). Besides, it makes the class not so teacher-centred and helps students become authors of class materials and temporary leaders of the class. Finally, by analyzing aspects of the book they gain new insight into a work which may initially be a bit hard to understand. Their understanding of the book is not limited to grasping the plot. Rather, it is widened by learning about the whole universe in the book, learning about language they did not previously know and discussing ideas and interpretation of passages, characters' actions and plot. Basically, they get an English universe in English and make it their own.

Of course, the ideas mentioned in this paper can be applied to several other recently-published books, whether they be by the same author (for example, *High Fidelity*) or by other authors who write about everyday life in English-speaking contexts.





## eTWINNING y COMPETENCIAS CLAVE

by Núria Salvador

El objetivo de este artículo es analizar el papel de la acción eTwinning<sup>1</sup> de la Comisión Europea en la adquisición de las competencias clave para el aprendizaje a lo largo de toda la vida. Para hacer esto tomamos como referencia el documento *Recomendaciones del Parlamento y del Consejo sobre las competencias clave para el aprendizaje permanente*<sup>2</sup>, elaborado por estos organismos europeos

### Las competencias clave

Ese documento define competencia como “Una combinación de conocimientos, capacidades y actitudes adecuadas al contexto. Las competencias clave son aquellas que todas las personas precisan para su realización y desarrollo personales, así como la ciudadanía activa, la inclusión social y el empleo. Al término de la educación y las formaciones iniciales, los jóvenes deben haber desarrollado las competencias clave en la medida necesaria para prepararlos para la vida adulta y deben seguir desarrollándolas, manteniéndolas y poniéndolas al día en el contexto del aprendizaje permanente.”

Tradicionalmente, las competencias clave eran la

“Capacidad de leer y escribir y las competencias mínimas de aritmética elemental”, pero en la nueva sociedad del conocimiento éstas han aumentado porque:

- el mundo del trabajo se ve expuesto a cambios rápidos y frecuentes
- las nuevas tecnologías se han incorporado a la vida cotidiana y laboral
- nuevos enfoques en la organización de empresas obligan a sus empleados a actualizar aptitudes específicas inherentes a su puesto de trabajo y a adquirir competencias genéricas que les permitan adaptarse al cambio

Para seguir siendo competitivas las empresas europeas necesitan flexibilizar sus estructuras rápidamente para convertirse en organizaciones que aprenden a través del trabajo en equipo, esforzándose por alcanzar la reducción de los niveles jerárquicos, la cesión de responsabilidades y la creciente exigencia de una mayor polivalencia. Si tenemos que de preparar a los jóvenes para este mundo el aula debe formar a los alumnos para que puedan trabajar sin problemas en este tipo de organizaciones, adoptando enfoques que nada tienen que ver con la clase magistral decimonónica.

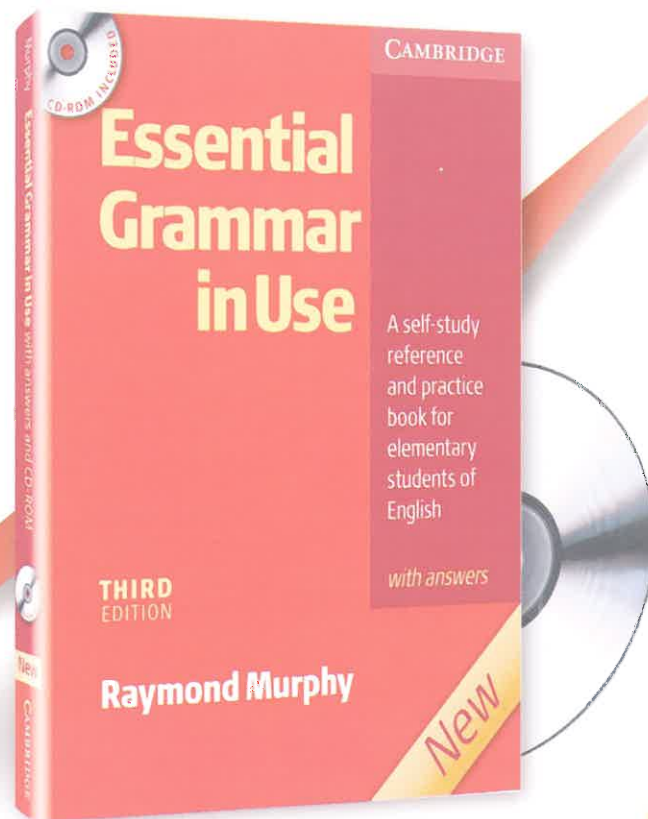
<sup>1</sup> <http://www.etwinning.net>

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/keyrec\\_es.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/keyrec_es.pdf)

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Este interesante documento identifica ocho competencias clave en la nueva sociedad del conocimiento:

- comunicación en lengua propia
- comunicación en lenguas extranjeras
- competencia matemática y competencias básicas en ciencia y tecnología
- competencia digital
- aprender a aprender
- competencias interpersonales, interculturales y sociales y competencia cívica
- espíritu de empresa
- expresión cultural

Trabajar todas ellas supone una apuesta a favor de la diversificación de actividades de aprendizaje y evaluación, y un gran esfuerzo de coordinación y aglutinación entre docentes, dado que las competencias clave se pueden trabajar desde diferentes asignaturas.

Se trata, sin duda, de un avance hacia una educación más inclusiva y centrada en las necesidades de una sociedad del conocimiento. Sin embargo, el problema evidente que se plantea es cómo hacerlo, y en este sentido estamos todavía lejos de trabajar por y para la adquisición plena de las nuevas competencias clave en su globalidad, y de utilizar las herramientas necesarias para medir su adquisición convenientemente, lo que no resulta fácil dado que se necesita mucho tiempo para mejorar habilidades cognitivas o emocionales específicas, por no hablar de actitudes y conductas.

sición de las competencias clave, dado que parecen ofrecer a los alumnos, los profesores y los centros las condiciones adecuadas para desarrollarlas, proporcionando además un marco institucional que asesora y premia a los centros, aglutina el esfuerzo colectivo y da visibilidad al trabajo realizado.

### eTwinning

**eTwinning** es una iniciativa de la Comisión Europea con el objetivo de hermanar centros europeos de forma virtual mediante el uso de las TIC. Consta de un Servicio Central de Apoyo<sup>3</sup>, con sede en Bruselas y de Servicios Nacionales de Apoyo en cada uno de los países participantes en la acción<sup>4</sup>. El Servicio Central de Apoyo es el encargado de dar coherencia a la acción y de coordinar un portal en 21 lenguas que proporciona las herramientas necesarias para encontrar socios (el Escritorio) y para gestionar un proyecto (el entorno virtual de aprendizaje “TwinSpace”). Ofrece asesoramiento, formación y apoyo para docentes, tanto pedagógico como técnico, y da visibilidad y reconocimiento a su trabajo. Los servicios Nacionales de Apoyo realizan una labor paralela a nivel nacional y aportan contenido al portal central. El número de centros inscrito supera los 21.000 al iniciarse diciembre.

<http://www.etwinning.net>

En esta situación, iniciativas como eTwinning son sin duda muy interesantes en el camino hacia la adqui-

Una vez esta acción ha contado con el respaldo de los centros, es necesario determinar cualitativa y

<sup>3</sup> European Schoolnet <http://www.etwinning.net>

<sup>4</sup> El servicio Nacional de Apoyo español es el CNICE, Centro Nacional de Información y Comunicación Educativa <http://etwinning.cnice.mec.es>

cuantitativamente si los hermanamientos escolares que este proyecto promueve suponen o no una mejora en la adquisición de las competencias clave que la Comisión Europea ha identificado. A falta de esta validación, que no ha podido realizarse dado que la acción es todavía muy joven, eTwinning parece promover una metodología adecuada para ello, dado que implica a los alumnos en un trabajo por tareas en el que se dan una serie de enfoques pedagógicos como el pensamiento crítico, la creatividad, la capacidad de iniciativa, la resolución de problemas, la evaluación del riesgo, la toma de decisiones y la gestión constructiva de los sentimientos. Todos estos enfoques pedagógicos fomentan la adquisición de las ocho competencias clave y se trabajan en una metodología por proyectos, basada en postulados constructivistas.

**eTwinning** fomenta que los alumnos trabajen de forma cooperativa, tanto en el aula como con su centro hermanado, construyendo su propio conocimiento no solo en su comunicación con el profesor, sino a través de la colaboración con compañeros, tanto en el aula como a muchos kilómetros de distancia. De este modo, permite que los alumnos se inicien el “Aprendizaje Combinado” o “Blended Learning” que es la modalidad de enseñanza en la cual el tutor combina el rol presencial con el rol a distancia.

Aprovechando la circunstancia de que los alumnos tienden a trabajar más cuando saben que otros compañeros van a ver su trabajo, se inicia un proceso en el que éstos adquieren nuevos valores y modos de comportarse en el aula, así como una nueva identidad. En una clase mucho más social y abierta aprenden los unos de los otros, resuelven problemas reales, toman consciencia de sus propias carencias y habilidades y desarrollan su capacidad de trabajar en equipo, de expresarse, de negociar y liderar, mientras crean nuevos vínculos entre ellos y aprenden a respetarse.

Finalmente, este elemento social contribuye a que las clases sean, frecuentemente, más divertidas. Si los alumnos se divierten aprendiendo estamos fomentando su deseo de ampliar y profundizar en sus conocimientos y aumentando su capacidad de auto-motivación frente a nuevos retos de aprendizaje.

### Las competencias claves y eTwinning

Pasaremos ahora a analizar cada una de las ocho competencias clave que el documento *Recomenda-*

*ciones del Parlamento y del Consejo sobre las competencias clave para el aprendizaje permanente* identifica, ofreciendo una definición de las mismas y una breve explicación de lo que supone adquirirlas, basada en el citado documento. Seguidamente se analizará cómo puede contribuir eTwinning a la adquisición de cada una de ellas, ofreciendo ejemplos prácticos para cada caso.

### 1.- Competencias lingüísticas en la lengua propia

Podemos definir esta competencia como la capacidad de expresar e interpretar pensamientos, sentimientos y hechos de forma oral y escrita e interactuar lingüísticamente de una manera adecuada.

Uno de los objetivos primordiales de la educación es, sin duda, enseñar a que los alumnos sean capaces de comunicar lo que saben o piensan en diferentes situaciones. Para dominar esta competencia los alumnos precisan el vocabulario, gramática funcional y funciones del lenguaje necesarios para expresarse correctamente en su lengua vehicular; también han de ser capaces de distinguir y saber utilizar los diferentes tipos de interacción verbal, estilos y registros de la lengua. Poseer esta competencia implica la habilidad de comunicarse adecuadamente en función del contexto.

**eTwinning** fomenta la comunicación en lengua propia, y en este sentido, contribuye a la adquisición de esta competencia:

- aplicando una pedagogía participativa y el trabajo en grupos
- promoviendo la expresión oral y escrita en el aula
- creando situaciones en las que los alumnos han de formular y expresar argumentos de una forma convincente y adecuada al contexto
- haciendo que los alumnos recopilen y procesen información en colaboración con otros alumnos
- ofreciendo una nueva visión para el aprendizaje de la lengua propia, en el contexto de una realidad europea multilingüe
- mostrando la importancia de la lengua propia a partir del interés que esta despierta en otros países en un contexto multilingüe europeo
- promoviendo técnicas de conversación, alegación, indagación, debate, discusión y escucha activa

Un ejemplo de un **proyecto eTwinning** en el que podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia <sup>5</sup>:



Talking through time (Primaria)



<http://www.ww2inthehighlands.co.uk/etwinning/index.htm>

## 2.- Competencias lingüísticas en lenguas extranjeras

Estas competencias se refieren a la habilidad de comprender, expresar e interpretar pensamientos, sentimientos y hechos de forma oral y escrita en una determinada serie de contextos sociales en una lengua no propia.

Las competencias lingüísticas en lenguas extranjeras suponen dotar a los alumnos del vocabulario, gramática funcional y funciones del lenguaje necesarios para expresarse en una lengua extranjera; también implican conocer las convenciones sociales, los aspectos culturales y la diversidad lingüística en otras sociedades.

Que **eTwinning** resulta especialmente apropiado para desarrollar competencias lingüísticas necesita poca argumentación. En el momento en que alumnos de diferentes países dentro del rico contexto lingüístico europeo inician un hermanamiento, la implicación de los departamentos de lenguas extranjeras parece lógica, al ofrecer una magnífica oportunidad para la comunicación real en lengua extranjera.

La pedagogía participativa de eTwinning ayuda a que los alumnos se comuniquen en lengua extranjera por lo que ya hemos explicado en el apartado anterior, pero eTwinning contribuye además específicamente a esta competencia:

- posibilitando una comunicación real con alumnos en segundas lenguas
- ofreciéndoles la oportunidad de apreciar las diferencias culturales y la diversidad europea
- despertando su curiosidad por otras lenguas y por la comunicación intercultural

Vale la pena comentar, sin embargo, que cuando en los centros se tiende a pensar que los proyectos europeos “corresponden” a los departamentos de lenguas extranjeras se están de hecho limitando las posibilidades reales que eTwinning puede ofrecer en otras asignaturas. Se puede iniciar un proyecto eTwinning desde otras materias. Aunque la lengua de comunicación puede suponer un obstáculo para iniciar hermanamientos con otros países de Europa, éste no es en ningún caso un escollo insalvable. Hay muchas lenguas en Europa que son muy similares al castellano, catalán y gallego (rumano, italiano, portugués)<sup>6</sup>, muchas materias utilizan lenguajes universales que precisan poca traducción (educación física, matemáticas, visual y plástica) y muchos proyectos pueden utilizar las mismas fuentes en diferentes idiomas (traducciones de obras literarias o paginas web en diferentes lenguas) o se pueden llevar a cabo con la ayuda de pequeñas traducciones que resuman las conclusiones de los proyectos (proyectos medio-ambientales, o de valores). La fotografía y el video también se pueden usar en muchos proyectos sin necesidad de soporte lingüístico (hermanamientos en preescolar o de NEE).

<sup>6</sup> Los profesores vascos tienen la posibilidad de hermanarse, en vasco, con profesores del país vasco francés.

Un ejemplo de un **proyecto eTwinning** en el que podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia.

básicas y la comprensión de los términos y conceptos matemáticos esenciales para poder aplicarlos a situaciones de la vida real.

**Drawing our country (Primaria)**



Here I am travelling abroad.  
Drawing by Linnea



Here I am fishing  
Drawing by Konsta



Here I am taking care of my turtle.  
Drawing by Tomi

**Finnish Animals, värihiitutyö**



Hare  
It is brown in summer and white in winter.  
It has long ears.  
It lives in forests.  
It eats grass in summer.



Goldfinch  
It is black, red and grey and it is 17 cm long. It lives in forests in summer and near houses in winter.  
It eats bugs and seeds.



Great tit  
It is a bird. Its breast is yellow and it is 15 cm long.  
It lives in forests.  
It eats bugs and seeds.

<http://www.ouka.fi/koulut/myllyoja/koulusivut/kuvagalleria.htm>

La ciencia y la tecnología han de servir para ayudarnos a alcanzar una vida mejor y más sostenible, en equilibrio con los demás y con la naturaleza. En ciencia y tecnología, trabajar esta competencia supone garantizar que los alumnos comprenden los principios básicos de la naturaleza, los principios y métodos científicos fundamentales, los productos y procesos tec-

**3.- Competencia matemática y competencias básicas en ciencia y tecnología**

La competencia matemática implica la habilidad de usar sumas, restas, multiplicaciones, divisiones y fracciones en el cálculo mental o escrito con el fin de resolver diversos problemas en situaciones cotidianas. También supone utilizar modos matemáticos de pensamiento (lógico y espacial) y representación (fórmulas, modelos, construcciones, gráficos, diagramas)

La competencia básica en ciencia y tecnología supone la capacidad y voluntad de explicar la naturaleza, planteando preguntas y extrayendo soluciones basadas en pruebas. Por competencia tecnológica se entiende la aplicación de dichas habilidades y procedimientos para responder a los deseos o necesidades humanas. Entraña la comprensión de los cambios causados por la actividad humana y la responsabilidad de cada individuo como ciudadano.

Para mejorar las competencias de los alumnos en matemáticas, es preciso trabajar sus habilidades en números, estructuras, operaciones matemáticas

nológicas, los avances, limitaciones y riesgos de las teorías científicas y las aplicaciones de la tecnología en la sociedad para utilizar y manipular herramientas y máquinas tecnológicas, así como datos científicos, con el fin de alcanzar un objetivo o llegar a una decisión o conclusión basada en pruebas.

**eTwinning** contribuye a la adquisición de la competencia matemática y competencias básicas en ciencia y tecnología entre los alumnos:

- ofreciéndoles una oportunidad de percibir la universalidad de la ciencia
- ayudándoles a entender patrones, estructuras, leyes y procesos
- usando los objetos de aprendizaje disponibles en la red que posibilitan visualizar procesos y experimentos de forma virtual para entender mejor la ciencia y la tecnología.
- introduciendo en las clases de ciencias el elemento cooperativo y social, que contribuye a que los alumnos con más dificultades o menos motivados tengan mayores oportunidades de entender la materia

Un ejemplo de un **proyecto eTwinning** en el que

podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia

**Nature and Human activities** (Secundaria)

ofrecen para fomentar la puesta en común de información y el uso de redes de colaboración para el aprendizaje y la investigación. Dominar esta compe-

IES Alonso de Madrigal, Ávila


IES Alonso de Madrigal, Ávila
Search

**Content**

Information page

Enter editor's office

Users on-line: 1 (0 logged)



**Water.**

According to the Town Hall and after the last snow precipitations, Ávila will have water for, at least, a whole year. But, even so, there will be still restrictions for watering in order to avoid trouble if a dry season happens again. The main dams that provide the town with water: Becerril, Serones and Fuentes Claras have 100% their capacity. Even so, the population is warned to make a sensible use of water and gardens will be watered drop by drop. On the other hand, a consumer organization has recently denounced that the water in Ávila was not drinkable in the year 2,005 because of the big quantity of trihalomethanes. Although the local authorities have denied such a thing, the organization wants to go on doing research and offering the results to the everybody. As a consequence of the news the sale of bottled water has increased a lot.

**Birds as a resource for rural development**

An association in La Moraña, one of the areas in the province, has signed an agreement with the regional authorities to promote the sustainable use of birds as a resource for the rural development. The agreement is part of a Interior Tourism project that wants to promote the natural heritage as a way to attract visitors to our villages, since birdwatching is an activity with a lot of fans in other countries in Europe. The regional authorities will give technical support to make the project a good one and avoid damage to the species. On the other hand, the organization will call for a regional meeting to inform people about the possibilities this kind of actions have as a way to increase the economical resources of the region and as a way to preserve our natural heritage.

**Used oil to be collected by the Town Hall**

The Town Hall has started a pilot plan to study the advantages of collecting the family used oil. Pouring used oil through the family pipes can cause a lot of problems: dirty pipes, rats in the sewage system, pollution in the river. To avoid it, five workers from Down Work, a driver and a coordinator will collect the vegetal used oil from 100 different points in the town during four weeks. The aim of the project is to integrate disabled citizens and collaborate to take care of environment.

[http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/Museo10/index.php?output=FrontPage\(\)](http://ejournal.eduprojects.net/Museo10/index.php?output=FrontPage())

tencia supone utilizar las TIC para el apoyo a la creatividad y la innovación y desarrollar estrategias para evaluar la validez y fiabilidad de la información. La competencia digital permite aplicar los principios éticos necesarios para utilizar las TIC de forma interactiva y la capacidad de analizar las fuentes y ser conscientes de cómo se puede manipular a través de los medios de comunicación.

eTwinning ofrece un marco favorable para que los alumnos adquieran la competencia digital

- promoviendo el uso significativo de las TIC
- fomentando el acceso a servicios basados en Internet para buscar, obtener tratar y compartir información
- evidenciando la necesidad de utilizar y discriminar información de manera crítica y sistemática,

- impulsándoles a que evalúen la relevancia y fiabilidad de las fuentes utilizadas
- animando a que los alumnos produzcan, presenten, comprendan y compartan información compleja usando las TIC
- promoviendo la utilización de las TIC como apoyo al pensamiento crítico, la creatividad y la innovación
- mostrando la necesidad de usar las TIC de forma responsable
- aprovechando las posibilidades lúdicas que las TIC ofrecen

Un ejemplo de un **proyecto eTwinning** en el que podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia

**4.- Competencia digital**

Podemos definir la competencia digital como la capacidad de usar de forma segura y crítica las Tecnologías de la Información (TIC) para el trabajo, el estudio y el ocio. Esta competencia implica la utilización de ordenadores para obtener, evaluar, almacenar, producir, presentar e intercambiar información y comunicarse y participar en redes de colaboración a través de internet.

El alumno adquiere esta competencia cuando conoce la naturaleza, la función y las oportunidades de las TIC y comprende las posibilidades de Internet y la comunicación por medios electrónicos. También supone aprovechar las oportunidades que las TIC



Playing and Learning about Europe through ICT (Infantil)



<http://www.kindergarten-soeding.com/projekte/e-twinning-en.htm>

### 5.- Aprender a aprender

Aprender a aprender es la habilidad de iniciar el aprendizaje y persistir en él, siendo capaz de organizarlo y de gestionar el tiempo y la información eficazmente. Aprender a aprender supone adquirir, procesar y asimilar nuevas destrezas así como buscar orientaciones y hacer uso de ellas. La motivación y la confianza son cruciales para la adquisición de esta competencia.

Es importante que los alumnos se conozcan a sí mismos, sus creencias y sentimientos. Esto se puede hacer mejor y más rápidamente en un aprendizaje entre pares, como el que eTwinning ofrece, dado que es al confrontar nuestras creencias y sentimientos con los de los demás cuando aprendemos a conocernos mejor y reafirmamos o modificamos nuestras creencias y sentimientos. También es importante que los alumnos sean conscientes de sus capacidades y carencias en materia de habilidades y conocimientos. Los alumnos también aprenden a aprender si se promueve la evaluación entre pares, lo que les permite apreciar mejor los criterios que sustentan lo que es un buen trabajo al aplicar dichos criterios a trabajos que no son propios.

Para adquirir esta competencia, los alumnos han de conocer las habilidades y capacidades y cualificaciones necesarias para alcanzar un objetivo determinado. También han de ser capaces de gestionar sus propios estilos de aprendizaje y saber conducir los puntos fuertes y débiles de las propias capacidades y cualificaciones. Finalmente, adquirir esta competencia supone saber aprovechar las oportunidades

de educación y formación disponibles.

La pedagogía de **proyectos eTwinning** pone a los alumnos en situaciones en las que han de aprender a aprender y conocerse mejor como individuos en una sociedad del conocimiento:

- ayudándoles a que adquieran, procesen y asimilen destrezas y capacidades que difícilmente se trabajan en un aula tradicional
- fomentando que gestionen, preserven y evalúen su propio aprendizaje
- incrementando la autonomía y autodisciplina de los alumnos
- promoviendo el trabajo en equipo creando las condiciones para que aprendan de los demás y compartan con ellos lo que han aprendido
- preparándoles para la sociedad del conocimiento, en la que han de seguir aprendiendo y en la que han de adaptarse a unas condiciones que cambian cada vez con mayor velocidad
- impulsando presentaciones efectivas de todo tipo de conocimientos y conceptos, a través de diferentes medios y recursos
- aprendiendo a conocer mejor sus propias habilidades, tanto individuales como en el trabajo en grupo
- poniendo de manifiesto un abanico más amplio de los puntos fuertes y débiles de uno mismo de los que ofrece un aula tradicional

Un Ejemplo de **proyecto eTwinning** en el que podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia:

My Week (Primaria)

The screenshot shows the 'MyWeek' project page. On the left is a 'Menu' with links to 'Opening page', 'Main article', 'eTwinning project "My Week"', 'My class', 'My school', 'My town', 'My Country', 'Free time', 'Traditions', 'The description of the schoolyear', 'Jokes and interesting happenings', 'Dictionary (English - Greece - Estonian)', and 'Pupils write what they think about our project'. The main content area features a large article 'Project "MyWeek"' with a 'Read more >' link. Below it are four smaller articles: 'Easter Traditions in Greece', 'Greek Educational system - Written by Pistikou – Polychronidou', 'Preparation of the poster for our stand etwinning Awards (Linz Austria January 2006)', and 'Special Religious Celebration in Greece before Easter'. Each of these smaller articles includes a 'Read more >' link.

<http://www2.edu.fi/magazinefactory/magazines/projectmyweek/>

**6.- Competencias interpersonales, interculturales y sociales, y competencia cívica**

Estas suponen la capacidad de participar de una manera eficaz y constructiva en la vida social y profesional y ser capaces de resolver conflictos, gracias al conocimiento de conceptos y estructuras sociales y políticas, y al compromiso de participación activa y democrática.

Adquirir las competencias interpersonales, interculturales y sociales y la competencia cívica implica entender los códigos de conducta y los conceptos básicos relativos al individuo, al grupo, a la organización de trabajo, a la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres y la sociedad y la cultura. También supone fomentar la democracia mediante la fijación de objetivos comunes con socios de contextos distintos así como percibir las dimensiones multicultural y socioeconómica de las sociedades europeas. Finalmente, contribuye a alcanzar el bienestar personal y colectivo, comprendiendo cómo las personas pueden obtener un estado de salud físico y mental óptimo.

eTwinning ayuda a que los alumnos mejoren sus com-

petencias interpersonales, interculturales y sociales y sus competencias cívica

- contribuyendo a que se conozcan mejor, al explicar su realidad a compañeros de otros países
- mejorando el conocimiento entre países europeos
- promoviendo la creación de vínculos con alumnos de otros países
- ayudándoles a comprender que algunos comportamientos que dan por supuestos están en realidad ligados a una cultura
- reduciendo sus prejuicios hacia otros países y el rechazo de lo desconocido
- fomentando la toma de decisiones conjuntas desde una base de igualdad reforzando el sentido de pertenencia a la propia localidad descubriendo la importancia de la cortesía, la empatía, la tolerancia y el auto control poniendo de manifiesto la necesidad de participar de forma constructiva en las actividades comunes

Un ejemplo de un proyecto eTwinning en el que podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia

**Itales: Intercambio cultural y matemático** (Secundaria)

## 7.- Espíritu emprendedor

El espíritu emprendedor implica la habilidad de la persona para transformar ideas en actos usando la creatividad, la innovación, la asunción de riesgos y las habilidades para planificar y gestionar proyectos.

El espíritu emprendedor es el motor principal de la innovación, la competitividad y el crecimiento; representa además un vehículo de desarrollo personal que la Unión Europea tiene como objetivo fomentar entre los jóvenes<sup>7</sup>. Adquirir esta competencia supone haber desarrollado las cualidades personales que constituyen

la base del espíritu empresarial, a saber, la creatividad, la iniciativa, la responsabilidad, la capacidad de afrontar riesgos y la independencia, así como comprender el funcionamiento de la economía en líneas generales y las oportunidades y los desafíos que afronta todo empresario u organización. El espíritu

emprendedor implica también ser consciente de la postura ética de las empresas y como éstas pueden ser un impulso positivo mediante, por ejemplo, el

comercio justo o las empresas sociales.

**eTwinning** ofrece una oportunidad para desarrollar el espíritu emprendedor de las alumnos:

- permitiendo orientar el proyecto en los alumnos
- ofreciendo a los alumnos la posibilidad de gestionar los proyectos (planificando, organizando, gestionando, liderando, delegando, analizando, comunicando, difundiendo y evaluando los mismos)
- fomentando la iniciativa, la toma de decisiones y la evaluación de riesgos
- valorando la independencia, la colaboración y la innovación
- proporcionando herramientas para superar las barreras de distancia
- descubriendo como el grupo es mejor que la suma de sus partes
- desarrollando una visión conjunta y trabajando por el bien común

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### ITALES

Esta es una página web o blog para el trabajo de dos centros escolares pertenecientes a dos países distintos de la comunidad europea para un intercambio cultural y de conocimientos.

#### Blogs de trabajo

- [Liceo E.Nithingale](#)
- [Curso 2005-06](#)
- [Itales-II](#)

#### Entradas interesantes

- [Libros](#)

#### Algunas páginas de ayuda

- [HTML-básico](#)
- [Daleclick](#)

#### PROGETTO DA LAVORO

TITOLO:

ITALES: uno scambio culturale e matematico fra Italia e España

CENTRI SCOLARE CHE PARTECIPANO:

INSEGNANTI PARTECIPANTI:

DURATA: 1 curso escolar

CORSI: 2º curso di Licenza media e 3º e 4º de ESO

ETÀ DEGLI STUDENTI: 14 - 16 anni

LINGUE DEL PROGETTO: italiano, spagnolo e inglese

MATERIE DEL TEMA: Matematica e Informatica

DESCRIZIONE DEL PROGETTO:

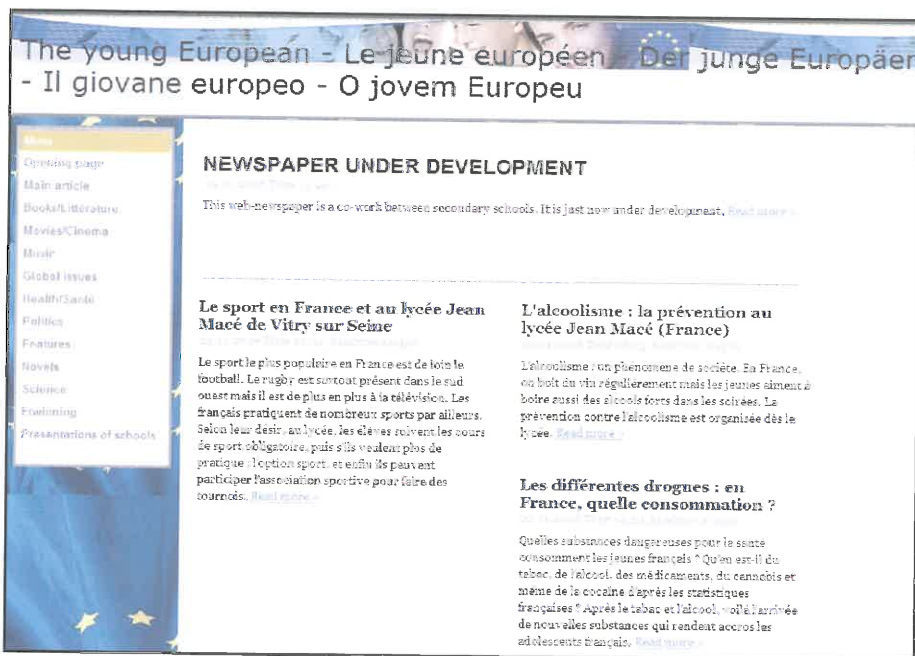
<http://itales.blogspot.com/2005/07/progetto-da-lavoro.html>

Un ejemplo de un **proyecto eTwinning** en el que podemos ver cómo se aplica esta competencia

<sup>7</sup> "Desarrollar el impulso de las actitudes y capacidades empresariales en la educación primaria y secundaria"  
[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support\\_measures/training\\_education/doc/mini\\_companies\\_es.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/entrepreneurship/support_measures/training_education/doc/mini_companies_es.pdf)



The Young European (Secundaria)



<http://www2.edu.fi/magazinefactory/magazines/OrdrupGymnasium/?str=40>

- impulsado que se den cuenta que la incidencia del propio legado cultura a partir del interés que este despierta en otros países
- promoviendo la utilización de medios de expresión que no se limitan al lenguaje oral y escrito
- educando su capacidad de apreciar las diferentes expresiones artísticas como formas de comunicación universal
- fomentando que los alumnos compartan las obras de arte y la cultura de sus propios países y regiones
- ayudándoles a descubrir la relación entre legado cultural y valores compartidos

8.- Expresión cultural

Podemos definir esta competencia como la capacidad de apreciar la importancia de la expresión creativa de ideas, experiencias y emociones a través de distintos medios, incluida la música, las artes escénicas, la literatura y las artes plásticas.

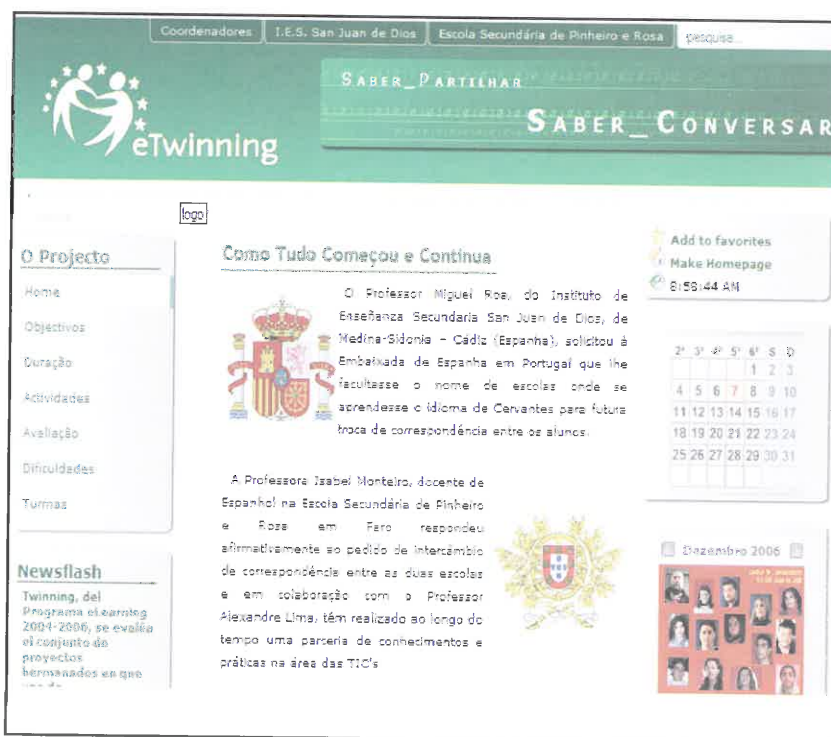
Adquirir esta competencia supone conocer a nivel básico las principales obras culturales y comprender la diversidad cultural y lingüística de Europa, así como entender la necesidad de preservarla y ser consciente de la evolución de los gustos populares y la importancia de los factores estéticos en la vida cotidiana.

eTwinning ayuda a que los alumnos adquieran esta competencia

- ayudándoles a descubrir la identidad regional, nacional y europea a través de la cultura, las obras de arte

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## BritLit – LITERATURA FOR LANGUAGE LEARNING

A Joint British Council / APPI Project in Portugal  
Email: [fitch.oconnell@pt.britishcouncil.org](mailto:fitch.oconnell@pt.britishcouncil.org)

It all started with a discussion we were having, one seriously cold December weekend in Krakow, Poland, about the content of course books. We were wondering if any of them contained any vibrant cultural material at all that had not been painstakingly sifted and strained, made bland or neutered. We doubted they did, and vainly searched high and low for examples to prove ourselves wrong. What we wanted was to be able to access classroom materials that made a direct –and punchy – connection between contemporary British life and culture and the culture of those to whom we were teaching English.

The ‘we’ in this case was a group of teachers, teacher trainers, materials writers, project managers and other ELT specialists working for the British Council. We attempted to meet the challenges we had identified regarding contemporary British culture in classroom materials and this is the story of one of them, and it involves using contemporary British literature as a language learning tool. It is the story of a project which works with state school teachers in Portugal and which also recognises that literature as a language tool in the classroom can challenge the perception of teaching methods that are driven in a linear fashion by exams and by the syllabus and, all too frequently, the course book. Many teachers instinctively recognise that language teaching is more naturally an organic process, and a non-linear approach is more favourable to success, but are



held back by the linear restraints of the school or the Ministry of Education's programme, where the end-product dictates the process, as it does in industry. The challenge, therefore, was to see if using contemporary literature could effect a deepening of cultural appreciation while providing a vital

tool for improved language teaching.

Literature, at its core, has a cultural heartbeat. What better way to tackle the demands of contemporary cultural perception and comparison than with contemporary literature? Literature can also help to introduce non-linear lines of influence. "No two people read the same book" said American author Edmund Wilson and this is the perfect introduction to a series of pre-reading activities that share this idea, with its implication that we, as readers, contribute a considerable amount to what is being read, and that we are not just passive recipients of the author's intent. One of my favourite pre-reading activities is one which causes initial surprise, where the student is asked to answer a series of micro questions about the characters and events contained in a story that they have never read. Surprise is soon dispelled when students start to construct viable (and usually hugely enjoyable) stories based on the skeleton that the questions provide, the flesh being provided by their own experiences and memories and, without doubt, a whole range of stories unique to them. It is rare for the stories created in this way - in one room by small groups - to be duplicated, even though

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the skeleton and the potential for similar experiences to play a role are all around; it is unknown – at least in my experience – for the stories created to be the same as that produced by the original author. But isn't that heart of stories? All those experiences; all those possible paths to take.

Moreover, all the stories created in the classroom by this device have their own validity and their own truth. As a teacher you will suddenly find yourself steering a course where student's answers, if given honestly, cannot be wrong and where opinions and insights have equal validity regardless of linguistic or story-telling abilities.

At this point we can see that the usual view of a relationship between teacher and language, one which seems normally to disfavour the student, can be redressed and replaced by a far more balanced relationship without dislocating respect or natural authority. We need to be clear about what has happened here: the triangular relationship of teacher/student/language has been replaced with a teacher/student/literature model. Literature in this case is a language tool, not an academic literary tool. The relationship the student has primarily is with the text or story, the language being merely a means to access it. The teacher has an equal relationship to the text, even though their perception of the language medium will be different. It should be clear, then, that literature as a language learning tool is a powerful asset in the quest for greater non-linearity in our classroom. Literature can help us to be better language teachers.

The BritLit project was built on the premise of cooperative partnership, and the way that the materials have been developed presupposes the role of the student as a reader, someone whose views on the text demand an equal voice. Ironically, this attempt to produce materials to assist in the non-linear classroom started from a linear challenge – the extensive reading list for years 10-12 in the Portuguese state education system<sup>1</sup>. Literature, in the form of short stories, is a compulsory element of language learning for these years and as such seems to have been treated as more of a drudge than a joy, both for teachers and students. Our intention was to help change that, making materials attractive enough to lure teachers into "our" stories and thereby into a way of teaching that included the readers, our students, as partners in that process. The partnership that was established from the outset was between APPI (the Portuguese teachers' association) and

British Council, Portugal. This partnership of equals helped to determine the content as well as the style of the materials, with British and Portuguese culture and knowledge being partnered, paired and compared. This in itself led to a degree of non-linearity in our relationship, and we went in some fairly unexpected directions for the first few months. This non-linearity of approach has meant that the project has also been very successful in coping with sudden change or shifting demands and priorities, something that a more linear, fixed-end-result, model would find harder to achieve.

The Portuguese Ministry of Education's extended-reading list is an advisory rather than an obligatory list of titles, but few teachers seem to see it that way, and many stick slavishly to the list. Indeed, many teach the same short story year in, year out. BritLit decided to work with some of the texts from the reading list, but also started to add some of its own choosing. The choice of texts, as well as the early classroom material, was decided by a small 'panel' of 25 Portuguese teachers, suggested by APPI, with the British Council acting as a linking agent, as well as an occasional agent provocateur. Drafts and ideas were put forward and discussed at informal 'focus' group meetings in different parts of the country, the original 'panel' growing by word of mouth from 25 to over 200 in the first year. A healthily organic way to develop an idea, surely.

There were a few self-imposed rules – the short stories had to be British and contemporary (British Council influence) and had to relate to multiple aspects of the syllabus (APPI influence). By the beginning of the 2004/5 academic year, just 18 months after the official launch of the project, ten 'kits' or resource packs were available for classroom use, based mainly on short stories, but also on a fragment of a novel as well as a group of poems.

A pattern soon emerged. First, we decided, what we produced should not be perceived as a "course". Rather, we needed to respond effectively to two tricky issues which would make such an approach problematic: English language classes in year 10 in Portuguese schools tend to be of mixed ability, so the materials had to be adaptable to a wide range of linguistic competencies; we had no way of knowing how much time each individual teacher would be able to devote to this part of the syllabus – such decisions were made, in advance, by each teaching team in each school. This meant that all the materials we produced had to be flexible in a number of

ways. No single worksheet or project could be dependant upon any other; they all had to be free-standing. Secondly, we wanted to increase the impact of the first reading of the story so that it was not a trial but something that the student had a genuine reason to do, and so pre-reading activities had to play a major role. Thirdly, we wanted to link the text to broad cultural issues that students could relate to both within the story and within their own experiences. Fourthly, we knew we had to meet the demand of linearity created by the rest of the syllabus and by the testing system by focusing also on lexical and language features that occurred naturally within the story. Finally, we wanted to create a clear wrapping-up session or event, for the teacher to bring the activity or the project to an end, but at the same time we wanted to open the way to new experiences and other, related paths through further reading of texts that had something in common with the work recently completed. We didn't want the reading experience simply to be snuffed out just because the activity had ended.

We also needed:

- to produce materials that were 'reader friendly', especially knowing that many of the set texts were linguistically challenging
- to acknowledge that other texts presented cultural challenges, especially those in specifically British settings – for example, references to pantomimes, Welsh customs or backdrops of particular English towns – and to recognise that readers will benefit from some assistance.
- not to attempt to analyse or dissect the literary structure or value of the text, rather allowing it simply to be a tale worth telling while giving access to cultural and linguistic experience and learning.

Therefore, we have attempted to provide the readers with a series of stepping stones to the texts, with pre-reading exercises that concentrate on introducing the characters and the settings, through dialogue and other quotes from the text, which themselves provide an introduction to the language used. The consequence is that by the time the readers get to read the complete text, there are already a sufficient number of familiar passages to make the journey through the story comfortable, one that could be accomplished largely without tears.

We had, therefore, to cope with a number of unknowns, including the reality of very mixed ability classes, and not knowing how much time – half an

hour, or half a semester – each teacher would be able to devote to the project. It seemed important, therefore, that we produced a series of materials that could be used as flexibly as possible. Hence, reference to Grandfather Griffith's hatred of technology in 'The Return of the Moonman'<sup>2</sup> led to an explanation of Luddites, old and new, alternative technology provision in Wales and some pithy little articles from the European Space Agency<sup>3</sup>, while the spooky tale of Roald Dahl's 'The Landlady'<sup>4</sup> leads us to information on real-life witches, how to embalm a body, and famous English poisoners. All the project work and worksheets produced are sourced, in that they are headed by quotes from the tale highlighting the relevance of this contextual exploration.

This, then, still manages to leave reading the story itself within the far more private, individual realm of the reader – where it properly belongs – a reflective, subjective activity which does not attempt to challenge the reader's honest interpretation. Indeed, whenever direct response to a question of interpretation becomes inevitable, the format used always leaves the answers to questions open-ended and debatable, with right/wrong answers being avoided. In the end we hope to have provided a heightened possibility of fluidity, an adapted framework and new, positive friction within the classroom, thereby supporting non-linear activity.

The four main sections of the kits – so called because teachers have to build their own lessons from the materials provided – are the 'pre-reading' (sometimes called 'characterisation') and 'context' outlined above, plus 'word work', which explores the language used in the text in a more formal way, and 'after reading', which brings the activity to a close, while also pointing ahead to new, contemporary literature which is thematically linked.

Another element of the project is to bring writers – authors and poets (the kits use poetry extensively) – to work with teachers and students, either in situ or online. The effect of this new input can have an electrifying effect on both teachers and students, and it is interesting to reflect on what happens to the classroom dynamic by introducing a fourth element, the writer. Does the author take the place of the teacher, or the place of the language/literature? Perhaps what happens is a series of perception shifts, for the students might regard the author temporarily as the teacher, while for the teacher the author becomes the language and for the author the teacher becomes a student. Or, let us take the case of a group of students who were

working on a short story by an author who they knew would shortly be visiting their school. With help (but not direction) from their teacher, they transformed this story into a little play, which they then performed for the author when he visited, and before they interviewed him about his work. The author, inspired by the work of the students, went on to write a new story, about the place where the students came from. In this case all the elements were able to transform status, and everyone had the chance to be a student, everyone became a teacher and everyone became an author: everyone in the project gave something and gained something. A real win-win situation.

The project has undoubtedly gained many supporters and well-wishers across the globe through the delivery of the materials through the joint British Council and BBC hosted website 'Teaching English' ([www.teachingenglish.co.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.co.uk)). It has also spawned extraordinary interest in the country where it started, Portugal, where now the work has extended beyond the requirements of years 10 and 11 at high school and includes younger teens and even Primary school children in a series devoted to story telling. It is planned that materials for pre-teens will be produced in 2006, and this would mean that all levels in schools will have access to classroom materials using stories as a powerful means of teaching students English. Teachers in countries other than Portugal have also become involved in the process of material writing, and teachers in Hungary, Romania and the Czech Republic are now producing kits for BritLit.

Within the British Council itself, the project has recently achieved a regional status and will be working in Spain and Italy as well as Portugal from 2006.

Of course, the arguments against the non-linear approach that BritLit promotes – as beneficial as it is – are legion, and frequently deafening. The loudest arguments are: "But what about the syllabus?" "What about the course book?" "We haven't got time!" Well, fine. If teaching English means completing the course book and ticking all the boxes in the syllabus check-list, then this is your only option. If, on the other hand, teaching English is about making the language live and meaningful, where students can even gain ownership of the language, then perhaps teachers should consider missing out pages 58 – 61 of the course book and introduce a bit of live literature instead.

#### NOTES

1. Years 10-12 in secondary schools for students aged 15-18.
2. 'The Return of the Moonman' by Malpass, E.L.; *British Short Stories of Today*, Penguin (1987) ed. E. Jones.
3. <http://www.esa.int/esaCP/index.html>
4. 'The Landlady', from 'Kiss, Kiss', Dahl, R. Michael Joseph Ltd (1960)

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# APAC – JOHN MCDOWELL AWARD 2007

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

## MODALITATS

### A.- TREBALLS PRESENTATS PER PROFESSORS ( o futurs professors)

*(Crèdits variables d'anglès, treballs d'investigació, projectes, memòries, treballs acadèmics, etc.)*

Els treballs presentats en aquesta modalitat han de ser inèdits i han d'incloure: objectius, continguts i conclusió. En el cas dels crèdits variables també s'hi ha d'incloure el material per utilitzar a classe i les activitats d'avaluació. Pel que fa als treballs d'investigació han d'estar relacionats directament amb aspectes de la llengua anglesa.

**1 PREMI I 1 ACCÈSSIT**

### B.- TREBALLS PRESENTATS PER ALUMNES

*(Treballs de recerca, etc.)*

Tots els treballs presentats en aquesta modalitat han d'incloure objectius, contingut i conclusió i han d'estar directament relacionats amb aspectes de la llengua anglesa.

**1 PREMI I 1 ACCÈSSIT**

### C.- TREBALLS PRESENTATS PER GRUPS CLASSE

*(Vídeos, DVDs, projectes, revistes, pàgines web, etc.)*

Els treballs presentats en aquesta modalitat han d'incloure una introducció del professorat de la matèria indicant els objectius de l'activitat.

**2 PREMIS I 2 ACCÈSSITS**

## BASES GENERALS

1. És condició indispensable que tots els treballs siguin en anglès.
2. Tots els treballs s'han de presentar en un sobre o paquet tancat. La informació que hi ha de constar és:  
Modalitat en la qual participa (Modalitat A - B o C)  
Nom, adreça, correu electrònic i telèfon de contacte del concursant  
Nivell educatiu o curs (en cas dels alumnes i grup classe)  
Escola i nom del professor/a
3. El termini de presentació finalitza el dia 31 de desembre de 2007.
4. El jurat estarà format per cinc membres d'APAC.
5. Els premis consistiran:  
**Modalitat A:** 1 curs de dues setmanes al Regne Unit, esponsoritzat per l'Institut Britànic (l'anada i la tornada al lloc de destinació serà a càrrec del professor/a premiat/ada)  
**Modalitat B:** lot de material didàctic adequat al nivell educatiu del concursant i una traductora CASIO.  
**Modalitat C:** lot de material didàctic adequat al nivell educatiu dels concursants i vals descompte per a viatges lingüístics.
6. Els premis es lliuraran en el marc de l'APAC- ELT Convention 2008
7. APAC es reserva el dret de publicar totalment o parcialment els treballs presentats a la revista d'APAC.
8. Tots els participants al Premi APAC han de ser socis d'APAC amb l'excepció de les modalitats B i C.
9. Tots els treballs s'enviaran per correu ordinari : APAC (PREMI APAC)  
Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 606, 4t 2aF  
08007 Barcelona
10. APAC no es responsabilitza dels treballs no recollits abans del dia 30 d'abril del 2008.

Aquestes bases anul·len les bases publicades anteriorment.

## DRAMA TECHNIQUES IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

by Rodrigo Fernández Carmona and Miquel Oltra Albiach

Drama activities are activities which give the students an opportunity to use their own personality in creating the material on which part of the English class is to be based. These activities draw on the natural ability of every person to imitate, mimic and express him or herself through gesture. They also draw on the students' imagination and memory, and natural capacity to bring to life parts of their past experience. Each student brings a different life, a different background, into the class.

However, by drama activities, we do not mean putting on plays in front of a passive audience. We do not want the students to feel that drama activities are part of the preparation for some great final performance. Their value is not in what they lead up to but in what they are. When we prepare this in class,

we should have no audience in mind other than the people who are taking part in the experience.

Nevertheless, this does not exclude at all the performance by one group for all the others if the need is felt. The value of drama as an educational tool consists in fostering the social, intellectual and linguistic development of the child.

Most techniques for teaching any new item of language cover three major phases: a) presentation, b) practice and c) reinforcement. In the first phase, one attempts to find a way of presenting the item so that it is clearly understood; in the second, one practises it under controlled conditions; and in the third, one tries to create conditions in which it can be used more or less freely by students.

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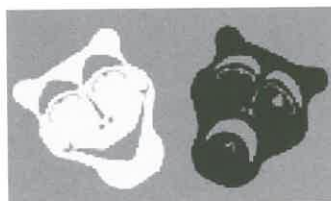
MIQUEL OLTRA ALBIACH IS A LECTURER OF CATALAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE AT THE DEPARTAMENT DE DIDÀCTICA DE LA LLENGUA I LA LITERATURA, UNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA. HE IS ALSO A LANGUAGE TEACHER AT UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE VALENCIA. AT THE MOMENT HE IS PREPARING HIS DOCTORAL THESIS ON THE USE OF PUPPETS IN LITERARY EDUCATION. HE HAS CARRIED OUT SEVERAL RESEARCH PROJECTS FOR TEATRES DE LA GENERALITAT DE VALÈNCIA: BISBES Y MILICIANOS; TITELLES I TEATRE POPULAR A LA II REPÚBLICA (1931-1939) AND VOCABULARI ESCÈNIC VALÈNCIÀ. AS WELL AS SOME ARTICLES IN REVIEWS, HE HAS PUBLISHED THE BOOK VOREJANT LA HISTÒRIA (ELS TITELLES VALÈNCIANS, DEL BETLEM DE TIRISITI A LES COMPANYIES INDEPENDENTS 1875-1975).

### What can drama achieve in the language class?

- Drama demands the co-operation of the participants.
- It draws on previous experience.
- It creates situations in which there is a need for precise communication.
- It is experiential, thereby affecting students in other than a purely intellectual way.
- It challenges students to discover new truths or insights by confronting them with previously unknown predicaments.

### We can list the potential benefits of drama in language teaching and learning as follows:

- The acquisition of meaningful, fluent interaction in the target language.
- The assimilation of a whole range of pronunciation and prosodic features in a fully contextualised and interactional manner.
- The fully contextualised acquisition of new vocabulary and grammar structures.
- An improved sense of confidence in the student in his or her ability to learn the target language.

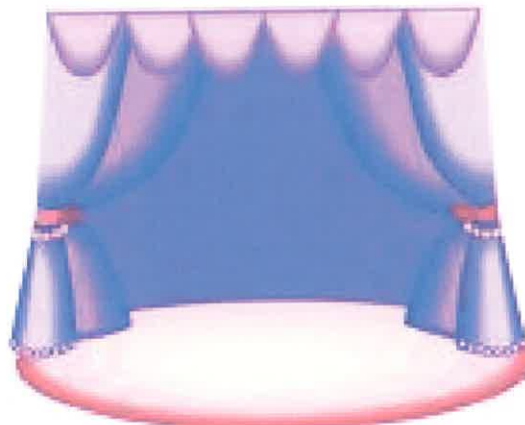


### What are the advantages of using drama techniques in the language class?

- They provide a framework for communicating.
- They allow for unpredictability in language use.
- They provide a bridge between the classroom and the real world.
- They allow for creativity.
- They provide physical involvement and release.
- They develop confidence and can be motivating.
- They help cater for mixed-ability classes and large numbers of students.

In language teaching and learning, drama simulates reality, develops self-expression and allows for

experiments with the language. Once the teacher has decided for him or herself what the real nature of oral communication is, he or she can begin to use drama exercises in the classroom. These exercises will usually fit most naturally into the production stage of the lesson, when the students are experimenting with the language that they have learnt in a relatively controlled way.



Drama is not a new theory of language teaching, but rather a technique which can be used to develop certain language skills. In language teaching, drama should be viewed as a technique of communicative language teaching. It emphasises the role of the learner as an active participant rather than a passive receptor. With the emphasis on the communicative approach to language teaching, greater weight is given nowadays to establishing situations in the classroom in which students employ language in a meaningful manner. Drama activities can provide a framework in which students have a real need to communicate. Furthermore, drama activities also provide a physical release from the constraints of having to sit in a chair for an hour. They should be both enjoyable and rewarding if handled in the right way. They are not a magic ingredient for fun, and like any other aspect of language teaching, they can go disastrously wrong if not prepared for adequately.

Some teachers may feel reluctant to make use of drama activities, stemming from one or more of the following reasons:

#### 1) Fear of losing control.

If this is the case, the teacher should plan carefully, make sure the instructions are understood and should not be over-ambitious. We can illustrate an example of wrong and right planning:



**Wrong planning**

Situation: Socialising.

Instructions: Stand up, walk around and socialise with another person.

Result: The students look bemused and talk casually to one another in their mother tongue.

**Right planning**

Activity: Role play in pairs.

Purpose: To practise the language of socialising.

Method:

- a) Ask the students to stand up.
- b) Send half to one end of the classroom and the other half to the other end.
- c) Tell the students that they are walking down a street one day when they bump into an old friend.
- d) Give the students a brief example of the sort of conversation that might ensue.
- e) Ask the students to pair off with someone from the other half.
- f) After three or four minutes, tell the students to return to their chairs.
- g) Compare what happened in various pairs.

Time: Between 10 and 12 minutes.

**2) Lack of confidence.**

Most drama activities make no more demands on the teacher than other commonplace classroom exercises. However, if the teacher feels unconfident, he or she should follow these simple steps:

- Start with story-telling and creative work.
- Try short mime exercises.
- Get the students to do simple role plays.
- Develop these into slightly longer improvisations.
- Introduce a script.
- Try acting it out.
- Get the students to work on creating their own sketches.
- Work towards performing a play.

**3) Lack of space.**

The most satisfactory arrangement is to have the class sitting in a horseshoe shape with the teacher at the mouth. The desks can be pushed against the walls for more space.

The teacher should explain to the students before each drama activity what the purpose is. Similarly, concluding remarks afterwards can help reinforce the

notion that the activity was worthwhile.

In any case, teachers should follow certain basic guidelines:

1 Lead by example.

2 Avoid putting the students on the spot. (The teacher can ask for volunteers and encourage an atmosphere in which the students are stimulated to put themselves forward).



3 Make positive comments.

4 Do not demand too much of the students.

**Typology of drama activities (a basic selection from *Drama Techniques in Language Learning* by Alan Maley and Alan Duff, Cambridge University Press, 1982).**

There are some games played at the beginning of a lesson as warm-ups or introductory activities. Such games tend to relax the learners, make them feel at ease with each other and willing to work together. They also serve to introduce the main topic of the lesson.

There are games used as part of the lesson to revise or reinforce previously-taught material. Such games will generally be played before the "exercise" or "writing" stage in a lesson, and should help to clarify the taught material through direct experience.

There are games which end a lesson. These can be used to let the students "unwind" after a hectic session of intense learning, or simply as "fillers". Such games can help to review the language taught during the lesson, and to "fix" it in a relaxed and enjoyable manner.

Basically, the aim of warm-up exercises is to foster a climate of trust, awareness and group cohesion in which creative collaboration can take place. In the language classroom, they have an important part to play in achieving an atmosphere in which genuine communication can take place.

## 1 Introductory exercises

### a) Non-verbal warming-up exercises

- 1 Handshakes
- 2 Mirror hands
- 3 Hands touching
- 4 Numbers in your head
- 5 Body numbers
- 6 Remaking the web
- 7 Catch
- 8 Tug-o'-war
- 9 Beat out that rhythm
- 10 Touch it

### b) Non-verbal cooling-down exercises

- 1 Feeling your muscles
- 2 Directed relaxation
- 3 Rediscovering the circle
- 4 Don't break it!

### c) Verbal exercises

- 1 Handshakes
- 2 Body words
- 3 My word!
- 4 Backs
- 5 And I'm a butcher
- 6 Interviews

### d) Group-formation exercises

- 1 Atom 3
- 2 Mix
- 3 Identikit
- 4 I know what I like

## 2 Observation exercises

- 1 Observation of the room
- 2 Back-to-back
- 3 Spot the change
- 4 Listening with eyes closed

## 3 Interpretation exercises

- 1 Things aren't what they seem to be
- 2 What am I doing?
- 3 Portraits
- 4 Tableaux

## 4 Creation and invention exercises

- 1 Signs of the future
- 2 Fashion show
- 3 Masks
- 4 Music pictures

### Some Examples:

#### **Numbers in your head** (Ref. 1. a. 4)

Each person finds a space to stand in. With eyes closed, everyone traces the shape of the numbers from 0 to 9 by moving their heads only. Then one person is appointed to call out numbers, which everyone makes the same way, still with eyes closed. Finally, in pairs facing each other, one person makes a number and the other tries to guess what it is – eyes open this time!

This involves a high degree of concentration. It also helps students to "feel" the physical shape of the numbers in the foreign language.

#### **Feeling your muscles** (Ref. 1. b. 1)

This is done with students sitting or lying comfortably on the floor in their own space, with eyes closed. When the word is given, they tense all their muscles and hold them tense until told to relax again. This is done several times.

Besides being a pleasant, relaxing activity, it also serves to "tune up" the body for exercises in which physical movement leads to language.

#### **And I'm a butcher** (Ref. 1. c. 5)

The students sit in circles, facing inwards. One student begins by giving his or her real name and an imaginary profession, e.g. "I'm Luis and I'm a butcher." The student on the right then repeats this information and adds his or her own name and an imaginary profession, e.g. "You're Luis, and you're a butcher. I'm Rosa and I'm a hairdresser." The next student to the right continues the process, e.g. "He's Luis and he's a butcher, you're Rosa and you're a hairdresser. I'm Ana and I'm a taxi-driver." The process goes on until everyone has added information about him/herself. The person who began the process then has to repeat the whole series.

**Atom 3 (Ref. 1. d. 1)**

The students move freely about the room to music. The organiser stops the music unexpectedly and calls out: "Atom 3!" (or 2 or 7 or 11, but never a number larger than the actual size of the class), and the students join together with those nearest to them to form the number.

**Observation of the room (Ref. 2.1)**

The students are asked to walk round the room and have a good look at it for not more than about two minutes. They are then suddenly told to close their eyes. The organiser now asks five or six simple questions, such as: How many doors / lights are there? What colour are the curtains? Are any of the windows open? Is anything written on the board? etc. The students should listen to these questions without trying to answer them aloud. When the word is given, they open their eyes and check their impressions with the person standing (or sitting) next to them.


**What am I doing? (Ref. 3.2)**

As this exercise is conceived of as an introduction to mime for students who may never have done any before, it is suggested that for the first few times the material be prepared in advance. Work is done in pairs. Everyone should have enough room to move about easily. Each member of the pair is given a slip of paper on which several actions are briefly described. He or she chooses one of the actions to mime. By using only bodily movement and sounds (but not words), partners take it in turns to show each other what they are doing. The partner who is watching comments on the action and tries to work out all the details.

**Fashion show (Ref. 4.2.)**

The students work in groups of three or four. The task is for each group to present a fashion show for another group. This involves describing as vividly as possible the actual clothes being worn by group members. It is important to leave groups sufficient time to prepare the verbal presentation, as this usually needs to be written out.

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# EXPLAINING PHRASAL VERBS COMPREHENSIVELY AND DYNAMICALLY

by David Mason

BY PRESENTING PHRASAL VERBS AS COMBINATIONS OF MEANINGS IN WHICH THE PARTICLE IS FUNDAMENTAL WE CAN SHOW A LOGIC TO PHRASAL VERBS THAT HELPS STUDENTS LEARN THEM MORE EFFECTIVELY. THIS PRESENTATION LOOKS AT EXPLAINING PHRASAL VERBS IN THIS WAY; (PRESENTING DYNAMIC PHYSICAL AND VISUAL ACTIVITIES TO REINFORCE THIS IDEA); AT SOME COMMON PROBLEMS AND AT SOME USEFUL TECHNIQUES AND TIPS.

## Outline of the workshop:

- 1 Explaining the basic theory.
- 2 Explaining particle meanings – both literal and non-literal
- 3 Reinforcing Activities
- 4 Tips and techniques.

Students, and many teachers too, have a lot of difficulty with phrasal verbs. Phrasal verbs seem to have no logic to them and there are literally thousands of them. Sometimes students even give up trying to learn them, believing it to be a hopeless task. However there is a logic to phrasal verbs and teachers need to show students this logic. In order to do this, phrasal verbs must be taught comprehensively, rather than randomly or bit by bit, as is often done.

To give this comprehensive explanation two concepts need to be explained and fully understood:

- 1) Phrasal Verbs are combinations of meanings in which both verb and particle affect the meaning. As a result of this phrasal verbs can be seen not as separate entities that have to be learnt separately one by one, but as a system of meanings.

- 2) The importance of the particle meaning needs to be emphasized. Students have a clear idea of the basic meaning of many verbs, but not of the different meanings of particles. If they become aware of these, they can start to see connections between different phrasal verbs with similar or opposed meanings.

## 1- Explaining the Basic Theory

The first and most important stage is to explain these two ideas to students, trying to be as clear and concise as possible.

### a) How Phrasal Verbs Work

Phrasal verbs are a combination of two parts, a verb and a particle (a preposition or adverb). Both parts are important to understand the full meaning.

However, it is often the particle which gives the basic meaning and which allows us to see connections with other phrasal verbs. For example:

- She goes **back** home.  
She comes **back** home.  
She gets **back** home.

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**Back** is used in all of these sentences to mean return.

If we know **back** often means *return* then it is easy to understand the following examples:

She walks **back** home.  
She runs **back** home.  
She drives **back** home.

And also:

He **gives** the ball **back**. = He **returns** the ball.  
He **throws** the ball **back**. = He **returns** the ball (throwing it).  
He **kicks** the ball **back**. = He **returns** the ball (kicking it).

These are all literal examples but we can see the same logic in less literal uses of back:

He **calls back**.  
He **phones back**.  
They **take** the power **back**.

The same logic applies to other particles and phrasal verbs. For example we can see that in often means **enter**.

He walks **in**. = He **enters** (walking).  
He runs **in**. = He **enters** (running).  
He drives **in**. = **enters** (driving).

**Or:**

She **asked** him **in**. = She asked him to **enter**.  
The burglar **broke in**. = The burglar **entered** (by force).  
He was **voted in**. = He entered (into power or government by being voted).

Understanding the meaning of a particle, not only helps us to understand a specific phrasal verb, but also helps us to see connections between different phrasal verbs.

Having explained the theory we can then go on to practising it. It's important to pace this practice correctly; too fast and students will find it too difficult and get discouraged; too slow and students may have the impression that what is being explained is quite simple and obvious.

Consequently some of these activities can be done quicker or slower or even omitted, depending on the level. At this stage it's usually better to use literal

phrasal verbs to focus on the idea of phrasal verbs as combinations of meanings, and to avoid distracting students by using more difficult meanings.

### **b) Combinations with Verbs of Movement**

1) Begin with the most easily understood verb + particle combination: go + particle.

Write these 12 particles on the board

Into, Out of, Up, Down, On, Off, Over, Across, Through, Around, Back, Away

and ask students what is the literal meaning of the particles combined with go, either using synonyms or translation.

Explain we can also use **come or get** with a similar meaning to go + particle.

2) The next step is to show that we can use other verbs of movement with the same particles to produce similar meanings.

Write these verbs up on the board.

Walk, Run, Skateboard, Ski, Fly, Swim, Jump, Climb, Fall, Sail, Cycle, Drive

Then students complete the worksheet on the following pages using these twelve verbs with the twelve particles from the first exercise with **go**.

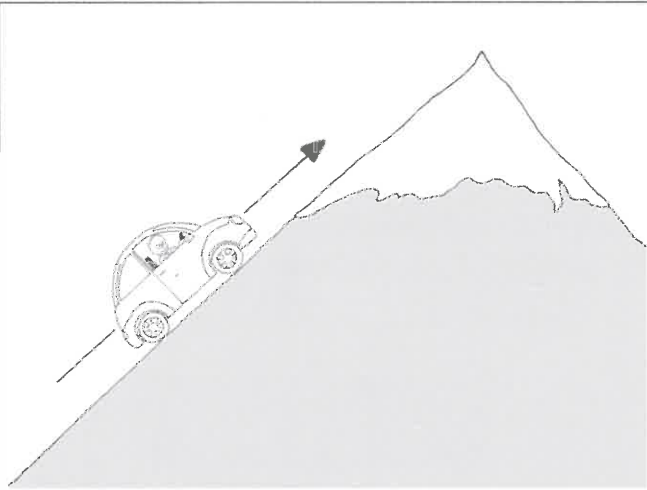
3) Given the dynamic nature of many phrasal verb meanings, it is very useful to exploit this in activities to help students really see and feel these meanings. The following adaptation of Simon Says focuses students on the importance of combinations:

- Elicit different particles from the students and write them on the board.

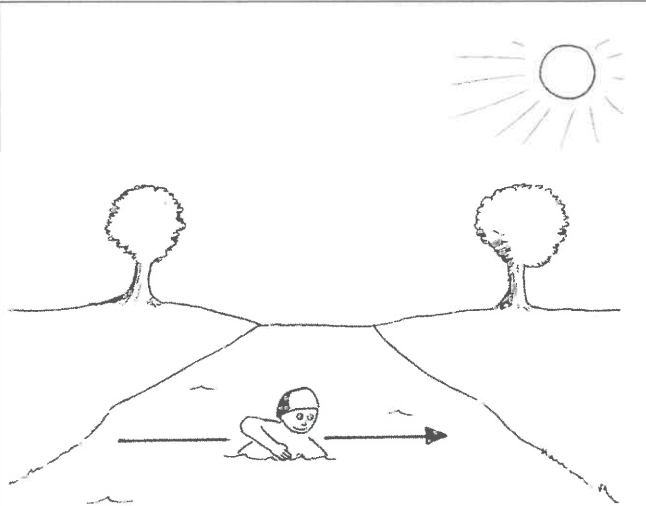
- Students and the teacher stand in a circle next to a chair.

- The teacher gives instructions to the students using the particles. e.g. "Go behind the chair!", "Go on it!", "Go away from the chair!", "Go back!" And the students must stand behind, on, away, or go back to their chairs. The last student to complete the action, or one who does a different action is eliminated and must change roles with the teacher.

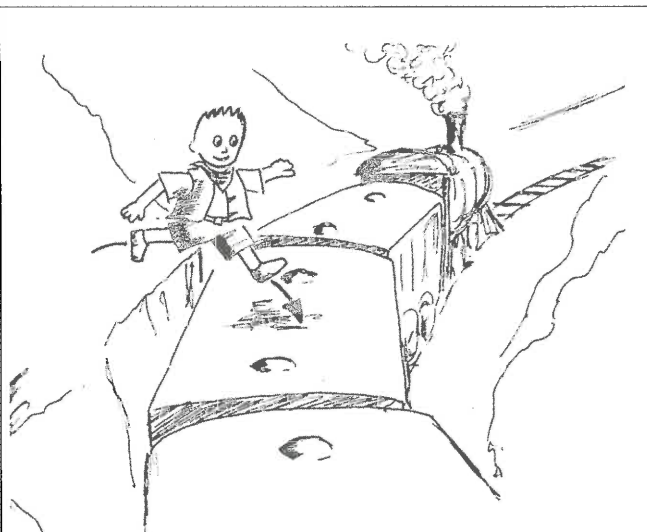
4) Once students have got the idea, other verbs can be used such as sit, stand, lie etc. In this way students can focus on the way combinations of meaning are made.



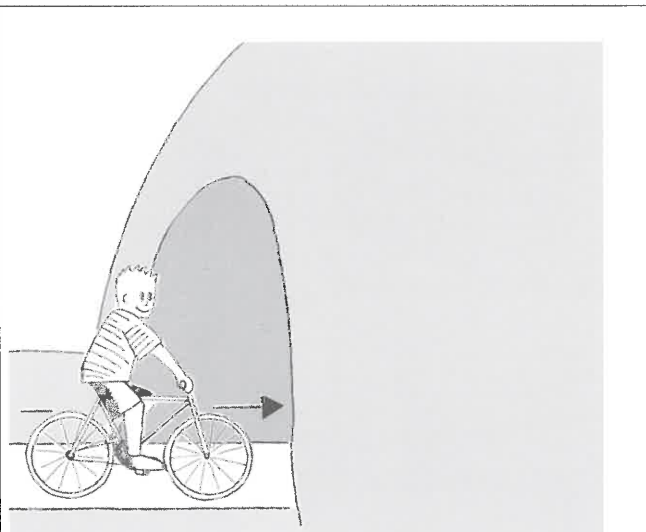
1. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the mountain.



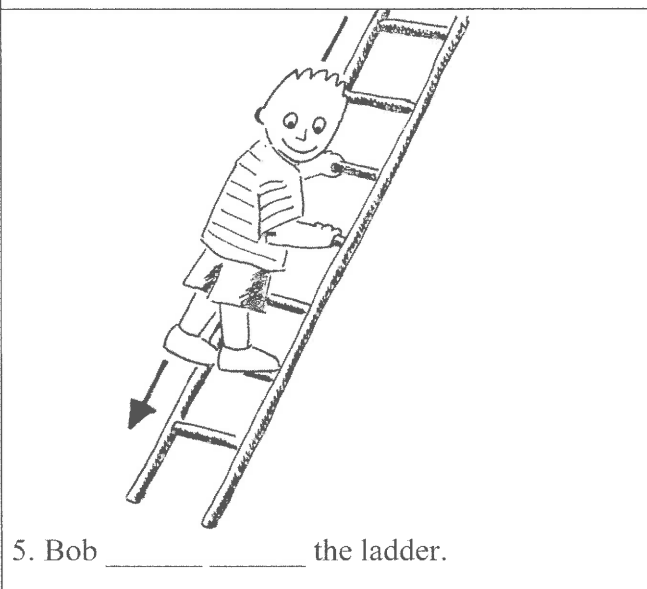
2. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the river.



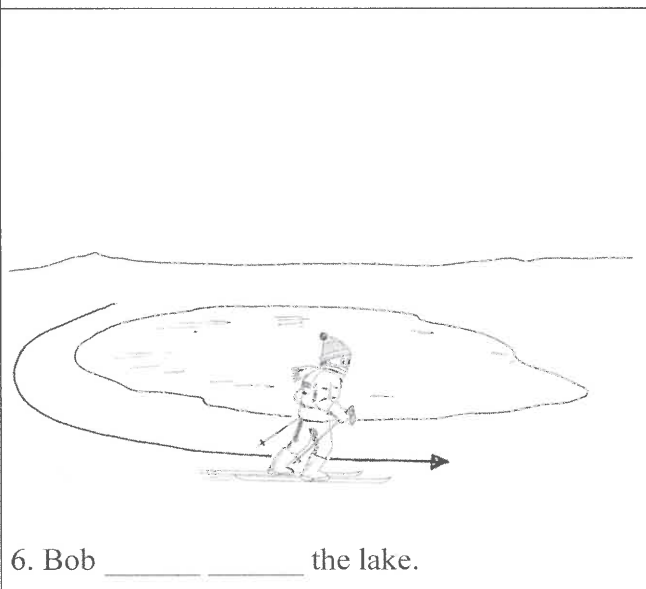
3. Buffalo Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the train.



4. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the tunnel

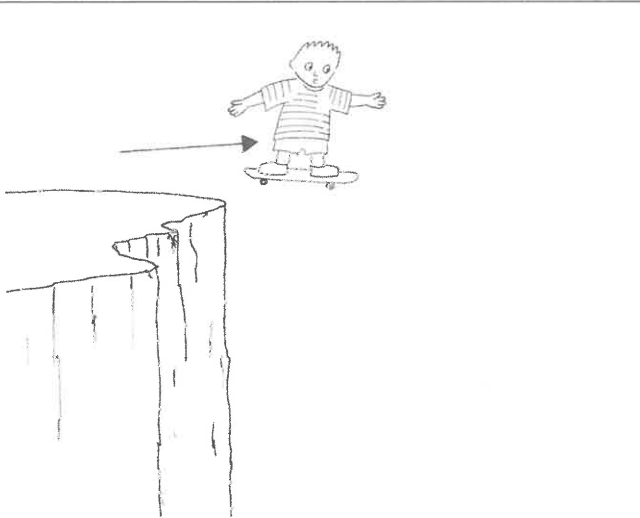


5. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the ladder.

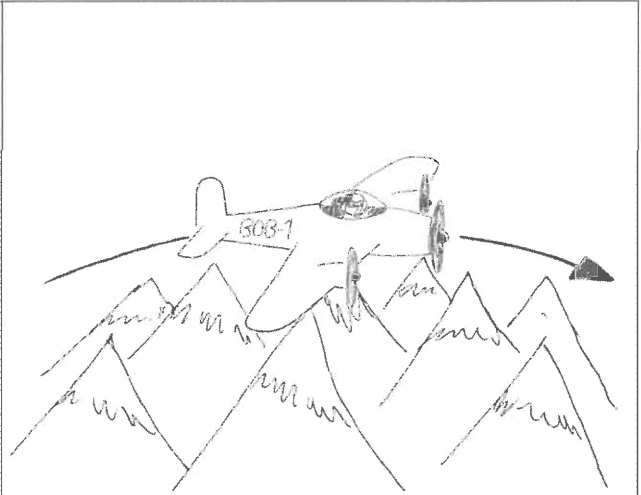


6. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the lake.





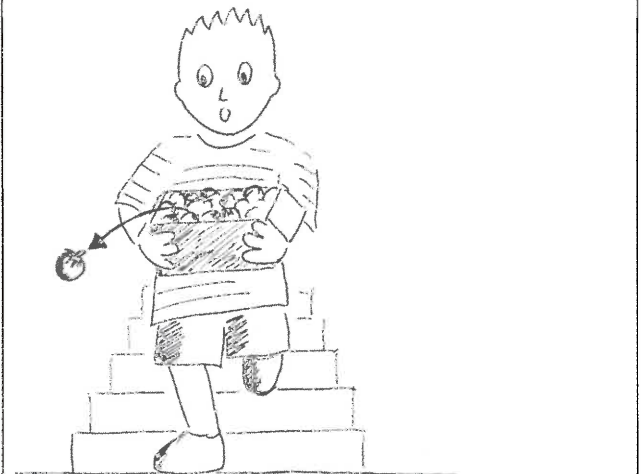
7. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the cliff.



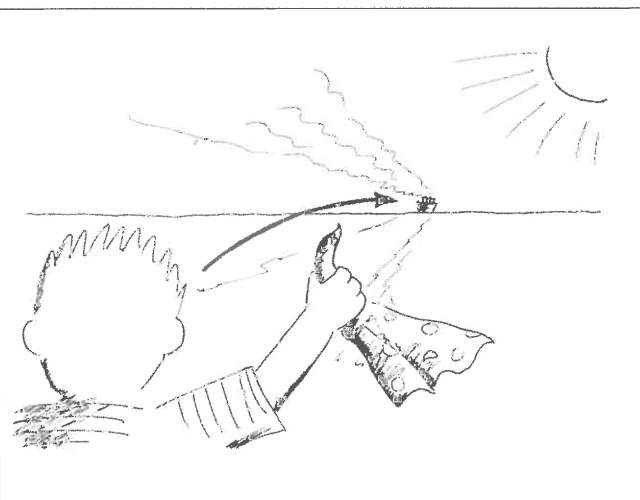
8. Bob \_\_\_\_\_ the mountains.



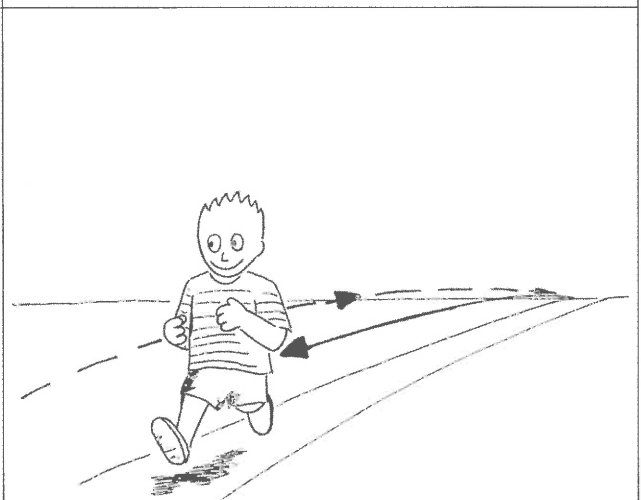
9. The mummy \_\_\_\_\_ the wall.



10. The tomato \_\_\_\_\_ the box.



11. The ship \_\_\_\_\_.



12. Bob \_\_\_\_\_.

We can also use songs with actions. A song like "She'll be coming round the mountains" can be adapted with the following lyrics. Students accompany the song with suitable actions.

She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain – Adapted Version

We are going to the mountain, yes we are!  
 We are going to the mountain, yes we are!  
 We are going to the mountain, going to the mountain,  
 Going to the mountain, yes we are!  
 We are climbing up the mountain, yes we are!  
 We are singing on the mountain, yes we are!  
 We are skiing down the mountain, yes we are!  
 We are jumping off the mountain, yes we are!

4) The next step is free practice. This is an essential stage in any effective language learning but a stage very frequently overlooked in the teaching of phrasal verbs. Questionnaires can be used which make students use the target language (an example questionnaire is on the following page). The objective of this activity is to make student personalize, to make them think of the real meanings of the phrasal verbs. It's possible students won't actually use the phrasal verb in their answer, which is fine, as long as they are thinking about the meaning.

C) Combinations with other verbs  
 What we've seen so far are combinations with verbs of movement which are usually quite easy for students to grasp. In the next step we use other verbs. Write up these verbs:

Shout, Shine, Push, Help, Carry, Hit, Kick, Throw, Drop, Pull, Hand, Shoot

Then the process of worksheet, physical activity (see Ball Game below) and questionnaire for oral practice is repeated.

**BALL GAME**

- 1 Each student has a soft ball or paper ball and stands three to four metres from a chair.
- 2 The teacher gives instructions and the students must try to follow them. You can use the game with the pre-prepared cards or you can write different possible combinations on the board. Students receive 1 point for each instruction correctly followed. The first student to reach ten points wins the game. This student then gives instructions to the other students.

**VERB OF MOVEMENT + PARTICLE  
 CONVERSATION PRACTICE**

**Ask and answer these questions with a partner. Try to use the phrasal verb in your answer.**

- INTO**  
 Do you ever **jump into** the swimming pool or do you get in slowly?
- OUT**  
 Have you ever **fallen out** of bed?
- UP**  
 When did you last **climb up** a tree?
- DOWN**  
 Have you ever **skied down** a mountain?
- ON**  
 When did you last **walk barefoot on** the grass?
- OFF**  
 Have you ever **fallen off** a bicycle?
- OVER**  
 Have you ever **flown over** mountains? What could you see?
- ACROSS**  
 When was the last time you **ran across** a busy street?
- THROUGH**  
 When did you last **walk through** a wood? Where was it?
- AWAY**  
 When did you last **fly away** on holiday?
- AROUND**  
 Have you ever **run around** an athletics track?
- BACK**  
 How will you **get back** home this evening?

**2- Explaining Particle Meanings**

The next stage is to look at the particle meanings more closely. It's good to do the first session on particle meanings quite soon after the explanation of the basic theory so that students can see this theory applied in a more detailed example while it is still fresh.

At lower levels it's good to separate and focus on literal meanings first, just mentioning the abstract meanings so students are aware of them. With higher levels students you will probably want to move quickly on to the more abstract meanings.

However, it's necessary to make sure students have the literal meanings clear so they can see connections between literal and abstract meanings. A useful exercise is to give students some examples of phrasal verbs and ask them to decide if the meanings are literal or non-literal.

They will discover that often it is not very clear if the meaning is literal or non-literal. They will also see that often there are close connections between literal and non-literal meanings.

Literal or Non-literal?

Are the phrasal verbs in these sentences literal or non-literal? Or somewhere in the middle?

He was **kicked out** of the company.  
 The film **goes on** for hours  
 He **rubbed** the writing **off** the board.  
 She **built** the business **up** from nothing.  
 He **got over** the illness.  
 She **grew up** in London.  
 He **ran away**.  
 I've got to **cut down** my spending.  
 The government were **brought down** by a financial scandal.  
 She **turned** the lights **off**.

Here is an example explanation of the literal meanings of **ON** and **OFF**.

**On – Off:** Literal meanings.

**1 TOUCHING – SEPARATE**

**On** means to be *touching something*, and often *above* it. **Off** means *not touching something*.

**a) Attach – Separate**

**On** explains that we attach one thing to another. The verb tells us *how* it is attached.

**Off** explains that we separate one thing from another. The verb tells us *how* it is separated.  
 I **glued** the picture **on**. = I attached the picture (with glue).

She **sellotapes** the paper **on**. = She attaches the paper with (sellotape).

He tears the poster **off** the wall. = He removes the poster from the wall (by tearing it).

**b) Paper / Screen / Tape**

We use **on** with paper, screens, TV, computers etc to show the words or text are on the surface of the object. We use **off** to show something is removed.

The film is **projected** on the screen.

I've **taped** it on video

She **rubbed** the writing **off**

He **wiped** the information **off** the floppy disc

**c) Clothes**

We also use **on** and **off** with clothes. The most common are **put on** and **take off**. However, if you want to be more specific, you can use many different verbs.

She **buttoned on** her shirt. = She put on her shirt (and button it)

He **threw off** his shirt = He took off his shirt (and threw it somewhere)

He **ripped off** his shirt = He took off his shirt (violently).

Explanations should be followed by controlled practice, preferably with images, possibly a physical or visual activity, and then by an oral practice questionnaire for free practice. With higher groups you could move directly to the non-literal meanings, explaining them in a similar way, in groups of meaning. In the case of on and off these groups of meaning are continuing, leaving and starting or stopping.

**On – Off:** Non-literal meanings.

**2 CONTINUE - LEAVE**

**a) Continue**

He **keeps on** talking. = He continues talking.

She **walks on**. = She continues walking.

He **slept on** all morning. = He continued sleeping all morning.

**b) Leave**

I'm **off**. = I'm leaving.

She **walks off**. = She leaves (walking).

He **rushes off**. = He leaves (in a rush).



### 3 STARTING – STOPPING

#### a) Work

I **go on** at eight. = I start work at eight.  
I **get off** at five. = I finish work at five.  
I'm **off** tomorrow. = I'm not a work tomorrow.

#### b) Organise – Cancel

The meeting **is on** for Friday. = The meeting has been organised for Friday.  
The appointment was **put off**. = The appointment was postponed.  
The match has been **called off**. = The match has been cancelled.

#### c) Start – Stop ( machines, effects etc )

I **turn** the radio **on/off**. = I start/stop the radio working.  
A storm is **coming on** = A storm is starting.  
My hangover is **wearing off**. = My hangover is decreasing.

You can vary the way of presenting the explanation of groups of meaning by asking students to match pairs of example sentences with meanings. .

The use of questionnaires too can be varied. Here are two possibilities:

Variation 1 Students choose only some of the questions to ask their partner.

Variation 1 Students choose one different question for each of the other students in class.

In both of these variations students will need to read through and think about the meanings of the phrasal verbs in the questions but will feel they have some control over the exercise.

#### On – Off: Non-literal meanings – Matching exercise

Match the phrasal verbs in the sentences below with the meaning groups.

#### 2. Continue - Leave

Continue  
Leave

#### 3. Starting – Stopping

a) Work  
b) Organise – Cancel  
c) Start – Stop ( machines, effects etc )

He **keeps on** talking.  
I **turn** the radio **on/off**.  
I **was off** sick yesterday.  
The appointment was **put off** until next Friday.  
He slept on all morning.  
**I'm off!**  
The meeting **is on** for Friday.  
He **rushes off**.  
She **walked on** without saying hello..  
I **go on** early tomorrow morning.  
I **get off** at five.  
He **drove off**.  
The match has been **called off**.  
A storm is **coming on**.  
My hangover is **wearing off**.

The process of explanation, controlled practice then free practice should be repeated to explain other particle meanings. It will be necessary to dedicate more time to the first explanation but after this it is probably better to use a brisk pace for the explanations and to spend more time on the practice. Students will find this more rewarding and will also be reflecting upon the meanings. They can investigate these meanings further out of class time if they wish.

**On, off, in, out, up** and **down** deserve special attention as these are the most common particles used in phrasal verbs. **Up** and **down** used to form 28% of the phrasal verbs in the Collins Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs!

### 3. Reinforcing Activities

It is important to use other activities to support the study of phrasal verbs to help students see their importance in a wider context and to reinforce the idea of phrasal verbs as **combinations of meanings**.

Here are some examples.

Text Corrections          The John Lennon Story

In this exercise there is a mistake in one part of the phrasal verb combinations (although not in all of the pairs!). Find the mistakes and if you can, try to correct them.

John Lennon was born in 1940. His father **1was** often **in** at sea during the war and even-



### 3 Use confusions and mistakes

Students often confuse the use of different particles (i.e. He **sat in/on** the car, or he **fell over/down**). These confusions can be used to explain the differences between particles and by comparing the with other examples (i.e. he **lies in/on** the bed or he was **knocked over/down**), they can show how particle meanings are constant (see following pages for an example with **off** and **down**).

### 4 Don't avoid using phrasal verbs

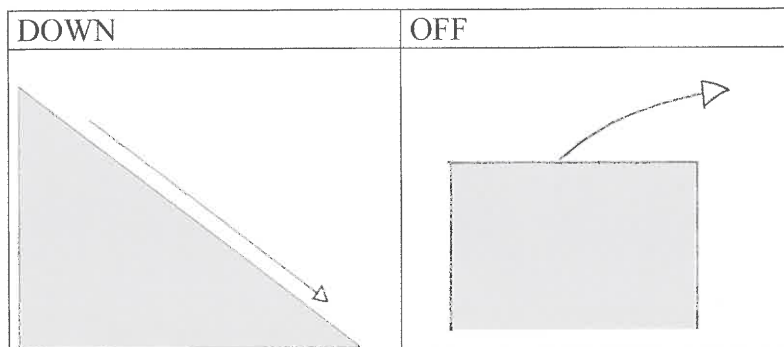
Even when not specifically teaching phrasal verbs remember to use them in class, even at low levels. Don't shy away from them. For example, don't use "enter" instead of **go in** or "communicate" instead of **get through**.

Familiarity with phrasal verbs from the beginning will help students at a later date.


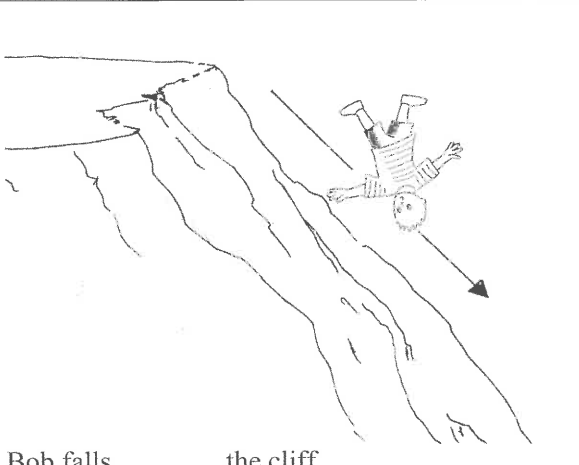
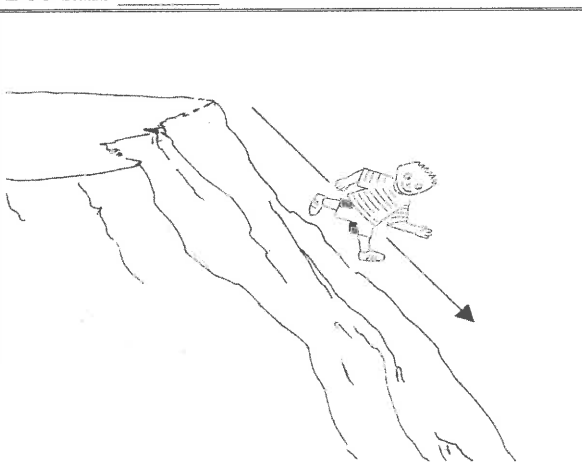
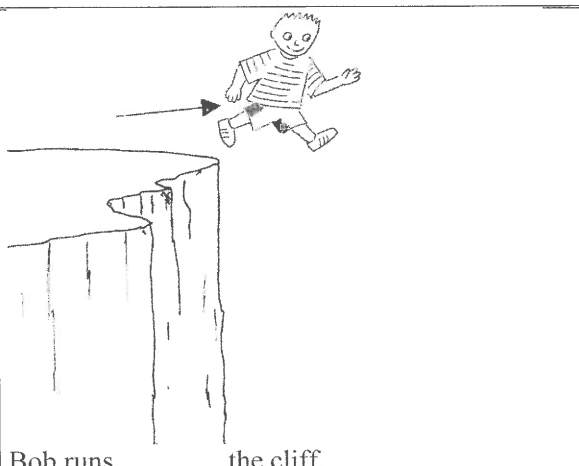
#### OFF - DOWN

**Off** indicates separation from another object. **Down** indicates a downward direction and does not indicate separation, often it indicates the subject continues to touch the other object.

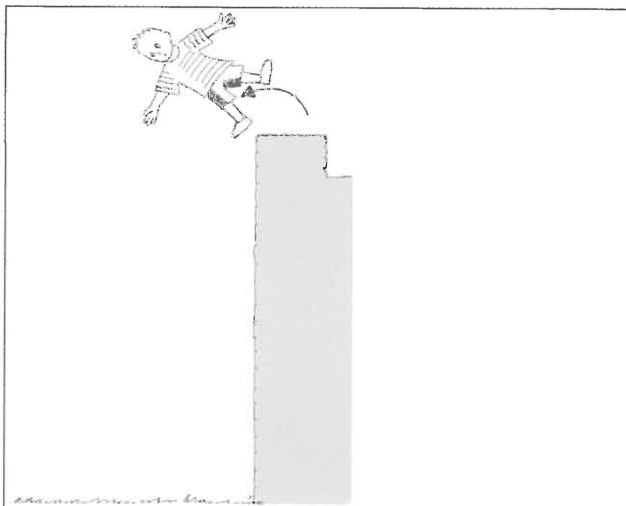
Compare:



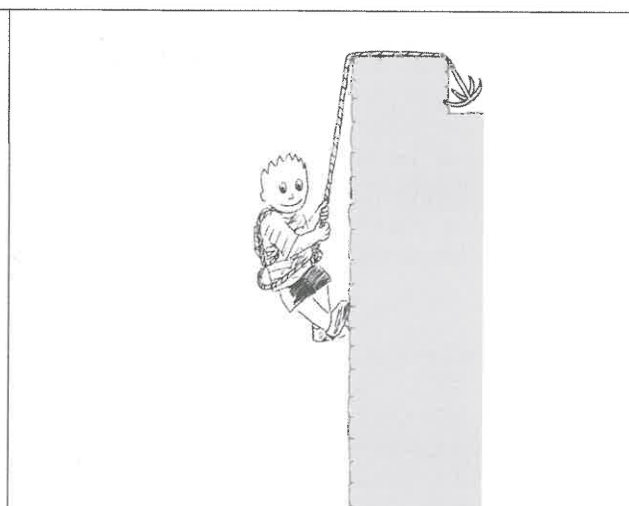
Ex. 4.1. Complete with **off** or **down**

 Bob falls _____ the cliff.	 Bob falls _____ the cliff.
 Bob runs _____ the cliff.	 Bob runs _____ the cliff.

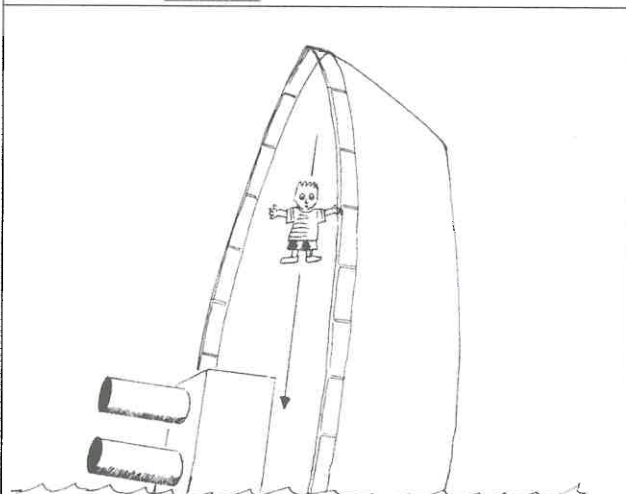




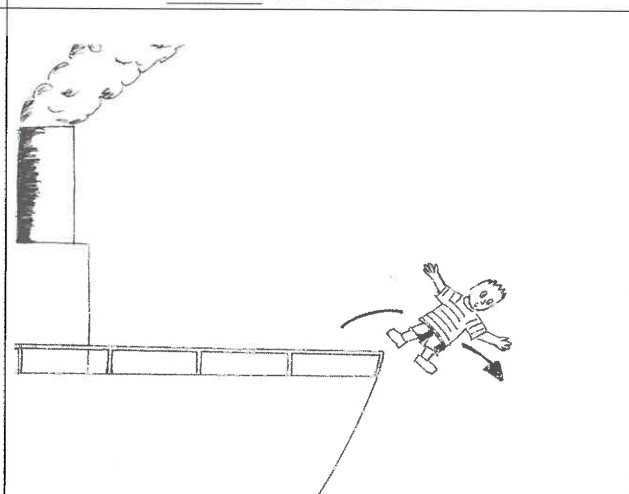
Bob comes \_\_\_\_\_ the wall.



Bob comes \_\_\_\_\_ the wall.



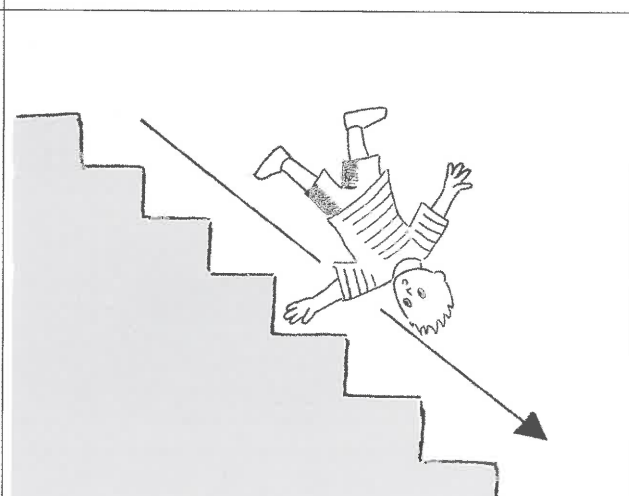
Bob falls \_\_\_\_\_ the ship.



Bob falls \_\_\_\_\_ the ship.



Bob falls \_\_\_\_\_ the stairs.



Bob falls \_\_\_\_\_ the stairs.