



Associació
de Professors
i Professores
d'Anglès
de Catalunya

Back to school
with many interesting
articles

Contributions

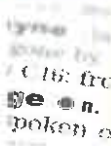
Book Review



ELT 2008


...and more


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Editorial

With the beginning of classes come the challenges for teachers. No matter how many students we have, what ages they are, or what abilities they have, the goal is always the same: to get their linguistic competence to show itself in their ability to communicate.

We have to teach structures, vocabulary, etc., and give students the chance to practice them in "pseudocommunicative" situations. But, the objective must go beyond "skill getting"; we must lead the students to "skill using". That is, they have to be able to understand and respond to messages in real-life communication and interactions.

The decrees concerning the new curriculums place special emphasis on the communicative ability that language learners have to achieve, but often teachers ask how they must go about this.

No one has a magic wand, but there are attempts to offer teachers strategies, activities, and materials that in some way or another facilitate this enormous task. The APAC conference, the Girona conference in November, and other events that are organized in different places throughout the year aim to help professionals find mechanisms that can work with their groups.

In this issue of the journal, you will find articles that can get you to reflect on the teaching of English as an international language (Eve Schnitzer's), the central role of collocations in the teaching and le-

arning of languages (Michael McCarthy's), and even ready-to-use activities with material that can be downloaded from our web page, like Alicia Gala's Port-Adventure section, Michael Tomlinson's humor in the classroom, or Brian Brennan's use of pictures to generate tasks. Also, Hugh Dellar puts forward ways to "set aside" grammar a little in Making the Leap from Grammar to Lexis.

Even though the new information and communication technologies are being to have a seemingly required presence in the classroom, and the article by Yolanda Scott-Tennent presents many internet resources for primary school students, we must not forget that the ethnic diversity in our classrooms necessitates working on the acceptance of different cultures. The work carried out by five EOI teachers, of which we give you the first part, Surviving culture shock in the classroom, is an interesting contribution for high school students.

We hope that the material we are presenting you with, along with what you can find on our web page, will be of help to you in your daily work.

We would like to thank the teachers who have sent contributions in to us, like Alicia Gala and José Luis Bartolomé, and encourage all of you to share your experiences, opinions, and work with the rest of our readers.

Good luck with the beginning of the school year!



Letter from our president

Dear All,

What's in a name? Or, more to the point: What's in an acronym? Take APAC. Don't be misled by abstract sounding words. APAC stands for a big pack of very real people: lots of teachers with real names and real surnames. That is why it is always a pleasure to use this letter not to discuss things but to discuss persons. The joyful retirement of three dear and distinguished colleagues brings me such an opportunity. Isabel Villader, Dolors Solé and Pepita Subirà are retiring this year after decades of good service to the cause of education and TEFL in Catalonia. Their names must be familiar to any APAC member since they have been life-long supporters of our association.

Isabel Villader was a member of the APAC board for many years and, crucially, stood as president in a delicate, transitional moment. Isabel aimed at making APAC a more professional and inclusive body and made key contributions in order to give new vigour to our ailing financial resources.

Dolores Solé has been for years our most loyal supporter inside the Department of Education. Her managerial skills and personal energy were instrumental in creating an atmosphere of efficient collaboration between the Centre de Recursos de

Llengües Estrangeres and APAC. For some twenty years Dolores has coordinated a team of professionals in the Department of Education that have shaped the best initiatives in our field.

Pepita Subirà was part of an in-service training scheme started in the eighties that facilitated the emergence of a number of great, innovative professionals in Primary education. She was amongst the founding fathers and mothers of APAC and is the co-author of "The Big Red Bus", one of the most extraordinary successes in EFL publishing by Catalan authors.

These three very professional ladies stand for what is best in our association. I want to express on behalf of all APAC members our deeply felt gratitude for the way they were and for the way they are. Retirement is an administrative act and they do deserve to ease their workload but I know that the three of them will remain active APAC members for many years to come. Isabel, Dolores, Pepita: No need for you to go back to school but please keep helping younger teachers to make sense of their work in schools. Stay on.

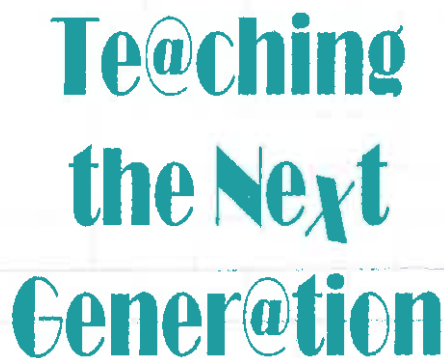
As ever,

*Miquel Berga
President*



There are some novelties on www.apac.es

On the portal we have the première of a new monthly section called Apac Editorials. It's a leader article on an ELT topic written by an editor and subscribed to by the whole team. But it doesn't end there. As it's in blog format you are cordially invited to participate by commenting on and debating the ideas expressed.



Teaching
the Next
Generation

The front page also offers a direct link to the presentation of the upcoming Apac Congress titled 'Teaching the Net generation'. Accompanying this you'll find a call-for-papers for the Convention. If you have an idea for a workshop this is the place to start. We are always pleased to support presentations from chalkface teachers.

Now is also the time to browse the John McDowell 2008 awards page. It sports an update on the different modalities accepted this year and how to apply. Applications are accepted until the end of December.

The British Council in BCN are planning to hold a one day conference at the end of this month. You'll find a link to the details under 'Teachers' Associations' at the bottom of the portal.

Keep in touch and hear all the latest by joining our the e-group subscription link at www.apac.es. At present there are around 70 members. It won't cost you a penny and may save you time and effort.



In the pipeline there are plans to enable us to network even more easily, frequently and extensively by setting up a social networking platform. More of that anon...

Reach out to each other via apac.es

Webweaver.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS



APAC welcomes the contributions of teachers who want to share their experiences and their thoughts, both in our quarterly magazine and in our annual convention. Articles or presentations dealing with new materials, new techniques and new methods are most welcome. We are also interested in methodological and educational issues related to the teaching profession.

Teaching the net generation

Few of us would have believed - 20 years ago - when the use of internet and web-related applications started to enter our lives, that our profession would be so affected by this new development. Any possible task we can think of today, from obtaining materials for our lessons, to communicating with the students or our employers (including access to our pay slip) requires using the internet on a regular basis.

The spread of internet has been very influential in the consolidation of communicative language teaching and in the introduction of humanistic approaches which require shared responsibilities between teachers and students and imply a shift in power relations in the classroom.

But some teachers think that things have gone too far, that the tables have been turned on us. Internet has changed our students radically and we find it difficult to adapt to our new context. Today's students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach. Specialised literature describes us teachers as Digital immigrant educators and refers to our students as Digital natives, which clearly states our disadvantageous situation. Things have changed, and we need to change in terms of approach and in terms of content. There is no going back.

Past APAC conventions have already addressed a variety of IT related topics and uses. Our 2009 Convention plans to have The NET as the centre of the debates and sessions. Gavin Dudeney and Jeremy Harmer have already confirmed their participation, and we look forward to learning about the expansion of **Second Life** and how it may impact our already complicated real life. Other equally experienced EFL speakers have already shown interest in coming.

We would like to invite you to present at our Convention (downloadable forms at) and to attend the Convention sessions at the Pompeu next February (26-28).

See you in February!!!

Te@ching
the Next
Gener@tion

APAC- ELT Convention 2009

Dates: February 26th, 27th and 28th
UPF - Campus Ciutadella

Call for papers available at
www.apac.es

Deadline for submitting proposals:
November 13th, 2008

Foreign Languages and Multilingual Spain: an exchange in “Nature”



Nature 454, (31 July 2008)

Schools in a third of Spain teach only in minority languages

Sir
Your Editorial ‘*Comédie française*’ () argues that opposition by the members of the *Académie française* to including regional languages in the French constitution is disingenuous. But maybe these French academics have looked south and seen what has happened in Spain, where “regional and minority languages, like endangered species”, are considered to “merit protection” by several of the regional governments. Today, it is impossible to obtain public or publicly funded education in Spanish, the common language, in the schools of about one third of

the country, including Catalonia, Mallorca and Valencia. For example, teaching is conducted in Catalan or one of its variants in northeastern Spain, and in Gallego in Galicia in the northwest.

In the Basque country, despite the obscurity of the language, education programmes will be available only in Basque from 2009 and programmes taught partially in Spanish will be dropped.

This is an absurd situation, where in some places it is easier for Spanish children to study in English (for example, in the British Council schools) than in Spanish, the language

that the Spanish constitution has set as the common official language.

It has stimulated prominent — and by no means all conservative — intellectuals, headed by the novelist Mario Vargas Llosa, to sign a manifesto calling to defend the rights of Spanish-speaking people in their own country (see [or in automatic-translation English at](#)). ¡Qué horror!

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Nature 455 (4 septembre 2008)

Languages: Catalan speakers learn a wider range

SIR – Jose M. Rojo claims, in his correspondence “Schools in a third of Spain teach only in minority languages (*Nature 454*), that public education is not available in Spanish in schools in Catalonia, Mallorca and Valencia. However, in Catalonia, the Spanish-language skills of schoolchildren completing their education are equivalent to those of children across Spain.

The Programme for International Students Assessment () indicates that the learning capacities of Catalan and Spanish schoolchildren in science and mathematics are not dependent on whether they receive a bilingual education.

His conclusion flies in the face of the manifesto mentioned in Rojo’s letter, which seeks to enforce a Spanish rather than bilingual education, and to relegate Basque, Catalan and Galician to a linguistic ghetto.

A recent study shows that in most Spanish regions, between half and two-thirds of the population does not know a foreign language (F.Alvira Martin and J.Garcia López *cuad.Inform.Econ.* **205**, 119-138:2008;). But in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands, where most of the population understands both Catalan and Spanish, about three-quarters of the population can also

speak a foreign language. It might be in the better interests of Spain and science to improve the present knowledge of foreign languages and encourage an effective multilingual education, rather than striving to enforce monolingual Spanish education.

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Nature 455 (4 septembre 2008)

Languages: Spain’s minority-language speakers are bilingual

SIR- In his Correspondence “ Schools in a third of Spain teach only in minority languages” (*Nature 454*), José M.Rojo complained about the impossibility of studying in Spanish in one-third of the public schools in Spain.. This is, at best, misleading. The

Catalan schooling system, for example, does indeed promote the use of Catalan, but native Catalan students are as fluent in Spanish as their monolingual counterpart. The political manifesto Rojo cites to emphasize his point is riddled with contradictions, is not

endorsed by any linguistic and does not belong in the pages of *Nature*.

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VIII JORNADES PEDAGÒGIQUES DE LLENGÜES ESTRANGERES

Dies: Novembre 27, 28 i 29 de 2008

Lloc: EOI Girona

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ORIGIN C16: from a
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 in a structure

Collocations in General and Specialised Registers of English

by Michael
 McCarthy



His talk looks at how corpus-based investigations can provide evidence of collocational patterns in everyday spoken and written English, both in general registers such as conversation and newspapers, as well as in more specialised registers, such as Business English and Academic English (in both spoken and written forms). He demonstrates how collocation creates the “fingerprints” of registers and how it is central to meaning. Real examples are provided from

several spoken and written corpora, and implications for language teaching and learning are presented.

We are going to start with a little history lesson, look back and see where we come from in the way we study language, where we are now and where we are going.

The theme of this conference is *The Great Leap Forward*. That was a slogan of the Chinese People's Revolution in the sixties. The Great Leap Forward means you make a sudden advance, sudden progress.

In the past, the traditional focus was on the study of single words. Students think learning a language is learning words. We talk about competence in a language in terms of how many words they know. This has been a very strong and dominant focus in the study of language.

Michael McCarthy is Emeritus Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Nottingham, UK, Adjunct Professor of Applied Linguistics, Pennsylvania State University, USA, and Adjunct Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Limerick, Ireland. He is author/co-author/editor of more than 30 books and more than 70 academic papers. He is co-director (with Ronald Carter) of the 6-million word CANCODE spoken English corpus project and the one-million word CANBEC spoken business English corpus. He has lectured on language and language teaching in 38 countries and has been actively involved in ELT for 41 years.

But also many decades ago, people started the study of collocations; the way words come together, how they are attracted to one another, like human beings. They form partnerships and some are stronger than others. Going back to the time when Europe was divided and we had the Western bloc and the Eastern bloc, in the Eastern bloc people were already studying collocations. Dictionaries were being published with collocations. For example in English: somebody has *fair hair*, not *light hair*; or he or she has *blond hair* not *beige hair*. But if your hair is the same colour as your car you cannot say *I have blond hair and drive a blond car*.

The unit of meaning, how we create meaning in language, is something that does not belong exclusively to the single word but maybe to two, three or four words.

The study of collocations was mostly carried out by looking at texts or getting ideas out of people's heads in the days before computers. Today I want to talk about what happens when we look at words using corpora in a computer; using the power of the computer to analyse large numbers of texts, huge databases.

The easiest way to contextualise the concept of corpora is to think of the internet. Internet is a huge corpus. It has millions and millions of texts. To get information you search with Google or Yahoo, or any of those searchers. You input a word or a phrase and you get millions of hits. Working with corpora we do exactly the same thing. We have thousands of texts and we search those texts using computer software, using searchers. When you look at texts this way it changes everything, and you begin to realise that the meaning of language does not just live inside single words. It carries over to two, three or even four words. So the unit of meaning, how we create meaning in language, is something that does not belong exclusively to the single word but maybe to two, three or four words.

We are going to look at different types of corpora starting with typical everyday conversations. Then we are going to compare that with more specialised English: the English of academic life used in universities and colleges and also with the English of business. We shall have no prejudices, no prejudgements. The computer is going to do the job for us.

The computer is going to do the job for us.
Computers are stupid but good at doing four things:

- Storing massive amounts of data
- Retrieving it very quickly
- Counting very quickly
- Seeing patterns, elements that are repeated.

The computer's first task is to search through millions of words uttered by people having friendly conversations. It will look for pairs of words that are repeated and will try to find the most common pairs. It sounds like a lot, but it is not so much when we realize that an ordinary person uses about 10,000 words on average in every hour of conversation.

Here are the elements in the list of frequency:

Number one and number two are interesting. Both form a little pair in respect to one another in the way we relate to the other person and analyse how much we share with him (you know) or whether we need to clarify, say more (I mean).

Top 20 word pairs (spoken)

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. You know | 11. I was |
| 2. I mean | 12. On the |
| 3. I think | 13. And then |
| 4. In the | 14. To be |
| 5. It was | 15. If you |
| 6. I don't | 16. Don't know |
| 7. Of the | 17. To the |
| 8. And I | 18. At the |
| 9. Sort of | 19. Have to |
| 10. Do you | 20. You can |

“Sort of” is used when the speaker wants to be a little vague. Everybody says it whether they admit it or not. The computer does not lie.

In newspapers it is entirely different; the most frequent collocations are little grammatical chunks: prepositions. The written language is all about relationships of time, place and logic. Relationships in the world rather than relationships between people.

Spoken databases always forefront the relationship between speaker and listener: *you know* and *I mean*. It is all about you and me. It is a technique for bringing people into the conversation.

We go further and ask the computer to look for chunks of three words or four words. Larger chunks become very rare. Six words is the very maximum. That has to do with the way the human mind is constructed. We can memorize bits of information up to about five or six words. After that, you cannot remember and have to divide again. That is why you can remember your telephone number but not your credit card number. It has too many digits in it.

With three- or four-word chunks, the computer gives more information. Very frequent items are: *things like that* (14), and *something like that* (15), which enable us to relate to the other person’s mind, to their culture, to their common experience. I do not need to make a very detailed list. It will bore the audience. Those expressions are a kind of shorthand, a way of packaging information, of saying *you know what I mean*. It is a very important part of communication: vaguely referring to things in general.

In written texts the patterns are again very different and are all about relationships of time, place and logic.

I want to move now from this very general context of conversation and newspaper writing to a more specific, more goal-directed, academic discourse. We are going to have a look at a spoken academic corpus collected in different departments at a couple of universities in the UK. This corpus belongs to CUP. However, there is another huge academic corpus freely available in internet that has been recorded on the campus of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. It has thousand of hours of recordings of different situations.

To go beyond the purely grammatical word and get to the meaning of the lan-

Top 20 word pairs (written)

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Of the | 11. He was |
| 2. In the | 12. In a |
| 3. To the | 13. With the |
| 4. On the | 14. Of a |
| 5. It was | 15. By the |
| 6. At the | 16. Was a |
| 7. And the | 17. She was |
| 8. To be | 18. I was |
| 9. For the | 19. Had been |
| 10. From the | 20. With a |

Top 20 4-word chunks (spoken)

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. You know what I | 11. A lot of people |
| 2. Know what I mean | 12. Thank you very much |
| 3. I don't know what | 13. I don't know whether |
| 4. The end of the | 14. And things like that |
| 5. At the end of | 15. Or something like that |
| 6. Do you want to | 16. What do you think |
| 7. A bit of a | 17. I thought it was |
| 8. Do you know what | 18. I don't want to |
| 9. I don't know if | 19. That sort of thing |
| 10. I think it was | 20. You know I mean |

Top 20 4-word chunks (written)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The end of | 11. One of the most |
| 2. At th end of | 12. The side of the |
| 3. For the first time | 13. The edge of the |
| 4. The rest of the | 14. The middle of the |
| 5. In the middle of | 15. In front of the |
| 6. At the same time | 16. I don't want to |
| 7. The back of the | 17. For a long time |
| 8. At the top of | 18. In one of the |
| 9. The top of the | 19. On the oder hand |
| 10. Per cent of | 20. By the end of |

guage, we asked the computer to find the most common collocations having at least one content word, not just grammar words. *You know and I mean, sort of* appear again in the list. We are getting more context, but *you know and I mean* are still at the front.

We were not expecting this in academic English. It shows that these collocations are equally important in academic discourse as in everyday conversation. They both relate to the listener and show how speakers constantly monitor the interactive situation even in this very precise universe of academic life. However, there are other chunks exclusively specific to academic language, like *“in terms”* as part of a longer phrase.

Sometimes it is interesting to compare languages. I have the impression that in Spanish and Catalan people use *“por ejemplo / per exemple”* much more frequently than in English in everyday ordinary conversation.

The preoccupations about how precise one needs to be or how much repetition is necessary is also present in academic life, as well as characteristics of academic endeavour, like specifying, categorizing, simplifying, or trying things. One also needs to interact in academic English. Even lectures are becoming much more interactive.

The most frequent words in academic English are:

- Know
- Think
- Things
- Facts
- Right

They confirm that knowledge is being transmitted.

Written academic language is not like spoken language (academic or ordinary), nor is it like the written language of newspapers. It is much more concerned with the organisation of knowledge.

For chunks of more than two words, the argumentation structure for the transmission of knowledge comes together with the interactive structure. This a very powerful tool if you are writing texts for academic language study.

Business English, on the other hand, is full of examples showing the need to be cooperative. *“We need to”* is very frequent. In the academic sphere, *we need to* becomes *you have to*. Both are ways of getting people to do things. But even superior bosses in business will say *“we need to”*, being interactive, indicating we are in this together, we are in cooperation, we are a team. The computer tells us that the use of *we need to* is statistically significant. It is more frequent than

Many of these collocations are more frequent than the single words we teach our students. They are not marginal but rather very much at the centre of academic language.

Top word-pairs involving a lexical word: spoken academic

1. You know	11. You think	21. End of
2. Sort of	12. Need to	22. I know
3. I think	13. Trying to	23. You need
4. I mean	14. The end	24. Know the
5. Kind of	15. Can see	25. Know what
6. The first	16. To say	26. The last
7. Of course	17. That's right	27. Know that
8. All right	18. In fact	28. Terms of
9. Don't know	19. Part of	29. The next
10. The way	20. Talking about	30. To make

3-word chunks in spoken academic english (SAE) and spoken business English (SBE)

SBE	SAE
1. I don't know	1. A lot of
2. A lot of	2. I don't know
3. At the moment	3. One of the
4. We need to	4. You can see
5. I don't think	5. This is a
6. the end of	6. You have to
7. In terms of	7. this is the
8. A bit of	8. In terms of
9. Be able to	9. a sort of
10. At the end	10. there is a

it should be. On the other hand, *you must* has negative statistical significance. It is significant by its absence. It is an indication of the way business is transacted. Overwhelmingly, it is all about collaboration, not confrontation. There is power, but it is exercised in a very interactive way.

In terms of is frequent both in business and academic English, but more so in academic English, and it is important to see how uncommon the collocation is in everyday conversation. Besides the specialised vocabulary, like *costumer, market, strategy, revenue...* these collocations characterise the English of business and would be the language chunks a learner wanting to do business in English would have to acquire. It would be very useful to know how one interacts in order to carry out successful business. Business is all about interaction and being successful with other people.

Many of these collocations are more frequent than the single words we teach our students. They are not marginal but rather very much at the centre of academic language

Some of these chunks are frames on which you hang the rest of the utterances and are syntactically independent from the rest. Others are more integrated. So there are two types of items we need to learn: integrated or whole ones and fragmentary or half ones. If we design a syllabus, we have to include both types of collocations.

Sentence frames	If you look at... The fact that the...
Integrated terms	On the other hand At the same time

The way words are attracted to one another, whether they are grammar words or lexical words, enables us to be fluent.

A meeting between a hydraulics company and a coal company discussing their advertising schedule

Speaker 1: Do you know what I mean? Erm and there again it is a case of getting in front of people when the leads are produced.
 Speaker 2: It is yeah. Yeah
 Speaker 1: That's what is all about
 Speaker 2: We di= Yeah obviously if we get leads erm if the if we need to be wherever it is We need to be in+
 Speaker 1: Mm
 Speaker 2: + China in Korea wherever
 Speaker 1: Wherever
 Speaker 2: We need to be there
 Speaker 1: That's right

To finish up I want to show you some samples of actual conversation from our corpora of business English. It is a meeting between a hydraulics company and a coal company.

Again: *You know what I mean* (in American English it would be *you know what I am saying*) these three words become almost one. The words are attracted to one another and they tend to become frozen.

As a conclusion I would say that the way words are attracted to one another, whether they are grammar words or lexical words, enables us to be fluent. Without these collocations we cannot be fluent. If you had to process every single word, you would be like a robot because you would have to find every word individually in your brain and nobody could speak like that. So to become fluent in a second language you have to acquire these strings or chunks of language and you need to be able to say them fairly quickly:

• *You know what I mean* • *You know what I'm saying* • *I mean* • *Things like that*

Also the academic ones:

• *On the other hand* • *Same time* • *In fact* • *For example*

If you can say them fairly quickly, people will hear you as very fluent. It does not matter if the rest of your message is quite slow. The content bits can be slow and give us time to think. But the chunks have to be fast. Your ability to use these collocations is not everything in fluency, but it is a very big and important part of it. You have to learn them like little bits of music in your head and repeat them on the train, on the bus. Turn them over in your head all the time. As a student of Spanish at a British University, I read beautiful literature but never studied these useful chunks which are so common in Spanish as they are in English. It is only in recent years that I have become aware that if I want to be fluent in Spanish I have to learn, without thinking, chunks of language that go together. I must not stop and think about every single word.

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What does this word mean?

||

“ Show me how to use this word ”

Making the Leap from Grammar to Lexis

by Hugh
Dellar

(University of
Westminster
Thomson)

Summary of his
talk done

by Ana
Aguilar



*“Hugh Dellar being presented by
Neus Figueras”*

Grammar is obviously reassuring. As teachers, we have all invested time and effort in working out how to explain it. Yet it only takes students so far. This talk explores the fears around making the leap into the unknown and beginning to teach more lexically – and suggests eight ways of making the transition easier. He begins by considering the roots of the stranglehold that grammar exerts on ELT – as well as admitting to grammar’s seductions – before moving on to look at the limitations and problems inherent in this way of thinking about language and, therefore, about classroom goals. He outlines

steps which will ease the transition for teachers looking to move away from grammar-dominated teaching. He considers the importance of good examples and explores what constitutes a good example and why. He discusses ways of exploiting and exploring the language taught in class, the importance of – and difficulties involved in – answering students’ questions and outlines some ways in which these changes lead to teacher development. His article is rooted in personal experience and the classroom, yet also aims to tackle theoretical issues at the heart of ELT

In my early years as a teacher I was really grammar orientated. It was also what students expected. To prepare my classes I used my course book, reference books to design the time lines, the concept questions, the controlled practice and a few games thrown in to consolidate grammar.

My lessons were PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production). We used to say PPP meant: Presentation, Practice, **Pray to God** because production did not usually follow the two previous steps. The grammar explanation and a few drills thrown in were no guarantee that the learners had mastered the structure.

Take for example the present perfect. I presented a very neat time line for an action done in the past but within a time period that is not yet over. Then I asked a few questions:

*Have you ever been to Barcelona?
Yes, I have/ No, I haven't*

Then came the drills:

*I've been to Spain
He's been to Spain
They've been to Spain*

And I went home happy for having done the present perfect and planning to start in on a new structure in the following class. But those neatly organised lessons were not bringing the results expected from the learners. They still could not glue together all the bits and pieces they had been presented with in the grammar lessons and construct utterances.

Gradually, I started to experience a change in my beliefs and see there was more to life than grammar. Three elements favoured this change:

1. My own experience in learning a foreign language. I went to teach in Indonesia and started to learn the language. I discovered that learning "chunks" would really enhance my grammar studies
2. Michael Lewis's book "*The Lexical Approach*"
3. My new job at Westminster University.

I moved from being a grammar-orientated teacher to being a lexical-orientated one. No more teaching of single words but of utterances and collocations. I embraced the *Lexical Pedagogy*. The jump was scary to begin with, leaving the safe, familiar ground of grammar. But it is necessary for different reasons:

- Teaching grammar adds very little to the
- The toughest thing for students to grasp is how grammar is lexicalised.
- If we do not take the jump we might die of boredom.

Eventually I developed some basic principles to teach by:

1. Examples are more useful than explanations

When students ask "What does this word mean?" what they really mean is "Show me how to use this word". This isn't to say we don't need to explain new language. What it is saying, though, is that we need to START from thinking about examples of usage and work backwards from there. The explanation should always be rooted in a context of use. Take the word "rush". If you try to explain it by acting out running or saying it means to do something very quickly, the problem for students is how this is different from run or sprint -or even "wolf" (as in "wolf down your food"!). It is far better to root the explanation in something you'd actually say using the word "rush". For instance, I might explain the word like this:

OK. It's 5 to 9. I'm in Oxford Street. My class starts at 9. I meet someone I know. They stop me and start talking. "Hi. How're you? I haven't seen you for ages". I chat for a minute or two, but keep looking at my watch, before saying "Listen, I'd love to stop and talk, but I'm in a rush. My class starts in two minutes."

And on the board I'd then write that whole chunk:

Listen, I'd love to stop and talk, but I'm in a rush. My class starts in two minutes.

I might even add in hurry next to rush to show it's equivalent - in this context.

Despite the fact that this explanation perhaps takes a minute or two longer and there's more language on the board for students to deal with, this actually makes life easier for them in several key ways. Firstly, it helps them to learn what to say in the situations when they'd want to use the word. It also means that not only is the *context* clear, but so is the *co-text* -the language often found around the word being taught. In a sense, the idea of *co-text* is a slightly broader version of *collocation*. Where the collocation of rush here might be to be in a rush, the co-text is the language commonly used with that expression -in the typical contexts it'd be used in.

This is important for two reasons. The first is that writing the language up like this gives the students more support, more to review from at home. By giving the whole chunk, you allow the possibility of students actually memorizing and re-using the thing as it is. This means that teaching lexically places a much higher stress of the importance of memorizing. Of course, not all students WILL remember the whole chunk. Some will remember 80% of it, some 60%, some only a couple of words. This isn't an argument for going back to teaching less. Teaching more language gives better students the possibility of learning the whole thing -and for those that don't, well, 50% is better than nothing!

On top of this, there's one of the great ironies of teaching lexically, which is that this kind of teaching actually means students get MORE exposure to grammar and thus have more chance of slowly honing their accuracy. Traditionally, the idea has been that you do one big block of a structure in one lesson and that out of this, you're then somehow magically able to lexicalise the structure in all the different kinds of ways needed to help you talk about whatever you want. The problem being not only that this clearly doesn't happen, but also that there's a kind of blink-and-you-miss-it mentality to this kind of grammar teaching. If you don't get the structure embedded in your brain in that one session, tough luck! That's it on that for the next hundred hours.

Teaching lexically, however, means that because you're dealing with WHOLE LANGUAGE, the most common structures come up time and time again, in each and every class. This can only be a good thing. One final point to make here is that this kind of exposure in class should aid students' receptive understanding of English. By showing them the words that go together, we're helping them at least to notice this stuff when they encounter it outside the classroom.

Some implications for classroom materials

If you accept that the example given above is more useful than "to rush" or "to be in a rush", then this has serious implications for coursebooks. Vocabulary exercises need to provide more support, more co-text, and this means coursebook pages may then perhaps look denser than we're used to. It is worth remembering that students learn language from language – not from pictures or blank spaces – and that more words on the page actually makes their life easier, not more difficult.

I think one other implication is that gap-fill

exercises perhaps need to play a more central role. They are the best way both of showing students typical co-text, and also of testing whether words have been understood. Asking students to guess meanings or giving them synonyms to match to new words operates on the assumption that words actually have direct equivalents which work in the same way -which of course they don't; giving single words or collocations is fine, but again this only goes part of the way towards giving students what they want to say -they'll still have to do the hard part -the grammaticalisation -themselves!! In contrast to all of this, a gap-fill, say this one, for example:

Listen, I'd love to stop and talk, but I'm in a My class starts in two minutes.

is a pretty solid test of both memory and understanding.

For these reasons, the INNOVATIONS series is both rich in language on the page and rich in gapfill exercises. Of course, if all we do with gapfills is simply give them to students to do, let them compare in pairs and then run through the answers, classes can get pretty dull, which brings us to another basic principle:

2. Ask questions about language as you're going through answers

Once we've explained what new language means and have given students examples on the board, we can then use the class to expand on this. Learning how to ask questions about the language I'm teaching in order to generate co-text is one of the things that has kept me interested in my job, for this is one of the occasions where students get to bring their lives and experiences into the English classroom.

To look at how this works, let's start by taking the example of "rush" again. Once I'd got my model example sentences up on the board, I'd then just simply ask the class "Any other reasons why maybe *'I'm in a rush?'*" This is a great kind of concept check, because if I haven't explained the expression well enough, they'll be stumped!! Of course, what may start happening is students grasp the idea, but aren't that great at expressing other possible reasons in English, and so shout things out in the mother tongue or in wrong English: "I have appointment my girlfriend" or "I don't want lose my train". This is absolutely fine, but one needs to give them a chance to reformulate the utterance, correct it and add it to their repertoire.

It shows they've got the idea -and it allows

me to do some more teaching. Out of this, I might then end up with something like the following on the board.

Listen, I'd love to stop and talk, but I'm in a rush. -My class starts in two minutes.

**-I'm meeting my girlfriend in ten minutes.
some friends in a bit.**

-I've got a train to catch.

**-I don't want to miss my train.
bus.
flight.**

Students appreciate you helping them to say what they're trying to say in better English. And the fact that they've come up with the meanings mean that that side of things is already understood and, instead, they're freer to focus on form. Where the comedy comes in is when one student adds "If I'm late, my girlfriend (mime cutting throat)" or "But is not important. Is only English class. Let's go for coffee".

In the same way, language-generating questions about certain bits of language can lead to some amazing stories as they bring their life's experiences to the classroom. For instance, in an Upper-Intermediate class, the phrase *turn a blind eye* came up. I explained it, gave the example of the police here often turning a blind eye to cannabis use and asked anything else people could *turn a blind eye to*. One of my Chinese students, Fang-Li, launched into an impassioned retelling of the time he and three friends took on the school bullies with knives and baseball bats! The teachers apparently not only turned a blind eye, but literally left the playground to avoid the carnage. Fang-Li's lot won, but he still has scars on his forearm, which he showed the group. And to think, before then, we'd always thought he was such a nice boy!!

Asking questions about the language you're teaching in order to generate co-text obviously involves a bit more Teacher Talking Time, but this is not a bad thing. If students don't get this from us in the classroom, where ARE they going to get it? I think it's time we reclaim the dreaded TTT and realise that when we put it to good use, it's actually just called TEACHING! I think an interesting corollary here is that actually more of this kind of focused TTT also leads to more Student Talking Time and more whole-class involvement in the learning process.

One thing that starts happening much more in your classes when you teach more lexically is that students start asking YOU more questions about lan-

guage too. One of the most common kinds of questions comes during the explanation stage. I'll often be in the middle of trying to explain and give examples of, say, *subsidy* and a student will shout out "It's like a *grant*?" Now, it's tempting just to gloss over these questions as they can be quite scary and can really put you on the spot. However, one of the core components of meaning is actually DIFFERENTIAL meaning, and what students are doing when they ask questions like this is basically saying "Yes, I get the general idea, but could you explain to me exactly what the difference between a *subsidy* and a *grant* is, please?" As such, it's worth taking the time to answer these questions quite thoroughly. In this instance, I ended up with the following on the board:

The UK is angry about the subsidies French farmers get from the EU.

They've cut state subsidies to public transport.

The government still subsidises the mining industry fairly heavily.

The whole industry is still quite heavily subsidised.

I got a research grant from the university.

They've thinking of cutting student grants.

Now, of course, you could just explain that "a subsidy is an amount of money paid by the government or another authority to help an industry or business or to pay for a public service, whereas a grant is an amount of money a government or another institution gives to an individual or organization for a particular purpose such as education or home improvement", but actually the examples more or less do that for you -though you could obviously still mention the fact that subsidies are usually to industries, grants to individuals -AND give that little bit extra too.

Taking the time to answer these kinds of questions may mean you don't always get everything you planned to do in class done -but it also means you're teaching your class first and foremost and the material second. A much better way of doing things than vice versa!

Obviously, being able to access the kind of information about collocation / usage needed to deal with these kinds of questions is an acquired skill and one that needs working on. If it's any consolation, I still have questions which stump me and that I can't answer on the spot -and probably always will! It helps keep the brain sharp and alive to language and the way our students perceive it. It

is important for teacher's development. I believe Grammar Teaching gets you stuck.

Perhaps the best way we can train ourselves to get better at explaining language is to use a dictionary as part of our preparation -or retrospectively to look up things that puzzled us and not just to check meaning, but to get ideas about good examples of use as well. One thing worth watching out for at this stage is the difference between what things do and what we say about them. For instance, *balloons go up*, but we very rarely talk about them going up! **The balloon went up** isn't a good example of either balloon or go up. Far better would be something like **Can you help me blow up these balloons?** or else **Prices have gone up a lot this year.** Dictionaries help us find these kinds of examples.

In the same way, I think perhaps the best and most developmental conversations we can have with our colleagues are those about the kinds of questions we get asked in class. Discussing the difference between, say, *oily* and *greasy* in the staff room is more likely to lead to your long-term development than exchanging tips on great activities for revising the present perfect or new recipes for a wet Friday afternoon!!

At the same time, though, I also feel that dictionaries are best kept OUT of the classroom generally. I'm not saying that there's not a place, early on in a course perhaps, for a 10- or 15-minute slot where we run students through how to use them, how to look for collocations and examples, what the abbreviations mean and so on -just that I don't think students pay to come to class in order to then sit there and be told to look things up themselves. They can do that at home -for free! I think that as teachers we have to believe we can give better, more meaningful explanations and examples than dictionaries can -and that we can use the class time more efficiently whilst doing so.

Now, after a few Dos, here come a few Don'ts!

- Don't be afraid of being wrong in front of your pupils and of admitting it.
- I think one thing we need to be wary of when teaching lexis is trying to teach every meaning of words all at once. Students will have enough problems trying to remember the first meaning you tackle. If you've gone for **Listen, I'd love to stop and talk, but I'm in a rush**, it's quite enough to explore extra reasons for why you're **in a rush** -without then saying: "Oh, and then there's **rush hour** -but that's when everyone

travels really slowly because they're all trying to get to work. ..Oh, and sometimes people who've taken a drug like Ecstasy might say *I'm rushing* because the drug is starting to work. ..and you can **watch the rushes of a film**, before the director has changed the first photographed scenes in any way!!!" Stop! A basic rule of thumb would be to simply teach the words in the context they're present in -unless students themselves ask about other usages; then I think it's fine to compare and contrast.

- One of the great advantages of thinking and teaching lexically is that you realize that words always go together with other ones, whether that be as part of collocations, fixed expressions or whatever. Once you get your head round this, residual fears you may have had about supposedly difficult areas of the lexicon -phrasal verbs, separable and inseparable; transitive and intransitive verbs; idioms -all start melting away!!! These areas have traditionally been made to look and feel like even more grammar by coursebook writers, but in reality, they're no easier or harder to teach and learn than anything else. As such, DON'T scare students with jargon. Keep things simple and just show students the words that go together and explain what they mean. It's enough. I think it's also generally pretty unhelpful to only teach idioms or phrasal verbs together in big blocks -often as part of the run-in to FCE or CAE exams!! They can come into courses and classes much earlier on, as they're part and parcel of the way we typically talk about all manner of everyday topics.

- Connected to this is another DON'T: DON'T over-explain or try to explain why lexical items are the way they are. It's because that's how we say things!! When students ask WHY we say **I felt like a fish out of water**, it's because we do. When they ask if they can say **I felt like a fish in the water** to mean they felt comfortable and at home, the answer is NO! Why? Because we don't say it! Simple. Students generally have no problems accepting this as an explanation. Indeed, what other kind of explanation IS there?

- Similarly, I don't think we do our students many favours by teaching them etymology or lexical history. Do students need to know the history of the girl guides to understand what **He's just trying to win some brownie points** means? I don't think so! Do they need to know that **barbarian** is derived from the Greek root **barbaros** meaning stranger or non-Greek?

Definitely not! Try to keep all this cultural history and overly academic waffle out of the EFL classroom. Keep things simple and in plain English!!

3. Teach grammar as lexis

Another thing that starts happening more when you teach lexically is that you teach what you may perhaps previously have perceived as examples of grammatical structures as lexical items instead. This means students can start getting exposure to structures they were previously denied access to at a much earlier stage, thus priming them for closer encounters with them later on. An example might be the question **How long've you been doing that, then?** There's no reason why an Elementary student can't learn that question and some common answers **-Not very long. Only a few weeks, Quite a long time. Maybe four or five years** -and practise it. Indeed, it's in Innovations Elementary Unit 7, page 37! So long as our expectations at this stage are that we just want students to learn this question and to be able to use it, we won't be disappointed. It's unrealistic to expect broader use of the present perfect continuous yet. There's plenty of time to get onto **I've been meaning to do it for ages, but simply haven't got round to it yet** at a later stage!!

Apart from earlier -and more repeated -exposure to core structures, another advantage of teaching grammar as lexis is that you can side-step all the tricky questions students throw at you! If you correct *'It's a safety city'* to *'It's a safe city'* and are then asked why it was wrong, it's obviously tempting to say *"Well, we don't use the noun safety before another noun, like city"* but there'll always be the smart student who says *"Well, what about safety zone? And safety fears? And safety helmet?"* Rather than trying to explain these 'exceptions' away and digging ourselves ever deeper into a hole in the process, simply say *"Because it's wrong. We don't say safety city, we say safe city."* In the same way, when a student asks why we use *won't* in the expression *You won't have heard of it* -which is talking about the past -it's because we do. It's a fixed expression!

One other thing we can do when teaching grammar as lexis is to show patterns clearly. For instance, if you're doing a lesson where you're teaching students to get better at having conversations with old friends they haven't seen for a while, you might -with a little help and some suggestions from your students -end up with something like this on the board:

- Mike! Long time, no see.
- I know! I haven't seen you for ages. So what've you been up to?
- Oh, I've been really busy working.
looking after the kids
doing the new flat up.
finishing off my dissertation.

Here, students get grammar and lexis combined. They get to see how to say what they might well want to be able to say!

4 Get students to practise using the lexis

One final DO is Do get students to practise. This DOESN'T mean getting them to write example sentences of use. It means giving them clear, simple, personally meaningful contexts in which to connect the new lexis to their own lives. This is often most simply done by just asking them questions using the new language. These could be things such as the following:

- *Which industries are most heavily subsidised in your country?*
- *How do you feel about that?*
- *Do students in your country get grants to study?*
- *Do the police in your country sometimes turn a blind eye to things? What?*
- *Have you ever felt like a fish out of water? When? Why?*

Alternatively, some bits of vocabulary lend themselves more to a kind of role-play. Students could walk around talking to different students asking **"So what've you been up to?"** and giving different **"I've been busy -ing"** answers each time -or they could cut the conversations short by saying **"Listen. I'd love to stop and talk, but I'm in a rush"** and giving a different excuse why each time. The important thing is they get the chance to talk. The language they use can be later used as input for other lessons.

One point to make here is that this will mean yet more opportunities for students to bring their personalities, their stories, their lives to the class - which is one more way for you to stay enthused about the job you've got!

Finally, I must admit I am a fan of translation. It has been rejected for the convenience of the native teacher but I believe that used properly, it can be very useful: a short cut to memorizing long chunks of language.





Surviving Culture Shock in the Classroom. Five Approaches (Part One)

by Felicity Pearce, Merce Burrel,
Rodrigo Alonso, Núria Yidal and Marc Olmedo

How did we get together?

We are all teachers at EOI Esplugues except Rodrigo Alonso who teaches in Viladecans. We are friends and work colleagues and were willing to collaborate and reflect on cultural differences and similarities of the language we were teaching.

What was the idea?

Inspired by *Watching the English*, by Kate Fox, we were encouraged to look at ways of familiarizing students with cultural realities of the target language with the support of visual Internet and literature materials. We covered and challenged stereotypes, using British humour, and with the belief that stereotypes came to exist for a reason and by understanding the reason, students can access a foreign culture in more depth, instead of staying on the surface. We thought that some serious matters could be looked at in an ironic way without having to be disrespectful. We believe that everything can be talked about and crit-

ically analysed as long as you do it with care and respect. That was our aim and we think we have been successful with the activities we have prepared for the classroom.

The project

The different chapters of the book gave us ideas for the topics we wanted to work with and these are the different set of tasks we developed inspired by the content suggested in Fox's book:

1. *Accessing English through Stereotypes* (Felicity Pearce)



The stereotypes that exist in Spain related to British culture are what they are, and we cannot change a nation's ideas, but these activities should help to see the funny side, and also show students the stereotypical ideas that exist between Britain and the US. The poem or rap is a very ironic and British insight into the ideas of stereotypes and should create a light-hearted environment in which students can discuss

stereotypes and hopefully overcome them, as well as learning some useful stereotype-related vocabulary, just make sure they know the rap is a joke and most British rap is better!

2. *Mobile or Cell Phone?*

(Núria Vidal)



The use of mobile phones has recently changed our lives. There is not yet a set of rules of etiquette regarding their use in public spaces. Understanding that our students, as well as ourselves, needed to become aware of the disturbance the sound of a ring tone in class represents, we designed a series of activities which go from setting their mobiles into English, learning the text language, sending SMSs, watching a video to become aware, through exaggeration, how mobiles are used in our society. Students finish the activities, after reflection, designing a set of rules for the use of the mobiles in the school.

3. *Sports and Misbehaviour*

(Merce Burrel)



The stereotype of football hooligans is dealt with, the stereotype of Spain as the best place to live is challenged. Catastrophes from sporting events also appear as well as a world-famous Spanish footballer. All this in activities that include a lot of speaking with the support of a song, grammar, listening, reading and writing activities based on materials from the Internet.

4. *Meat and Two Veg*

(Rodrigo Alonso)



We personally believe that stereotypes have a reason to exist. We need them to reinforce our own existence. By opposing the other and confronting their nature we create ours and justify it. These activities, however, deal with stereotypes to critically analyse them and challenge the whole idea that backs them up. Shallow and simple as it might seem, many times food traditions hide inside the essences of our being. We sometimes brandish national food facts as indicators of belonging to or being part of without really

analysing them or stopping to think about the historical background that gave birth nurturing them. In this activity students will deal with food issues and stereotypes. They will analyse them, learn about their origins and compare them with their own culinary history and traditions. The final goal is to make them aware of the real nature of these stereotypes, understand them, make comparisons with their own ones and, if necessary, overcome them.

5. *God Knows!*

(Marc Olmedo)



The topic that serves as a framework for this set of activities is religion and beliefs. While it is true that nowadays religion is not very relevant to the lives of many people in either Spain or Britain (at least not as relevant as it is to the lives of a large number of people in the USA) it is also true that it is rare to find a person from Spain, Britain or anywhere else in the world who holds absolutely no personal opinion about the existence of God or some other kind of superior being, about death, reincarnation, astrology, miracles, etc. In our experience as teachers, we can say that a large number of students find these topics highly motivating and are very often eager to talk about them in class. But the set of activities that we suggest will provide students with opportunities not only to talk about their beliefs but also to gain insight into some of the most important religions and, most importantly, into the role of religion in Britain and the USA, as opposed to Spain.

We hope you enjoy carrying the activities in the classroom as much as we enjoyed creating and experiencing them.

Note: It is a known fact that the Internet and all its contents are in an ever-changing process. Because of this, some of the links, we provide in the activities, might not be available by the time you read this. We apologise for this, but also recommend you, you do some research. It is also true that many resources that are no longer available in a specific web site might have been transferred to another one or can be found in any other kind of social network.

Accessing English through Stereotypes

by Felicity Pearce

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Objectives:

- To encourage low-level students to see that “English” is accessible even without a high level, by showing how other aspects can aid comprehension (facial expressions, tone of voice, music, film, etc.).
- To help students to “stretch” their English, by showing how much they already know, or think they know, about English-speaking countries.
- To show students “British” humour and how important it is to make light-hearted fun of one’s national stereotypes.
- To get students to write about an important aspect of their country and talk about what stereotypes foreigners may have regarding it.
- To teach students some slang and bad language, and the contexts they appear in.

Levels:

A1, A2, B1

Procedure:

Begin by introducing the topic of “stereotypes”. Write stereotypes on the board, have two halves, one “UK” and the other “USA” and see what ideas students have about these countries. Maybe use prompts like *weather, food, people, transport, cities, sports, drinking, clothes, etc.*

1. 1.1, 1.2 Give out the first 2 sheets, and students can work in pairs/groups on each “verse”, trying to work out which “cultural elements” from the box are mentioned in each verse, what,

specifically, is said about them, and discuss whether or not they agree. Then each group tells the class what they have found in their verse, so that everyone has a completed box. (For higher levels, this could be a starting point for more debate).

2. Students watch the video.

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=2l1F6BmKbO0>

Before they see the video, explain first that they should not look at the “poem” as these are not the complete lyrics and they are not in order. (Explain that the first verses are an introduction and are irrelevant to students’ comprehension.) They should focus on watching the video and the other elements, such as the humour and the visuals and the music. They complete exercise 2 while they watch. Gauge the reaction to the video, any opinions and ask which elements they saw.

3. Students watch video again and circle words/phrases they hear. Invite any further questions regarding comprehension.

e.g.

A bed with wheels – stretcher (from the song)

Perhaps – synonym of maybe

To cause a stir – to provoke a reaction

4. Students can work alone or in groups, making up “verses” for a poem about their own country or city, which can later be shared with the class.

5. Finally, students write down the new vocabulary they have learned. This could either be done orally, to allow stronger students to lead weaker ones, in small groups or individually.



STEREOTYPES.



1. Read the "poem" below, and to try to understand the meaning and style.



<p>LAZY SUNDAY UK</p> <p>1</p> <p>We live in Cambridge (That's a city) With a uni-ver-sity English films are often gritty But real life is not so shitty We are from England (Don't you know?) The home of movies that are great We Brits make films like "The Ghost Train" While you Yanks make "Snakes on a Plane"</p> <p>2</p> <p>We're not allowed to carry guns As a result no one gets killed We can drink beer at 18 We love to drink those mothers chilled! But if you come over to England Then I'm sure that you will see That even beer can't compare To some mother fucking tea</p> <p>3</p>	<p>3</p> <p>En Angleterre we have a queen In fact a whole damn monarchy They use up millions of pounds Which could have gone to charity Sure, we don't have so much money Or as many bombs or guns But what we lack in armaments We make up for with hot cross buns</p> <p>4</p> <p>What is so special about England? Do I hear you rightly ask us? I reply: "We love to fight, We love to kick foreigners arses! You want proof? That's not a problem You see all you have to do Is go and watch a football match And ask anyone "Parlez Vous.. ?"</p> <p>5</p> <p>Now just in case there is a chance That you might need some more convincing Please let me remind you that we Brits Can act and dance and sing You've heard of Orlando Bloom He's the exception to the rule Everyone else from our small nation Is just motherfuckin' cool</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Cupcakes are for pussies When it comes to teatime snacks We all dunk scones into our tea All other condiments are wack You think you're cool Because your bodies Look like Scarlett T. Johansson We could as well but we prefer To look like Sir Richard C. Branson</p> <p>7</p> <p>On an English Lazy Sunday We hate golf and hoops and bowling What we really love to do is read Some good old JK Rowling Don't you know she wrote Harry Potter And his life of wizardry At Hogwarts they put spells on frogs And drink their motherfuckin' tea</p> <p><i>By Sam Baron and Raph von Blumenthal</i></p>
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Here is some vocabulary explained:

* = informal ** = rude *** = extremely rude

γριττιψ (αδφ)	Word used to describe the true-to-life nature of British films.
σηιτιψ *** (αδφ)	Not good
Ψανκσ *	Insult for Americans (not very strong)
το βε αλλοωεδ το δο στη	To be permitted to do something
μοτηερφυκκερ (μοτηερ) *** (v)	Insult, adjective and noun used very commonly in rap songs/language.
μοτηερφυκκινγ *** (αδφ)	
δαμν ** (αδφ)	Bad word used when something is not liked
χηαριτιψ	Businesses which do not make profit, e.g. Oxfam
ηοτ χροσσ βυνσ	Traditional British snack
το κιχκ σομμεονεεσ αρσε **	To be violent and cause someone injury/hurt them
χυπχακεσ	Traditional American snack (they eat them with coffee)
πυσσιεσ ***	Insult: men who are not masculine
σχονεσ	Traditional British teatime food
ωαχκ * (αδφ)	the opposite of cool
ηροπσ ανδ βοωλινγ	Traditional British sports
φρογ	Small, green, friendly amphibian

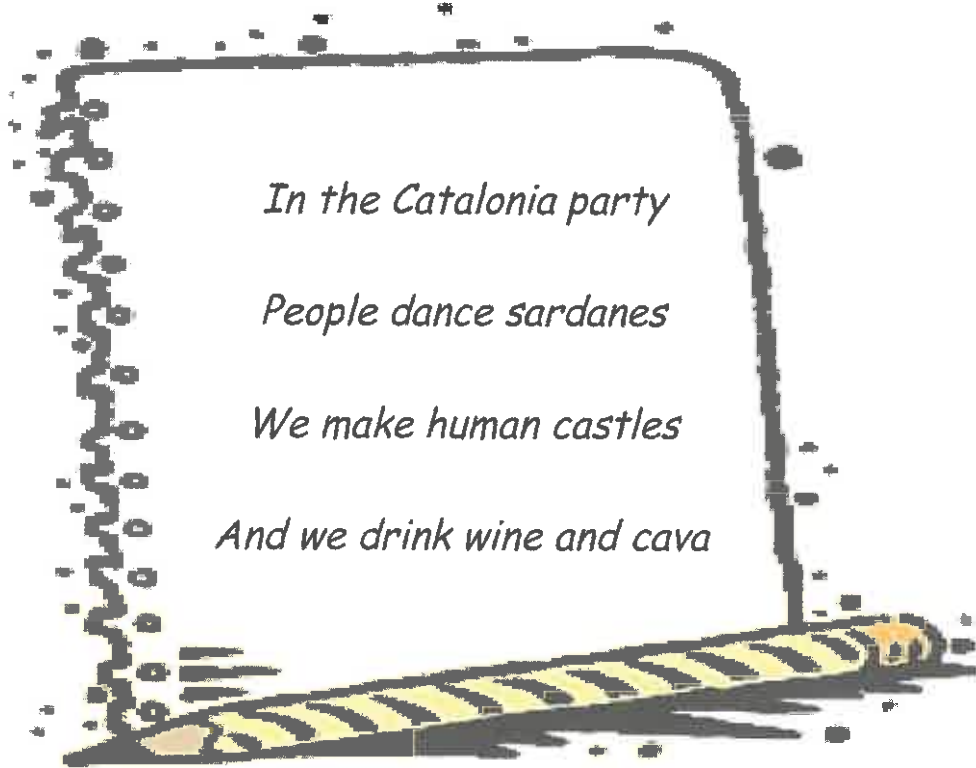
2. Tick which stereotypical things you see in the video and where they come from.

			Seen	Not seen
Hot dogs				
Fish and chips				
Grey, cloudy weather				
Dollar sign				
Wimbledon Tennis Courts				
A pint of beer				
The Queen				
Hollywood actors				
London Underground				
Donuts				
Cambridge University				
Football match				

3. Circle the words or sentences you hear.



4. Now write one or more “verses” for a poem about your own country or city, in English (it does not have to rhyme). Here is an example:



5. Now fill in the table below with as many words or phrases related to each topic. This can include stereotypes and reality!

TOPIC	Words/phrases learned
Food	
Weather	
Drink	
Cinema	
Sports	
Wars	
Tea	



Mobile or Cell Phone? A matter of identity

by Nuria Vidal

Objectives

- help students learn the vocabulary of functions and devices used on mobile phones.
- make them familiar with the language of text messaging.
- make them familiar with the language of phone speaking.
- make them critical with the use of mobile phones.
- involve them in the making of a set of rules to use their mobiles in the school.

Levels

A1 and A2: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10

B1 and B2: 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9

Procedure

1. Using our mobile phones in English

Before we start the activity, ask your students to set their mobiles in English and use it for several days, so that they are able to use and learn the language implied such as: *contacts, messages, call register, profiles, settings, etc...* Ask them to watch mobile and cell or cellular ads on YouTube to get familiar with the different mobile phone devices in British, American or Australian English. Through the ads, let them notice the difference between cell phone or cellular and mobile phone. Where is each term used?

Here are some videos they can watch but your students may find better ones:

-Nokia - Achieve: Achieving Together

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qIZBo8a_pA

-Nokia E62 Unlocked GSM Smartphone (devices written on the screen!)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5MEejkckBkg>

-CES 2007 - Nokia N-Series Video

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_GkLHxfLJI

Ask them what they have learned and fill in the box on page 1 of the handout.

1.1. What do you usually do with your mobile phone?

Students circle the functions they are most familiar with and add other functions that may have that are not written on the handout.

2. Devices

Students see the difference between function and devices and write the functions of their mobile phones next to each of the devices. Remind them to watch the video ads for further practice.

3. Where and when should we use the mobile?

Students watch the video *Trigger Happy TV Giant Phone Compilation* in:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21IOpV5c2OQ> and tick the situations they hear/see in the first column of the handout on page 3. Then, instruct them to fill in the grid for themselves. Where do they think mobile phones should be allowed?

Lower level students may find difficult to fill in the “why”. In that case the teacher may provide a few sentences like:

It's not polite. It's inconsiderate. It's acceptable. You disturb other people, etc.

Get them in groups of four and ask them to compare their answers. Do they agree?

4. Phone language

Watch the video *Trigger Happy TV Giant Phone Compilation* again. Ask them to pay attention to the language used during the conversations and to state where the language is used. Then ask them to join the language with the language function.

5. Text language

Go through the short text list on the handout and make sure your students understand all the sentences. You may discard some of the sentences if you want but all these are commonly used by English speakers.

5.1, 5.2 and 5.3

Students read the text on the little mobile phone, they write a message for one of their colleagues on a piece of paper without saying who the author is or who the message is addressed to.

The teacher collects the messages and distributes them at random making sure no one receives the message he or she has written. The students read the messages aloud and try to guess who the author is and who it is for.

6. The iPhone: Comparing devices

Show students the You Tube video *iPhone Steve Jobs Key Note Highlights* in

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScJMBhgb790>

Steve Job's presentation is a perfect 9' presentation. Advanced students may be asked to think of the structure of the presentation and to think of the content of the video following the questions on the handout.

The previous might not work and you may use the following ones:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZoPd8KUs>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vBUjiG7e20&feature=related>

7. Food for thought

These are statements taken from Kate Fox's book *Watching the English*. They are all very meaningful to the topic and they add a more serious perspective on the use of the mobile phone. Thinking how it has affected our sense of community, as she suggests, may give students a different approach to mobile use. Involve students in the discussion of these statements in groups. Ask them to tell each other if they agree or do not agree. Let them discuss and talk about each of the statements and the “whys” in groups and then as a whole class.

8. Using the mobile phone. When, Where and How?

When students get to this point they can be quite sensitised on “when”, “where”, and “how” should they use their mobiles. Adolescents may complain and say that they want to listen to their music anyway. Ask them how they would feel if they were forced to listen to a piece of Bach or Strauss. If they do not like this music maybe other people do not like theirs.

8.1, 8.2 and 8.3

Even low level students may find these activities possible. More advanced students will expand the activity following the instructions on page 7.

9. Rules of etiquette for mobile use

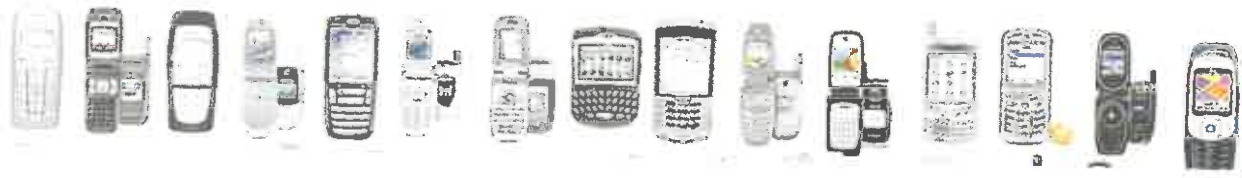
Here we come across the “Critical Pedagogy” bit. Should and shouldn't, might be introduced if you have not done that to be able to write a set of rules for the use of the mobile phone in the school. You may choose to write a more generous set of rules for a larger community or rules that if applied to trains, restaurants or other public places may be sent to the owners or to the people responsible for the service. It is important to notice that we break a rule (use the mobile in class) to make some rules on the use of the mobile.

10. What have you done? What have you learned?

Students grade themselves on the evaluation grid and add these other things they feel have learned doing the tasks. The teacher may add some comments to the students' evaluation if they do not agree

I want to thank Gerard McLoghlin and Felicity Pearce who introduced me and guided me into mobile text messaging.

Mobile or cell phone? A matter of identity. (Students' handouts)



1. Using our mobile phones in English

Which are the words and functions you have learned by using your mobile iEnglish? Write them in your notebook.

1.1. What do you usually do with your mobile phone? Circle your answers.

<i>call people</i>	RECEIVE INCOMING CALLS	<i>take pictures</i>	RECORD VIDEOS
<i>send e-mails</i>	<i>keep your agenda updated</i>	SPEAK ON A "HANDS FREE"	
<i>make notes</i>	<i>add your contacts</i>	LISTEN TO MUSIC	receive/send a text message
<i>play games</i>	alarm clock	READ BOOKS	DOWNLOAD MUSIC <i>watch TV</i>

Add some more functions of your own.

2. Devices



What devices do you use to perform the above functions? Add some more you may have. Write the functions next to the devices.

Voice phone
Feature phone
Smart phone
Cordless phone
Bluetooth headset
Handheld game console
Portable media player (PMP)
Personal digital assistant (PDA)
Personal Navigation Device (PND)
Digital Still Camera (DSC)
Digital Video Camera (DVC or Camcorder)
Pager
eBook Reader
Notebook PC
Any other?

ELT Convention

3. Where and when should we use the mobile?

Watch the video. First, check the situations you hear or see. Then, fill in the grid. Talk to your partners about your point of view.

	hear	yes	no	why
at a bingo				
at a meeting			✓	e.g. <i>It's inconsiderate and it isn't polite.</i>
at home				
in a boat tour				
in a concert				
in a hospital				
in a restaurant				
in an art gallery				
in an internet café				
in class				
in the library				
in the park				
in the supermarket				
jogging				
on a scooter				
on a toilet				
on a train				
when you are alone				
when you feel lonely				

4. Phone language

- Listen to the video again. Where do you hear the language in the first column?
- When do you use this language? Match the two columns.

5. Text language

a. where?	Language	b. when you...
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Bye Hang on... Hello! I can't talk now. I'll ring you back No idea Very cool What do you want? What? Yeah / OK 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> agree with your speaker don't want to speak, you're busy or engaged. start a conversation do not understand want people to wait for a moment. end a conversation ask for the purpose of the call do not know want to call later.

5. Text language

Have a look at the short text people use to send text messages. In pairs, read these messages to each other.

1. 2: To or Too	14. lmao: Laugh My Ass Off
2. 4: For	15. lmfao: Laugh My Fucking Ass Off
3. bb: Bye Bye	16. lol: Laugh(ing) Out Loud
4. brb: Be Right Back	17. omg: Oh My God
5. fyi: For Your Information	18. ppl: People
6. gtg or g2g: Got To Go	19. r: Are
7. hand: Have A Nice Day	20. rofl: Rolling On the Floor Laughing
8. b: Be	21. stfu: Shut The Fuck Up
9. c: See	22. 2moro: tomorrow
10. wkend: Weekend	23. ttyl: Talk To You Later
11. ily: I Love You	24. u: You
12. imy: I Miss You	25. wtf: What The Fuck
13. l8r: Later	26. yr/ur: Your

From: The wikipedia and more...



5.1 Transcribe the message on the phone

Transcribe the message in complete words and sentences in proper English. Read the message aloud to your partner.

5.2 Sending a message

Compose a message for one of your colleagues in class and write it on a piece of paper. Do not write your name or your colleague's name.

5.3 Receiving a message

Read the message your teacher gives you aloud. Can you guess? Who is it addressed to? Who is the author?

6. The iPhone: Comparing devices

Watch the video of the presentation of the iPhone by Steve Jobs. And talk about the content with your partners.



6.1 What is really revolutionary about the iPhone?

6.2 What's the most shocking function/device for you?

6.3 What are the main differences between your phone and the iPhone?

your phone	the iPhone

your phone	the iPhone

ELT Convention

7. Food for thought

Read the following statements and talk to your partners about them. Say whether you agree or disagree and say why.

statement	agree	disagree
1. Talking loudly about banal business or domestics matters on a train is rude and inconsiderate.		
2. The ringing of mobiles in cinemas and theatres is unacceptable.		
3. It is acceptable to switch your phone on during business lunch.		
4. Low-status, insecure people tend to take and even make calls during a business lunch.		
5. Women use their mobiles as 'barrier signals' when on their own in coffee bars or other public places as the alternative to the traditional use of a newspaper or magazine to signal unavailability and mark personal 'territory'.		
6. The mobile placed on a table acts as an effective symbolic body-guard, a protector against unwanted social contact: women will touch the phone or pick it up when a potential 'intruder' approaches.		
7. The idea of one's social support network of friends and family being somehow inside the mobile phone means that even just touching or holding the phone gives a sense of being protected- and sends a signal to others that one is not alone and vulnerable.		
8. The mobile phone has become the modern equivalent of the garden fence or village green. The space age technology of mobile phones has allowed us to return to the more natural and humane communication patterns of pre-industrial society, when we lived in small, stable communities, and enjoyed frequent 'grooming talk' with a tightly integrated social network of family and friends.		
9. Mobile phones -particularly the ability to send short, frequent, cheap text messages- restore our sense of connection and community, and provide an antidote to the pressures and alienation of modern urban life. They are a kind of 'social lifeline' in a fragmented and isolated world.		
10. This new form of communication requires a new set of unspoken rules, and the negotiation over the formation of these rules are currently causing a certain amount of tension and conflict - particularly the issue of whether mobile text is an appropriate medium for certain types of conversation. Chatting someone up, flirting by text is accepted, even encouraged, but some women complain that men use texting as a way of avoiding talking.		

8. Using the mobile phone. When, Where and How?

What did we learn? Are we ready to use our mobile phones in a way that we can respect other people's lives?

In groups of five discuss the following. Finally write a list of rules on the use of the mobile phone in the school and/or in life...

8.1 When should we use the mobile phone?

Write five situations where using the mobile would be accepted.

0. If someone has a close relative in hospital.
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

8.2 Where should be accept the use of the mobile phone?

Write five places where you would accept the use of the mobile and five where it would, by no means, be accepted.

accepted	not accepted
0. AT HOME	0. IN A CONCERT
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

8.3 How should we use the mobile?

If, in a given situation, there's no way to avoid the use of the mobile phone, how should it be used?

- 0.
- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

9. Rules of etiquette for the mobile use

In groups of five write a set of rules for the use of the mobile phones in the school.

ELT Convention

10. What have you done? What have you learned?

Class:

Date:

Name:

You						Does your teacher agree? See the teacher's comments.
Value yourself from 4 "very much" to 0 "nothing at all".	4	3	2	1	0	
1. I set my mobile in English and learned all the functions.						
2. I associated the functions to the devices by watching ads.						
3. I have become critical with the use of the mobile after watching video 1.						
4. I have learned phone language to be brief in my conversations.						
5. I have learned text language and have sent messages.						
6. I have successfully compared the devices of a regular mobile phone and the iPhone.						
7. I have been thinking and discussing with peers the social use of the mobile.						
8. I have elaborated a set of rules that regulate the use of mobiles in the school.						
9. What else did you learn?						
10.						



Humour Us Please: A look at the productive use of humour in the classroom

by Michael Tomlinson



The use of English in the Primary Language Classroom is only rarely explored, fun and laughter often being synonyms for chaos, evoking images of children giggling or guffawing. Teachers often avoid its use either because they are nervous about losing control or feel that they are not funny enough to use it productively: “I’m no comedian”. Michael Tomlinson’s workshop considered the positive effect of humour in the classroom at the same time attempting to allay some of these common apprehensions. The classroom can be a fraught place for a young learner trying to find her place in

a world which is continuously asking more and more whilst not always giving the answers. Humour can help to combat the anxiety that this causes, thus improving the class atmosphere, the teacher-pupil rapport and consequently motivation. At the same time we are offering an angle on the English language culture (with a small “c”) and introducing them to the joys of the creativity of language, be it through jokes, riddles or puns.

Michael Tomlinson has been teaching English since 1989. He has worked in the UK, Turkey, Spain and Sweden, with students ranging from children to adult, beginner to proficiency level. He is currently a teacher and Director of Studies at Star English, Murcia, Spain. He is co-author of Primary Activity Box, Primary Vocabulary Box, Primary Grammar Box Primary, Primary Progression Box, Primary Communication Box and Primary Reading Box (Cambridge University Press). He has also given teacher-training talks/presentations including talks at the British Council, Valencia, Cambridge Days in Madrid and Lausanne and IELTFL Brighton 2003.

Humour can be a very useful tool in the classroom, particularly those bland, silly jokes like:

Patient: Doctor, Doctor, it hurts anywhere I touch. What is wrong with me?

Doctor: Nothing wrong with you. Just something wrong with your finger.

They are appreciated in every culture. They can provide a break in some stressful situation, help to release tension and fill a silence.

Adults use jokes as pressure valves and social icebreaker.

Laughter therapy is now very fashionable as it releases endorphins and helps to endure pain. The role of the Buffoon had since always been considered beneficial for your health and general wellbeing.

Why bring humour into the classroom?

For one thing, it brings the real world into the classroom

What do you get if you cross a kangaroo and a sheep?

A woolly jumper

The benefits are many and of different character:

Psychological: Helping to enhance

- **Affective needs:** Primary children are often nervous or unsure in the classroom. Jokes create a bond with the teacher and help to pull down barriers.

- **Motivation:** Jokes give student a feeling of control of the situation and brings learning to life.

- **Memory:** Jokes help to remember chunks of English; concrete, complicated vocabulary combinations they can use or translate.

Linguistic: Jokes can be beneficial on different levels:

- They motivate listening and reading.
- They raise vocabulary awareness
- They help to develop syntax and grammar.
- They play on words. Through “Puns”, *homophones and synonyms* are introduced and students learn that the word is a label that can be used differently:

Why is ten afraid of seven? Because seven ate nine.

- Jokes encourage linguistic creativity and the need to experiment.
- Jokes teach phonetics.

Socio-Cultural: Humour is related to cultural precepts. “English Humour is related to the concepts of “Rudeness” of “Social Stereotypes”. Jokes will help learners to understand culture.

Humour in the classroom: There are many possible humour related activities to be introduced in the classroom:

• Jokes:

- o To practice **reading**.
- o To form and organize pairs.
- o **Mingles** different levels of language.

• **Stories** provide an opportunity to bring different social or political issues into the classroom:

- o Characterization children can identify with.
- o Voice
- o Visual humour
- o Verbal humour very important in EFL.

• **Songs:** Musical intelligence is an integral part of the English classroom. Children repeat the actions as they sing and humour is easily added to the actions.

• Games:

- o Action games like *Simon says*.
- o Board games.
- o Quizzes

• Tongue twisters

But teaching humour should not mean loss of control. It should enhance the teacher’s role, not undermine it. It should be used within well defined boundaries, to channel their energy. Care should be taken not to hurt anybody.

Summing up

- o If your pupils have fun, so will you.
- o Humour motivates, aids memory and helps us learn (and teach)
- o But the teacher chooses when and how to use humour.

Examples of activities:

The activities used to illustrate this talk have been taken from:

Kids Box by C. Nixon and M. Tomlinson

Primary Reading Box by C. Nixon and M. Tomlinson

Both published by Cambridge University Press

Only joking!

PRIMARY READING 3.5

Cut out and connect the boxes.



1 Which part of a dog smells best?
2 What is at the centre of gravity?
3 From which five-letter word can you take two letters and have only one left?
4 What comes after the letter 'a'?
5 What did one eye say to the other?
6 When can a car drive over water?
7 Why did the boy throw the butter out of the window?
8 Which month has twenty-eight days?
9 Why is the letter 'e' lazy?
10 What's the best way to eat spaghetti?
11 What's the hardest thing about learning to skate?
12 Where does Saturday come before Thursday?
There's something between us that smells.
Stone.
They all have.
The letter 'v'.
The ground.
Because it's always in bed.
In a dictionary.
The rest of the alphabet.
Because he wanted to see the butterfly.
Put it in your mouth.
Its nose.
When it's on a bridge.

From *Primary Reading Box* by C. Nixon and M. Tomlinson © Cambridge University Press 2005 **PHOTOCOPIABLE**

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Developing Oral Skills at Primary Level Through Authentic Materials and ICT Sources

by Yolanda
Scott-Tennant

A proposal of how to use authentic materials, mostly obtained or produced with ICT sources in a motivating way, to elicit, practice and improve oral production in a primary level class.

The presentation at APAC was a proposal of how to use authentic materials, mostly obtained or produced with ICT sources in a motivating way, to elicit, practice and improve all the skills, and especially oral production in a primary level class. It was, in fact, a condensed summary of a 30-hour course given this year to a group of very enthusiastic primary school teachers for the CRP Conca de Barberà, after which they elaborated a very useful DVD with activities they had created as a result of the course and which they will use in the different schools, thus sharing materials produced in common.

In the APAC talk, a wide range of audiovisual documents and pages were shown on the beamer and the objective of the talk was to show sources from which to obtain ICT material, to consider different proposals and possibilities created with or from these materials, and therefore lay the foundations for future elaboration of materials obtained from ICT sources which are bound to be more motivating for students, especially when having to produce language, and will certainly add much appreciated variety to the class.

After years of private teaching at different levels, Y.S.T became a high-school ("batillerat") teacher and then an EOI teacher. She has taught at the EOI Terragonia for the past fifteen years. Simultaneously she has spoken in several congresses, and very often at APAC, who has kindly sponsored her on these occasions, on a widely varied range of ELT topics such as: the use of e-mail in ELT, error analysis and correction, language lab materials, using "Soaps" in class, using authentic videos to improve grammar, using ICT to improve oral skills at secondary and adult level, etc. She has consulted and guided different publisher's materials, is a teacher trainer, wrote EOI advanced level exams for the Dept. of Education in Catalonia for a number of years and participated in a work group coordinated by the Dept. to produce future online materials for EOI and is increasingly interested in the applications and implications of ICT in language teaching. This year, by express demand from a group of teachers in the Conca de Barberà area, as a result of a session she gave for ICT Trainers at the CRP Reus, the CRP Conca de Barberà asked her to give a course for Primary school teachers dealing with the use of ICT sources to improve productive skills mainly oral at primary level.

Motivating oral production

The workshop intends to help primary teachers to find ways in which to make productive practice, and especially oral production, more motivating, and consequently “inspire” students to participate more actively in oral production practice activities. The variety of activities shown and suggested should also help to set the context for communicative activities, and this will help students, to some degree, to feel more confident, as they will be provided with ideas on what to talk about, how to do so, etc. Many of these activities also provide a reason for or need to talk, which is the basic reason for communication in the first place. Moreover, information coming from screens and other types of audiovisual input are definitely sources our students know and understand well and are generally interested in.

Other good reasons for using authentic material from ICT sources as often as possible are because it provides good models in terms of phonology, language-use and that it also improves comprehension of the target language, through exposure.

It also opens the doors to a wider range of “fresher” topics, so that students do not have the feeling that they are repeating the same all the time, and sometimes more “grown up” songs or topics can be found that make the older groups feel “different”, which they often appreciate immensely as a change from some of the more juvenile class materials.

Easing the transition

I quite often have the feeling that we drop students in at the deep end at the point in speaking when we move from just mechanically repeating structures or form, to expectations or tasks in oral production that they might be not very capable of doing or in-

spired to do in their own language, let alone in a foreign language. Moreover, when we move to more creative oral production, we then sometimes rather neglect other equally important aspects of oral communication such as intonation, etc. These aspects have frequently been seen in an isolated way and we then expect students to include them more or less “spontaneously” in freer conversation, and this is not at all as easy as it may seem.

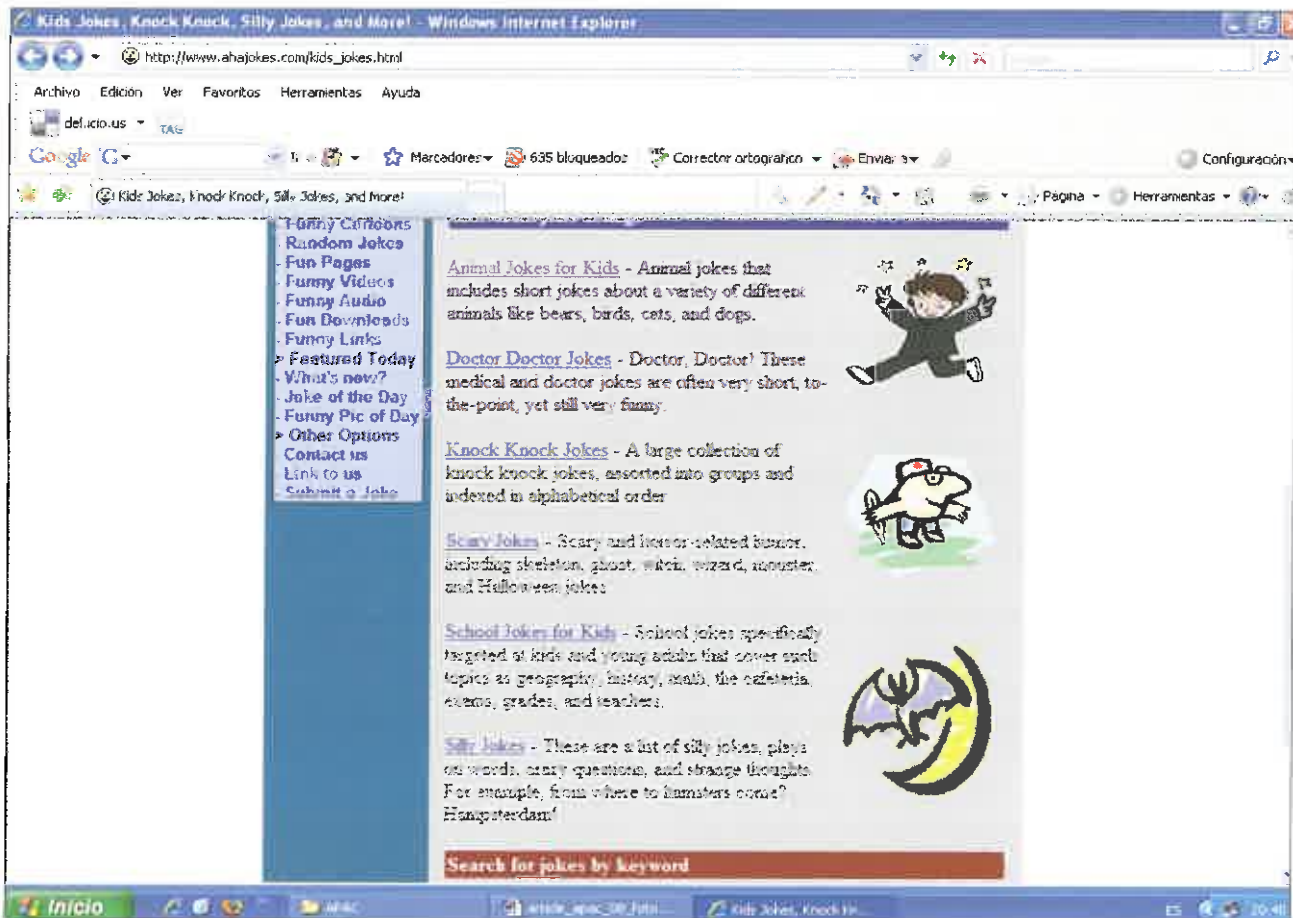
My first suggestion was, therefore, to expose students to ready-made conversations and more developed conversation patterns, so that they are not concentrating so much on the content as the form. Once they become relatively comfortable with these samples or patterns, they will be better equipped to move a step further.

We can easily find more monitored samples of speech acts on the Internet [e.g. <http://www.elt-podcast.com/archive/bc/>; or <http://www.focusenglish.com/dialogues/friendship/friendindex.html>], in the form of basic conversation pages with audios (so they can previously hear such things as pronunciation, intonation, appropriate pauses, etc.). Many of these provide scripts or texts that can be printed out, and this allows us to combine and vary reading and listening and speaking activities where the focus is on **how** to produce the language rather than **what** they should produce.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <http://www.elt-podcast.com/archive/bc/whatkindof.html>. The page title is "ELT Podcast - Basic Conversations for EFL and ESL". Below the title, there is a "Subscribe from iTunes" button. The main heading is "Basic Conversations - What kind of sports do you like?" followed by the authors "Bill Pellows and Robert Chartrand". Under "Podcast Notes", it says: "You'll hear this basic conversation two times. First, at a normal speed, then at a slower speed. After that, you'll hear short practice dialogs using 'What kind of (noun) do you like?' Finally, you'll hear the conversation again at a normal speed." To the right of the notes is a "listen" button with a play icon and file information: "mp3 file size: 1.36 MB time: 2:44 Jun 6, 2006". Below the notes is a "Conversation" section with a script: "Bill: Robert, I have some tickets to the Hawks game. Do you want to go? Robert: Not really, Bill. I don't like baseball. Bill: Oh, do you like sports? Robert: Yes, of course. Bill: What kind of sports do you like? Robert: I like soccer. Bill: Well, that's the world's most popular sport." At the bottom, it says "Let's practice." The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the "Inicio" button and several open applications.

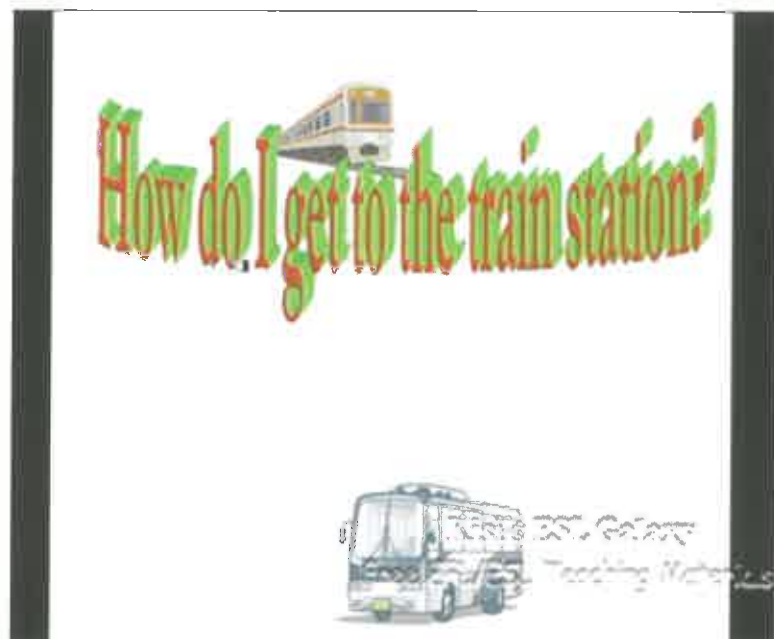
Other possibilities to practice texts which can later be re-enacted, expanded and developed on may be obtained by obtaining theatre [e.g. <http://scriptsforschools.com/files/>] and film scripts [e.g. <http://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Finding-Nemo.html>] also from Internet, or telling jokes [<http://www.learnenglish.de/EZine/Joke.htm> and http://www.ahajokes.com/kids_jokes.html].

native or more competent English language speakers from other countries in our “racons” when we are faced with the ever increasing “diversitat” in our classes. There are a number of pages that offer nursery rhymes, with or without music, words, etc. and some videos, like those we can find on the discoveryschool.com page, can also be used in a transversal form with other



Many more ideas for more monitored and controlled practice can be obtained from such pages as the British Council Teaching pages (see Primary Tips) or by playing games for ELT [see <http://iteslj.org/games/> or real playground games at <http://www.playgroundfun.org.uk/>

Other useful teaching and authentic resources seen that offer us interesting materials are, for example the BBC [see Jackanory, Beebies], the British Council's LearnEnglishKids page, School Express com, Reading A-Z.com. These can often give us ideas that we can then use to make more “home made “ materials or, also use to attend the increasing number of



ELT Convention

subjects being studied or for CLIL. Examples from all these pages were seen and activities suggested, which could be useful not only for fostering and improving oral production but also if we have students in our classes with a higher level of English and we wish to refer them to specific activities on these pages, either in the class [computer room] or at home. I also mentioned that by using the advanced search option in Google, I was able to find ready-made Powerpoint presentations on different specific topics with audiovisual information, and showed examples found for transport and animals.

SONGS

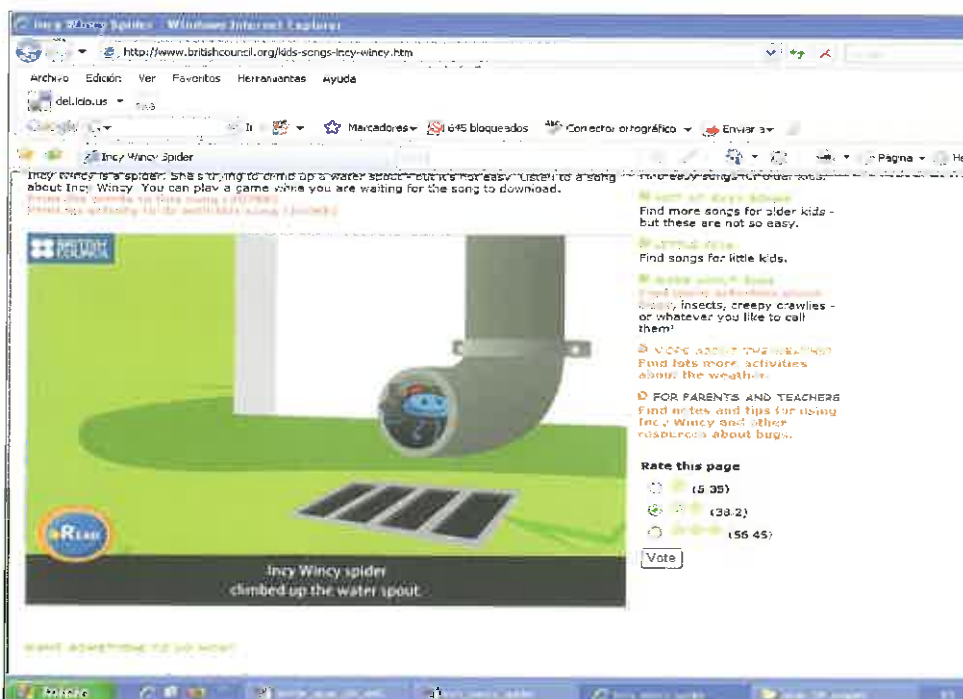
As we already know, many ideas for songs and lyrics are already prepared for teachers on the pre-cooked song exploitation pages provided by the BBC, the British Council, etc.

[e.g. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-songs-incy-wincy.htm> and <http://judyanddavid.com/cma.html>]

However, during the talk we saw video clips of a couple of songs [from U-tube or pages like <http://music.download.com/>] inserted in an HTML page, with exploitations that had been elaborated using Hot Potatoes, [a free programme available on Internet that allows teachers to produce a variety of HTML exercises and include videos, too].



The samples shown [“Wimbawe” and songs from the Muppets] illustrated how different types of exercises can be quickly and easily prepared and with the added attractive of actually being able to watch the video clip of the song and looking at the exercise on screen at the same time. Another example showed the possibility of miming actions to song lyrics, as an alternative to film charades so that students have to guess the song or merely as a more modern form of Total Physical Response, which is so popular with younger students. There are also pages such as <http://www.theteachersguide.com/ChildrensSongs.htm>, where we can find lyrics and music (sometimes separately, so we can practice the song and the ask students to memorise and sing it to the music, .etc) of more traditional songs for children and/or ELT songs for kids [e.g. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/kids/music.htm>] or nursery rhymes [<http://www.mamalisa.com/world/>].



Again, I showed a number of songs such as C is for cookies, Alphabet builders, Pin-ball numbers that are already audiovisual materials (many with text) that I had obtained by using a search engine with advanced search to specify what I was looking for or simply browsing different song and children's options in U-Tube and other video host pages.

Most ideas for songs

can also be applied to karaoke. There are at present, also on the net, free karaoke playing programs such as VanBasco and an endless supply of songs to play on them in karaoke format. This makes it easy to use the song for any of the above ideas or other things we generally do with songs, together with the added incentive of singing it to a karaoke – thus improving the acquisition of phonetics and phonology, vocabulary and structures, and therefore contributing greatly to future oral production of a more communicative nature. The older students will greatly appreciate seeing and hearing some modern, popular, “grown-up” songs they regularly hear on the radio and T.V. or listen to on their MP’s at home in their English class.



FILM TRAILERS

Film trailers have long been used in ELT and we saw some trailers and suggested activities which could be done after just watching the short excerpt, and using the trailer, above all, to set the scene or context and provide an excuse for interesting oral production. Here are some suggestions used for trailers taken from <http://home.disney.go.com/movies/> and http://clipland.com/index_mtd.shtml.

- The Chronicles of Narnia – used to discuss favourite traditional stories and books or comics

- Pirates of the Caribbean- to talk about habits and routines “A life in the diary of a pirate” which provides much more stimulating material



than talking about one’s own life- especially in teaching contexts where students have very similar routines (e.g. school !)

Harry Potter - a similar case to the previous one... and the day in the life of an apprentice to wizardry certainly provides for an ample range of vocabulary and use of imagination

Wizard of Oz – comparing old and new films, the story, the characters, who you like most, whether you are afraid of witches, wizards, etc., etc.



CARTOONS

Cartoons can often provide an amusing, and therefore much more memorable, way of introducing or repeating variations of a situation in a far more attractive format than on paper or in a book. We saw an example of this with a computer generated cartoon, with beings trapped in a computer programme introducing themselves. Many different forms of introducing and or responding to introductions were heard and could later be repeated in class, with many new characters from the cartoon to avoid the pointlessness of the students introducing themselves to their peers, who they have already known for years. I also showed how subtitles which I myself wrote in using Windows Movie Maker can easily help short excerpts and make them clearer for students to practice.




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Another point to keep in mind, is that many cartoons (and films or series, for that matter) can be found in DVD format, and most DVD's offer versions in English. So if a structure or situation strikes us when watching one of these in Spanish/Catalan with our family, or wherever, the structure will probably be there in English too as most DVDs have this option. I showed an example, lasting only a minute, taken from an episode from the Simpsons in which Homer talks to Bart about things he remembers from his childhood, "When I was a child...". I have used this time and again in class to talk about the past, when we were younger, etc. with a whole range of different levels and it always works.


Well known cartoons, such as the Simpsons may not only provide whatever appears in an episode, but also a source of common knowledge to talk about or compare cartoons, talk about your favourite cartoon/character, etc.

We also saw a quiz about cartoon characters I had elaborated with Powerpoint and ICT resources. Students have to guess who the famous cartoon character is and are given clues. These appear as audio clips I have recorded in MP3 using Nero and later inserted , so that students make the effort of trying to understand oral production without seeing the written form initially. Then, further clues are given using images from Google and, finally, the written form of the clue is provided.

Clue One



• He/She is tall



In this case, our mystery character was Obelix, and the first clue, for example, was to hear "He/She is very tall", then see a picture of a tall and then a short person appear, with the word "tall/short" underneath, to help comprehension in case of doubt or need, and then, after a few

seconds, see "He/She is tall" appear on the slide in writing. The three actions have been paced in this way precisely so that students get used to hearing and understanding first, without always relying on written support [often with subtitled audiovisuals, they are reading the text rather than trying to understand the spoken language). The second clue is visual, but still no text, so it can help comprehension and the written text is not seen until we reach the third clue.

The idea is that by this time all of/most of the students have understood the first clue and we are only providing the written form to help the very weak students and to revise writing and spelling for the majority. The same process is used for the following clues, until someone guesses who we are talking about. This "Guess who" activity, with different ICT materials (audio, visual, written) is immensely popular and challenging, as it taps on our natural curiosity and competitive spirit as human beings, exposes students to different stimuli and input, and subtly helps them to develop their listening comprehension skills, which will be fundamental if they are to communicate effectively in the not too distant future. It can be used for a whole number of guessing possibilities.

ADVERTS



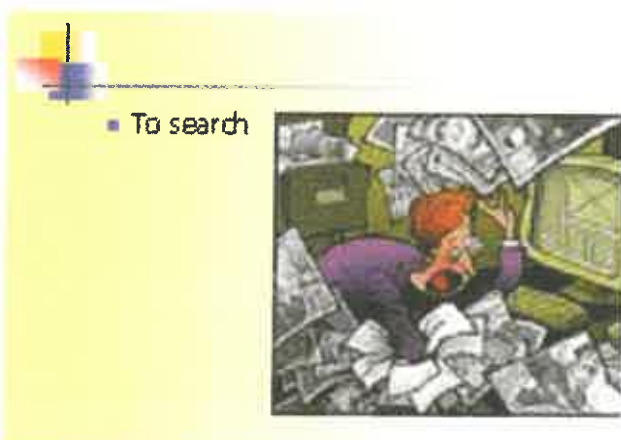
In this section we saw a variety of adverts [Caltex, Windex, Budweiser] obtained from a number of pages by just "googling" "funny" or "amusing adverts". Some of these were found on <http://www.funnyville.com/funnycommercials.html> <http://www.funny-games.biz/videos/commercial-videos.html> <http://giesbers.net/video/> http://www.metacafe.com/top_videos/

We mentioned a variety of oral activities to be done ranging from guessing what the adverts

are about, predicting what is going to happen, talking about favourite or most –hated adverts , discussing objects/people seen in the advert, the message... the possibilities are infinite and can lead on to anecdotes, memories, or wherever you want class contents to go next.

STORIES

Stories are very typically used in ELT, especially when dealing with younger students. Consequently, there is little to be discovered in how to best present and exploit them. One idea I proposed was from personal experience in a story-telling activity I was asked to do as a mother for St. Jordi at my children's school. I decided to use a video of a story in English with English subtitles I found on internet at: <http://www.schoolexpress.com/storytime.php> called The First Well.



The vocabulary in the story would have been quite complicated to do without working on it previously, so I had prepared some Powerpoint slides to introduce vocabulary, using images I had found using Google to illustrate the words I wanted students to know. First of all with the whole class, therefore, we ran through the slides and clarified the vocabulary. The students had a handout, also with the pictures, of the vocabulary we would be seeing so that they could make notes and remember it more easily with the images to help them.

Then, I played the story video. In my case, I turned off the volume and narrated the story myself, loosely following the subtitles, but making sure I did use the vocabulary we had worked on. I found that students hardly bothered to read the subtitles, as they were able to follow the story by combining my explanations, the images they were seeing and the vocabulary they had learnt just before. For teachers who are not quite so

happy to improvise, the volume can be left on, with the original narrator, and as I myself did when I thought necessary, the video can be stopped every so often to explain a specific point or event, or to ask the children questions to make sure they are following us. I left a CD with all these materials at the school and they carried on working on the project, elaborating on the story and vocabulary again afterwards.



DOCUMENTARIES

Discovery, National Geographic, etc also have web pages you can visit with very interesting information and quite a few videos. It is easy to establish



a cross-curricular topic with other teachers in the year teaching natural science, history, etc. and work on a specific topic using these videos and the accompanying information. We saw one about mammals and their characteristics, and only by using the first couple of minutes, which gives us details about the general characteristics and then gives specific examples, in this case about horses, we can use it as a guide to later describe a whole series of animals and review or introduce well-known vocabulary such as adjectives, quantifiers, etc. We may even decide to record our students talking about the characteristics of their pets, for example, and set up our own documentary.

Often e-mail attachments (video shots, Power-

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point presentations, etc.) can provide the context to deal with a given topic, or we can surf webs to see if we can find appropriate texts or vocabulary on a specific topic and this can also be used in conjunction with other subjects or topics we deal with in "tutoria". I showed an example of an e-mail attachment, which is an advert to promote awareness about pollution. At the beginning, we see a man dumping rubbish into a river with a pick up truck and then happily driving off. Later on, he has a shower at home and the rubbish is sent back to him through the shower, presumably travelling in the water from the river. It is quite amusing but also poignant and naturally leads on to a discussion about pollution, a topic we are bound to deal with at one point or other in the curriculum. We could surf for webs on the topic of pollution, recycling, etc. and just use short extracts to work on vocabulary and expressions, or in conjunction with specific structures (for example "must" and "can't") or imperatives.

CULTURE

Comedy programs often have scenes which can help us to work around specific cultural points such as festivities, customs and traditions. We saw an example with Mr. Bean at Christmas, which I use year after year, to great enjoyment of the students to talk about Christmas in the U.K. and then move on to Christmas celebrations in their own homes.



E-MAIL ATTACHMENTS

Finally, we looked at some e-mail attachments I have been sent on by friends that I use quite successfully in class.

For example: Painted hands – This is a slide show of a selection of photographs of hands that have been painted to represent animals. It is not

only wonderful to see but excellent to work on animals, colours, pictures, art...

- This is a wonderful video, which is in fact an advertisement for a brand of washing machines, but it becomes very attractive because there are a number of items of clothing that appear as if they were sea creatures, floating in the ocean. Young children find this a much more interesting way to learn or revise vocabulary for clothes, as they spot different items presented in a new and much more inspiring context than usual. We can also talk about colours and sizes, to practice adjectives, and singular/plural and so on. How nice it would have been to have been taught with these materials in our days!



We are sent by e-mail (e.g. photograph collections on sceneries, excellent photos and/or collections also provide excellent and inspirational material for a variety of activities and primary teachers are excellent creators of ideas and materials to make good use of whatever they can lay their hands on. Imagine that we are moving from the previous habit of cutting and pasting from paper-supported materials and now can apply these ideas to ICT generated materials. The sky is your limit!

Well, as you can see the possibilities are endless. We ran out of time in the workshop and articles also have limited space in journals. Nevertheless, I hope I have proved that ICT can definitely become a help, more than a hindrance, to ELT teachers at different levels. Take the plunge, surf the net for ideas and materials and never look back! Your students will appreciate the variety provided enormously and you'll soon be wondering how to stop them talking, but now it will be English that they're speaking and without much further poking or prodding, either. Undoubtedly worth a try and all the work and effort involved!



Every Picture Tells a Story

Using Pictures Creatively in the Classroom

by Brian
Brennan

We are hard-wired for stories, and every picture tells one. In his session Brian Brennan considers the role of story-telling in ELT and goes on to workshop several dozen ways in which teachers can use postcards-size pictures, both photos and paintings, to generate engaging classroom tasks at a wide range of levels.

- 'We're suckers for a really good story – it's one way we make sense of the world around us and so turn the unfamiliar into the known and the comfortable.'
(Michael Quinion)
- 'Through stories, our values and principles have been passed from one generation to another.'
(Stephen Denning, 'The Springboard')
- 'Stories are often a more compact way to express an important idea.'
(IBM Research – Knowledge Socialization)
- 'Storytelling is ... an effective vehicle to deliver messages to the subconscious ...when the subconscious is activated or accessed, the material enters the mind with no resistance.'
(Michael Berman 'Once upon a story' May 2000 Article 12, ELT Newsletter)

Brian is Language Training Manager at IT Company Training, BCN. He's taught in Spain, Greece and Britain. His work is now largely in the area of Business English, and has included writing internet-based courses, teacher training, materials evaluation and course designing, developing competence-based descriptors for the European Commission, oral examining for Cambridge ESOL, reporting to publishers, review writing for Modern English Teacher and translating for the Siges Fair Festival. So far that is a real mess. Apart from working on the English File series, he's the co-author of Business One and Business Two, intermediate and Pre-Intermediate for OUP, coursebooks with a new TV approach.

This session will be looking at some ways which you can use commercially available postcard-type pictures with adults, though you may find some of the ideas workable with pre-adults. Postcards are good because:

- they come on stronger paper than things you might cut out of magazines
- standard size allows for longer life (as does point 1)
- they're highly portable
- they can be passed from student to student
- they can be easily grouped / selected / ditched by you or the sts.
- they can be blutacked onto the board, wall, door or even to students' foreheads.
- they are open to interpretation
- talking speculatively about images is part of Cambridge ESOL speaking exams.
- postcards are easy to find and inexpensive to buy
- talking about pictures is something people do more or less naturally in *real life*, unlike many of the things we make students do in class (gapfills, etc).

The photocopier is out of action again, there's a power cut, you're doing a standby for someone who left no record of the previous 18 lessons, the coursebook is crap, there *is* no coursebook, you got through your material in half the time you thought, the previous teacher covered the whiteboard with indelible ink, the class rebelled, the cassette player chewed up your cassette, the DoS *absolutely promised* you that there would be a CD player, the VCR you booked out is dead, the DVD case turns out to be empty, or for whatever reason you decided to ditch what you were doing. Don't panic: get out your pix.

Fine art reproductions

Types that I've found to work better in class include:

- Contemporary figurative art
- Surrealism



- Well known Spanish art
- C19 narrative / moralistic art

- Some dramatic Biblical scenes (provided you know your students well)
- In general, secular realist painting from the C17 onwards
- Two thematically similar works (same scene, same event, etc)
- Self-portraits at different ages (Rembrandt, Tintoretto, Freud, etc)

Photography postcards

Types that I've found to work better in class include:

- Sepia images of known places
- Classic black and white *slice-of-life* photos
- Contemporary photojournalism



- *Now and then* photos of the same place



- Photo and painting of the same place
- Different photos of the same landscape / townscape
- Views of *exotic* places



- Aerial landscapes (*The Earth from the air*)
- Celebrities

Stories

Story /stori/ *noun* **1** a description, either true or imagined, of a connected series of events. **2** a report in a newspaper or in a news broadcast of something that has happened. **3** a lie.

Human beings are story-telling organisms

"The language we speak has stories embedded in its very fabric. Our discourse is thoroughly in-

tertextual, sprinkled with allusion to other texts from other places and times.”

Stories: Ruth Wajnryb
(CUP, 2003)

Research has estimated that we experience about 30 *narrative events* during a typical day. A colleague tells you about a film he/she saw last night, someone phones to cancel something and explains why, we read a news story on the Internet, someone phones you to ask how a doctor's visit went, someone asks you how a class is going, a friend comes back to work after a holiday, you apologise to a supplier about slow payment of a bill, something you say reminds a friend about something and off he/she goes, a previous teacher briefs you about a 121 student, someone tells you about something that happened in the gym, someone tells you about a match the night before, at home in the evening your partner tells you about his / her day, at home in the evening you ask your kids about their day at school...

Reasons to use stories in class

- The human mind is programmed for stories; storytelling is universal and timeless. People tend to remember stories, or parts of them.
- We're surrounded by stories (jokes, reports, soap opera, film, gossip, literature, press, problem-sharing with friends, problem-sharing at work, excuses for being late, basic socializing).
- They have a long and proven record as a didactical tool.
- Any story that can be told can also be written.
- It's normal for stories to be re-told. And re-told.
- Narrative is powerful.
- Stories are entertaining.
- Stories can be short.



- Stories can provide a means of teaching and learning in general.
- Stories provide a means of learning language. They engage the interest of the learner to aid presentation of lexis, function, structure, and development of intercultural and interpersonal skills
- Stories are context and co-text.
- Case studies are commonly used in pre-service and in-service business training. They are increasingly employed in business as a change agent (World Bank, IBM, Motorola, Siemens etc)
- Telling anecdotes is an important element in socializing.
- Telling stories is a critical language skill largely neglected in BE publishing.

Some ideas for generating stories from pictures.

- Tell the story behind it (*mythical, literary, Biblical, historical, Victorian morality painting.*)
- Using the image as the starting point for creating a story.
- Connect any two pictures in a story created by you.
- Create a story that starts with picture 1 and ends with picture 2.
- Create a story that includes three or these four pictures.

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- Create the story the artists intended from a sequence (eg: *The Rake's progress* by Hogarth).
- Any discussion points that arise. Images of other cultures, other times, ...
- Speculation about the lives of those depicted.
 - Write questions for some of the people in the picture.
 - Interview with someone/something in the picture.
 - Dialogues between characters pre-written by the teacher, or written by sts.
 - Roleplays between the characters in the image.
 - Relationships and/or secrets between the characters
 - Provide sts with pre-written speech / thought bubbles, (like comic). Sts write intervening bits.
- What they did next (if it's a *slice-of-life* photo, the shot taken five seconds later)
- What had just happened, to lead up to this moment.
- What's just outside the picture frame.
- Old photos of known places: *How it has changed since then? Is it better now?*
- Spot the differences (*similar photos, two artists' visions of the same theme/spot*).
- Spot the similarities (*ditto*).
- With views of places: *Where would you rather be, or go to visit and why?*
- Tie-in with videos or songs or themes or whatever being done in class.
- Match the image with the corresponding description/title/explanation/review.
- Team of archaeologists from the planet Zog VII find these (three?) images and make the following assumptions about Earthlings.

...

Good Sources of Postcards

For works of art: any large gallery / museum or tourist shops near them

For black and white photos: Poster shops, of which there are several around Plaça del Pi.

For sepia postcards of old Barcelona: some tobacconists / lottery kiosks.

For further reading

Ruth Wajnryb: *Stories: narrative activities in the language classroom* (CUP handbooks for teachers, 2003)

Duff & Maley: *Literature* (OUP Resource books for teachers, 1990)

Morgan & Rinvolucrí: *Once upon a time* (CUP, 1983)

'The largest crowds are drawn by the storytellers. It is around them that the people throng most densely and stay longest ... their words come from further off and hang longer in the air than those of ordinary people.'

Elias Canetti – *The voices of Marrakesh* - Marion Boyars. London, 1978

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English as an International Language Teaching, Learning and Using EIL

by Eve Schmitzer

The language we teach is for global communication - often among non-natives and not culture-specific - but do our beliefs and practices truly reflect this? How is EIL- in teaching, learning and use - different from other languages? What beliefs, biases and behaviours help or hinder teachers and learners? What basic intercultural skills must we all acquire for successful communication?

That was my optimistic abstract for the 2008 APAC conference, where I had a very good time discussing EIL with the responsive, animated participants.

But let's face it - though we may try to paint English as benign, a vehicle or a tool for all the world to use in order to achieve international communication and intercultural exchange, we all know that there are problems, issues that need to be aired before many learners can take to its use wholeheartedly. In order to drive the vehicle to get where you want or take up the tool to make what you like, not only do you have to feel that you know well enough how to handle it, but also that you are its owner - or at least perfectly within your rights to use it for your very own ends.

What this means for the English teachers of this world, in my view, is that the chameleonic nature of this international language and the many and varied positions of its international users are questions that must be dealt with in classes, explicitly and implicitly, constantly and coherently. When faced with a recalcitrant bunch

of teenaged students, or with an eager bunch, for that matter, that is the time to start discussion of EIL – what it is and what we want it for, plain and simple. Raise consciousness and clear the air.

What is EIL? Very briefly, a language that was well positioned both geographically, in former and remaining British colonies, and economically, with the growing power of US investments, hand in hand with the scientific and technological advances emanating from that country, from the early part of the 20th century. Add to that the power and prestige of the US following WWII, even its military presence in Western Europe, Japan and bases scattered round the globe, and the tremendous surge of US pop culture and new trends that could be spread ever more quickly as communications improved by leaps and bounds, and you have a recipe for linguistic predominance. But linguistic predominance does not have to mean cultural dominance and absorption, and in this case, everything indicates quite the contrary. Bear with me.

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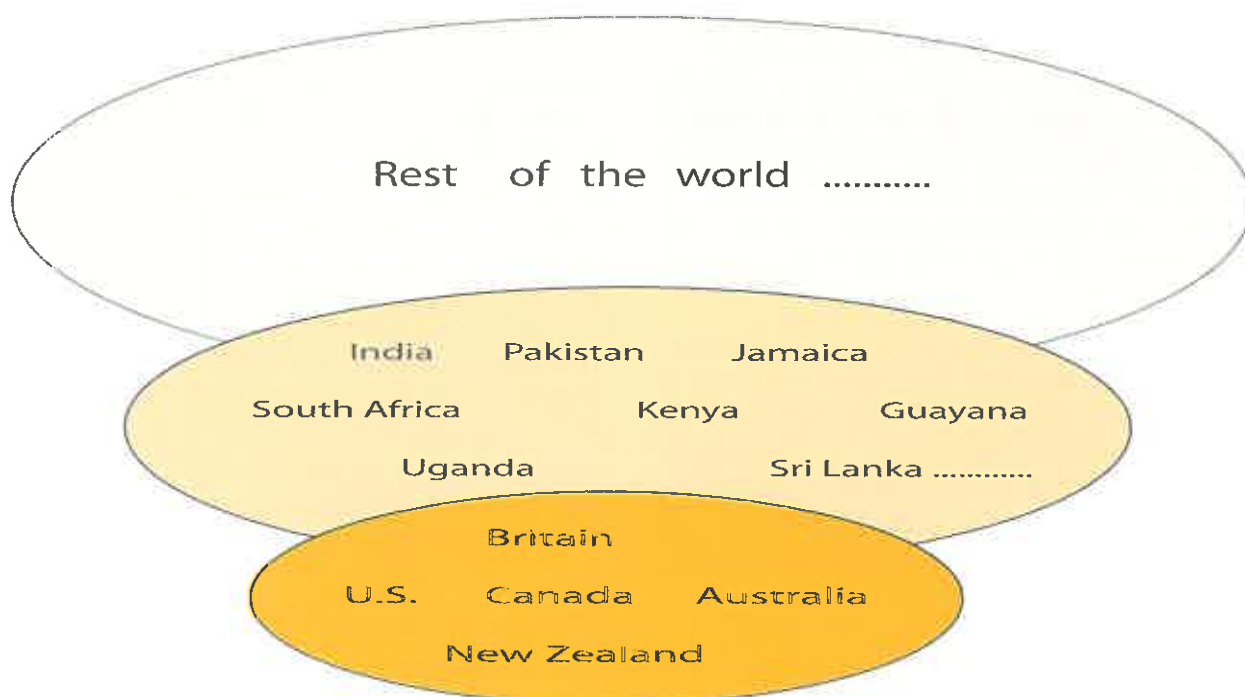
Naturally, the spread of English has gone through its stages and mood swings.

We have to look at a wide variety of situations and phases which, if you do so in class, will also provide a means to talk about the world and its many faces and the nature of language itself.

Let's take Kachru's 3 Circles of English (PIC) as a model to explore the world of English. In the Inner Circle, there are those former British colonies, with their own varied circumstances. Countries like my own, along with the US, Australia and New Zealand and a few island nations like the Bahamas – all those places where British colonists were dominant in numbers and position – went on being English-speaking, and the many immigrants with other languages simply swam or sank. Our parents, grandparents or great-grandparents learned English according to the circumstances of their lives - how much they used it at work, how much they mixed with the wider population, whether or not they went to school in the new country. Their children grew up with English and were educated in English, though of course in the past there were many adolescents who had trouble adjusting with no ESL to support them. But on the whole, they spoke English and nothing but English, back in the days when even in the famously tolerant Canada being 'different' was a mark of Cain in school and many youngsters lost their family languages, or understood but refused to use them.

Since the 1970s, it is safe to say in general, the panorama has altered. ESL has developed into a complex discipline and tremendous support for newcomers, to the point where it will soon become an integral part of teacher training for Ontario schools, to give one shining example. As for the wealth of immigrant languages, we all know the US seems largely fearful of encouraging their use in any way, even in the face of an obvious need to understand the world, but it is a losing battle in the face of Spanish for sure! In Canada, as elsewhere, however, these International Languages (once termed Heritage Languages but this was dropped not only for its backward-looking view but also to recognize that these languages are available to all) are supported by the provinces and offered as credits after school or on weekends. More and more people of all ages are developing their home languages or learning new ones. All this to say that English can and does coexist peacefully with other languages, even in the Inner Circle of those blessed native speakers!

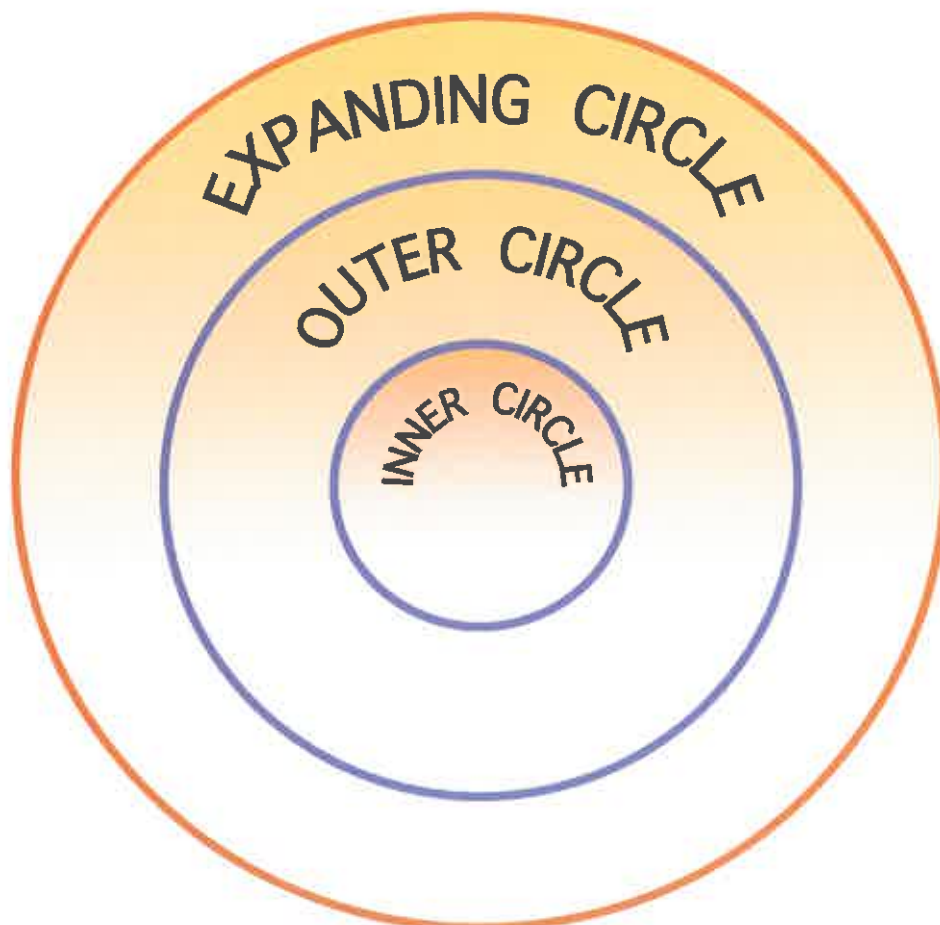
In the Outer Circle, we find a wide range of former British colonies, from India and Pakistan through East Asia and across the Caribbean into Africa, where English was established as the language of administration, education, business, power and prestige, and more or less remained so after decolonization. There are also enclaves or former enclaves of US domination, the Philippines being a prime example, along with Liberia and some Pacific



and Caribbean islands. English in these countries coexists with other languages, often many others and of varying distribution, dominance and prestige within each country. In India, Hindi is much more significant, especially in the northern half, and English has been official off and on according to political whim but has remained essential and very much native to the educated classes. Hundreds of other languages are spoken, as is the case in Africa. Similar situations prevail in Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, or the multicultural South Africa with its many large ethnic groups. Naturally, these multilingual speakers have developed their own Englishes, more or less accessible to outsiders depending on how much contact exists beyond their own milieus. Those who receive an education often do so in English, and may go to Britain or

elsewhere to university. Many of them will speak a more local variety of English outside class with others who share the same languages and social contexts – so you have all the varieties of South Asian and African Englishes, very much accessible to the rest of us with a few footnotes in their literature or a little interaction on the street. Then there are ‘creoles’ where the rules of conduct are so different that none of us can follow them without a lot of help! Languages know no frontiers, they follow their users wherever they want to take them, and English has been taken everywhere.

Which brings us to the Expanding Circle, or the rest of the known world. All those nonnative speakers living in nonnative-speaking places who have to have or hope to have some contact with the outside world, whether at home



or abroad. It is obvious that we need an international language – and there is no need to enumerate the reasons (but you should do so with your students just to make sure they contemplate the things they can do and those they cannot, with or without English). English was the best positioned when the need started to grow way back in the 20th century, and with a little help from its friends (no time or space to go into that now, though linguistic imperialism has certainly been a question at times!) it has developed into a worldwide educational prerogative. You are providing your students with an essential skill, a window on the whole world and a means to tell the world about themselves. Though there are and will be more internet sites and forums of all sorts in other languages, the need for one that we can assume everyone understands is a need we cannot escape.

I firmly believe that multilingualism will become increasingly fashionable, prestigious, and more importantly, available, with or without the proclamations of the EU or other bodies, and that smaller or less powerful languages are not endangered by English. A wise linguist called Joshua Fishman argued long ago (REF) that smaller languages would in fact be strengthened by the ubiquity and threat of EIL - that their users would pull together more firmly to protect their home languages. I think we can see that, as in the case of Catalunya, this has been so in many places, though of course the presence of English has not been the only or major determining factor! But certainly the Catalans are glad to have their own language well established and well regarded at home in the current climate of rapid globalization, and they know that their bilingualism gives them an advantage in acquiring yet another language, all of which

helps in facing this EIL that raises its head everywhere. In Québec, where they have to deal not only with EIL but also with the English spoken all around them in their own country and the neighbouring US, linguistic protectionism is fiercer than here. Sometimes in Canada we have to laugh or get angry at the demands of the Québécois language police (French must be larger on shop signs than English or any other language, commercial names must be translated wherever possible) but it is all part of a delicate balance that varies in each location and at different times.

The time for resistance is past. This is not to say that we should not be vigilant and liberal in our support for home languages and support multilingualism everywhere! But as the opportunities grow for contact with people all over the world using EIL - whether personal or professional or just in passing - it is only natural that many of us will be piqued into learning another language or dipping into several as we get the chance and feel the motivation of a new culture and relationships. EIL is a way in, but it will soon become evident that it does not take you all the way, and many of us (including those blessed native speakers of English!) will find ourselves in situations where another language is commonly used and we will want to participate. Just as the poor of the world have needed to use all the languages around them to survive (think of how many Africans or Indians speak several local languages, plus English, French or Portuguese, or even Russian if they were sent to the former USSR to study during Cold War days!), those more fortunate will be feeling the pressure to adjust and use another language now and then. We will get used to the Babel and learn to love it.

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Literacy Games For Young Adult Learners

by José Luis
Bartolomé, EOI de Ripoll
(currently at EOI Olot)

Wrong punctuation (commas in particular) can send a prisoner to the gallows, worsen the popularity of President George Bush Jr or even destroy the image of friendliness of panda bears in a dictionary entry. Let us consider three sets of sample statements (*):

1. a) "Perdón imposible, que cumpla su condena"
b) "Perdón, imposible que cumpla su condena"
2. a) Bush, one of the worst disasters to hit the U.S
b) Bush: one of the worst disasters to hit the U.S
3. a) "**Panda**. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats, shoots and leaves".
b) "**Panda**. Large black-and-white bear-like mammal, native to China. Eats shoots and leaves".

Statement 1b) would save the prisoner's life, which he would taken by a merciless king in 1a). Statement 2a) would give Bush a very bad name, while in 2b) President Bush is describing hurricane Katrina as a catastrophe for his country. Statement 3a) portrays a panda bear as a gunfighter, which is not the true picture of this friendly, vegetarian mammal supplied by 3b).

Funny examples of this kind can stimulate the eager interest of both young and adult learners in enhancing their reading and writing skills. A both simple and challenging way to lead that interest into actual performances is organizing a literacy contest in the class. The reading skills would be rather demanding, involving a pretty good command of punctuation, spelling, basic grammar rules as well as a good supply of word-power and a bit of background information. Skimming and scanning reading techniques are also required.

Three stages (or trials !) can be considered in the activity which I would like to present as a sample of a most successful contest with third-level-learners at an Official Language School. The contest, which was inspired after reading a worrying newspaper story (**), became one of the most satisfying events of St Jordi's Writing Day.

In this first stage all the students of the class are invited to play a starter game. The time set to do the reading task is 15 minutes. The **ten best scorers / scores over 8** points out ten will enter the second stage of the competition.

Here are the the worksheet and the reading stuff (a factfile) for the first round.

A LITERACY CONTEST. Stage 1

Name: _____

Your score: _____

1. A wrong homophone is used on line _____
2. The best headline for this short story is...
 - a) The night they killed Chico Mendes
 - b) Why the Yanomami try to save their gold and homes
 - c) People of the rainforests
3. A wrong spelling (adjective / verb) is found on line _____
4. The figure to complete the gap on line 7 should be...
 - a) 200,000
 - b) over one million
 - c) 22.000
5. The missing word on line 11 is...
 - a) however
 - b) suddenly
 - c) on the other hand
6. Inverted commas (“ ”) should be used between linesand.....
7. Two capital letters (CL, cl) should have been used on lines and
8. A full stop (.) should have been used on line as well as on line **19**
9. You can find a wrong irregular verb in the simple past on line
10. One word in the story meaning “illness”, “sickness” is.....

More than fifty million people live in the rainforests of the world and most of them do not hurt the forest they live in. They eat the fruits that grow on the forest trees, but they do not cut them down. They kill some animals to eat, but they do not destroy the species.

5 When we cut down the rainforests, we destroy these forest people, two. In 1900, there were one million forest people in the amazon forest. In 1980, there were only _____.

10 The Yanomami live along the rivers of the rainforest in the north of Brazil they have lived in the rainforest for about 10,000 years and use more than 2,000 different plants for food and for medicine. But in 1988, someone found gold in their forest, and _____ 45,000 people came to the forest and begun looking for gold. They cut down the forest to make roads. They made more than a hundred airports. The Yanomami people lost land and food. Many dead because new diseases came to the forest with the strangers.

15 The Yanomami people tried to save their forest, because it was their home. But the people who wanted gold were stronger.

20 Many forest people try to save their forests. Chico Mendes was famous in Brazil because he wanted to keep the forest for his people I want the forest to help all of us –forest people, Brazil, and all the Earth, he said.

A few months later, in december 1988, people who wanted to cut down the forest killed Chico Mendes.

(257 words, from *Rainforests* by Rowena Akinoyemi, Oxford Bookworms 2, Factfiles)

Contributions

A It is one of the world's forgotten dynasties. It once stretched from Bohemia to Budapest and the Balkan. But the Austro-Hungarian empire enjoyed a posthumous boost this week thanks to _____ Hryhory Nestor –the world's oldest human.

B Nestor recalled his life as a young man before the first world war. He slept outside, drank fresh milk and ate cheese and potatoes. He had several friends, but did not marry any of them. The world's oldest man now lives with his _____ in the village of Stariy Yarychiv. A moustached, diminutive figure in a denim jacket, Nestor is a bit deaf, but still active.

C Nestor lives in a small village in western Ukraine. His home, 25km from the historic city of Lviv, has for centuries been at the centre of feuding empires. The Habsburgs, the Poles, the Soviet Union and now the Ukrainians have all been here. Tracked down this week, Nestor –who celebrates his 116th birthday next month- was asked which of these regimes he liked best. "Things were best under Austria," he said. "You could go where you wanted, live where you wanted. And there was work for everyone."

D Born on March 15 1891, he is nearly two years older than Yone Minagaww, a Japanese woman who celebrated her 114th birthday last month and was said to be the world's oldest person. The Austro-Hungarian empire fell apart in 1918. Nestor was 27. Western Ukraine became part of newly re-established Poland. "When the Poles took over, there were Polish beggars everywhere. And then there was the front and soldiers would come and take everything away," Nestor recalled despairingly.

E Nestor puts his extraordinary longevity down to the fact that he never married. "I liked my freedom. I would spend my time with one girl and then another. And then I would go off somewhere with the gays," he told Reuters.

F Next came the Russians who invaded in 1939 under the Nazi-Soviet pact. They were no better. "Those Russians promised us all sort of things –tractors, combines, cars when they were setting up their *kolkhoz* collective farms," Nestor said. In the forced collectivisation that followed, millions of peasants perished. "They told us the *kolkhoz* was not obligatory. But you had to do it," he added.

G Ukrainian newspapers discovered Nestor's story only recently. There are few doubts about his age: he has Austrian, Soviet-era and Ukrainian passports, all of which confirm it. His only aspiration now is to live until his 116th birthday on March 15. We wish him well.

(429 words, from *The Guardian*, Thursday 15 February 2007)

Lastly, this is the worksheet for the third round., the most challenging one. The six squares below are the room for the six jumbled paragraphs.

A LITERACY CONTEST. Stage 3

This fragvillage of Stariy Yarychiv. A of **Rebecca** is all jumbled. Can you reset it into the original paragraphs? Use commas, full stops, inverted commas and capital letters.

1) iheldmaxim'sarmandlookedupintohisfacetalkingaboutmanderleyalwaysmademaximhappyagain

2) wehadreachedthetopofasmallhillthepathrandownintoalittlevalleybythesideofastream

3) theresaidmaximlookatthat

4) therewerenodarktreesinthisvalleynothickbushesoneithersideofthenarrowpathstoodhighgraceful bushescoveredwithflowerstheflowerswerepinkwhiteandgoldtheywerethingsofbeautyandgracethes oftsummerrainfellandtheairwasfullofasweetscenttherewasnosoundexceptforthenoiseofalittlestrea mandthequietrainontheleaveswhenmaximspokehisvoicewasgentleandlow

5) wecallitthehappyvalleyhesaid

6) westoodstillnotspeakingilookeddownattheclearwhiteflowersmaximpickedupafallenflowerandgav eittomeasirubbeditbetweenmyhandsthescentwassweetandstrong

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

6)

The time set for this last trial is 30 minutes. On-lookers are invited to participate somehow more actively by gambling a pack of 100 points they are each granted for free (the student /students who guessed who the finalists would be add the voucher of 20 points, so their bonus is 120 points).

The 100 points can be gambled by guessing the number of capital letters , commas, inverted commas and full stops (including end of para-

graphs) in the jumbled text. They can gamble as many as 25 points for each category of punctuation marks. Depending on how sure they are about the correct answer they can gamble 25, 15 or 10 points but gambling is dutiful.

The students (except for the three finalists) write their guesses on a gambling card. They win or lose as many points as they gamble. The winner will be the student with most correct answers for each category.

Contributions

Number of capital letters:
Points gambled:

Number of sets of inverted commas:
Points gambled:

Number of commas:
Points gambled:

Number of full stops:
Points gambled:

Points lost altogether:
Points won altogether:

Total: 100 /120 +
100 / 120 –

No tie-breaks in the final writing stage / gambling are to be played . The winner (winners) of the whole literacy games is awarded a diploma, a pretty large dictionary as well as a pack of class readers. The winner (winners) to the gambling activity is rewarded with a smaller dictionary (like the class readers, courtesy of Oxford University Press).

Contests or games are not likely to change permanently the average learner into a real stickler for accurate spelling and all that literacy jazz. But who nose...

* The Bush story is a headline screened by Sky News. The other two statements are borrowings from the following book titles: José Antonio Millán, *Perdón imposible. Guía para una puntuación más rica y consciente* (RBA Libros, S.A., 2005); Lynne Truss, *Eats, Shoots & Leaves. The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation* (Profile Books Ltd, 2003). The latter was a 'Book of the Year' in Great Britain in 2004.

** "Poor maths and literacy skills cost £800m a year, survey finds" (The Guardian, Tuesday February 20, 2007)

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Descúbrenos





Port-Adventure Section

(Teaching Unit for 3rd year ESO. 1st Term. 12 sessions)

by Alicia
Gala

“Most times it is easier to teach a foreign language when we establish a relationship with the context where students live. This teaching unit, called “Port-Adventure Section”, could be useful for students living in Tarragona or near it. However, students coming from other areas could put it into practice if they intend to spend one day in Port-Adventure by Halloween. This teaching unit is designed for students in the 3rd year of ESO.

This teaching unit combines activities focused on form and on meaning. The tasks proposed lead to a final goal which is to make an album. At the beginning, the tasks are quite controlled, but once students are more familiar with the vocabulary and the grammar, tasks become more creative. At the end of the teaching unit students are taken to Port-Adventure to have fun while they take some photographs with a camera. Later on, in groups of three or four, they have to design an album with commentaries below the photographs and present it orally. When they finish they carry out a self evaluation and the rest of groups do a co-evaluation, in other words, they evaluate their classmates.

The album that students choose could be published in the school magazine.

As far as the key competences of the LOE (Llei Orgànica d'Educació) are concerned, from the 8 key competences, this teaching unit contributes to the development of the 6 of them:

- Linguistic and audiovisual competence
- Cultural and artistic
- Information treatment and digital competence
- Mathematics
- Learning how to learn
- Social competence and citizenship

The pictures used have been taken from Google, in the section of images.

Alicia Gala holds a degree in English Philology (1994-98) from the URV. Master in teaching english as a foreign language, which was organised by “the australian institute” and URV. She is a secondary English teacher. She has taught for Educació in different institutes since 2002: l'Arboç, Torredembarra, Pons d'Icart, and Comte de Rius (in Tarragona). She's 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, she taught English in a private English academy called *Bill's English School* to students of 4 up to 12 years old.

Contributions

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Get students uninhibited to speak in English
- Review hours
- Ask for information and give information
- Suggest where to go and negotiate it
- Learn ways of study

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE KEY COMPETENCES

- Linguistic and audiovisual competence* (Practice of the four skills: reading, listening, writing and specially speaking)
- Cultural and artistic* (Designing an album)
- Information treatment and digital competence* (Taking photographs in Port-Adventure, choosing and printing them)
- Mathematics* (calculating how much a family is going to spend in Port-Adventure)
- Learning how to learn* (learning the meaning of adjectives by drawing them and writing a meaningful sentence)
- Social competence and citizenship* (showing respect and cooperation when working in groups and doing the oral presentation)

CONTENTS

A) COMMUNICATIVE DIMENSION

Participation in oral, written and audiovisual interactions:

- Practising dialogues
- Doing a role-play between a customer of Port-Adventure and an employee

Understanding oral, written and audiovisual messages:

- Getting the main idea in readings
- Grasping the main idea and specific details in listenings.
- Completing oral dialogues
- Filling in timetables
- Interpreting schedules

Expressing oral, written and audiovisual messages:

- Doing an oral presentation of an album of pictures from different rides and activities in Port-Adventure
- Description of Halloween characters

Knowledge of the functioning of the language and its learning:

- Discrimination of sound /b/ and /v/
- Strategies to study
- Vocabulary on actions, hours, subjects, Halloween
- Habits and routines
- Present Continuous
- Contrasting Present Simple and Present Continuous
- Adjectives ending in -ic, -ing, -y
- Imperative

B) AESTHETIC AND LITERARY DIMENSION

- Learning some Halloween jokes

C) PLURINGUAL AND INTERCULTURAL DIMENSION

- Respect towards the traditions of English speaking countries in Halloween
- Use of a non-discriminatory language, showing respect towards all the opinions

SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES

- Session 1:** Initial Evaluation
- Session 2:** Pre-warming: talking about pics – Matching sentences and pics – Grammar Sheet 1 (Present Continuous) – Reading – T/F statements.
- Session 3:** Communication Skills 1 (Suggesting) – Writing dialogue: deciding where to go to – Activities focused on P.C. – Writing (contrasting PS-PC) – Grammar Sheet 2 (PS-PC.)
- Session 4:** Activities focused on PS/PC – Exp PS/PC – Listening (main idea & order places that are visiting) – Discrimination between /b/ and /v/ – Writing a report from timetable – Listening and completing a timetable.
- Session 5:** Reasoning activity (ticket) – Listening to 3 dialogues and filling in Customer's interaction – Listening to dialogues (writing employee's interactions.)
- Session 6:** Practising dialogues and role-playing.
- Session 7:** Matching pictures and descriptions – Learning a learning strategy- Describing Halloween characters-Humour Section – Searching in web page for more humour.
- Session 8:** Field trip to Port-Adventure!!! Dossiers to complete them in pairs. (Students must take a camera with them to design a photo album as homework.
- Session 9:** Talking about pics about Port-Adventure – Identifying pics and texts about Halloween – Identifying titles and texts.
- Session 10:** Identifying adjectives from text-Thinking of more adjectives ending in -ic, -ing, -y – Grammar Sheet 3 (Imperative.)
- Session 11:** Oral presentation of photo album – Self-evaluation and Co-evaluation. Select the best album to include it in the magazine.
- Session 12:** Summative evaluation.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Recognize actions in the Present Continuous/Simple
- Know the time
- Suggest places to go to
- Know Halloween characters
- Describe people

Dear Readers,

Due to the length of this article, we could not include the accompanying hand-outs in the journal. Therefore, we have posted them, along with the complete article, on the APAC web page <http://www.apac.es/publications>.

Yours Faithfully,

The editor



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The Catalan Challenge

by Barbara Leonardi

'You must be mad', 'Good for you!' and 'Isn't it just the same as Spanish?', were all comments proffered to me by my teaching colleagues when I announced my decision. After some 30 years of speaking Spanish, and ignoring the Catalan language I was resigning from my teaching job in England, going to Girona, and returning to being a student.

Back in 1980-81, as a recent teaching graduate, I had taught English for a year at the Escola Oficial de Idiomes in Barcelona. Throughout that year I avoided Catalan, despite the fact that I shared a flat with a Catalan teacher. I was worried that I would become confused and that my Spanish would be contaminated. Ignoring Catalan is still easy to do, especially if you live in Barcelona with its large cosmopolitan population. However, in Girona, my new adopted home, things are very different.

As I sat the initial placement test, I realised that some words had become embedded in my subconscious. 'boira', for example I knew meant fog – largely due to it having impeded a journey I had tried to make once in the wintry depths of inland Catalunya. However, of the intricacies of Catalan grammar I was blissfully ignorant, and sat there perplexed by some of the multiple choice options. To my untrained eyes many seemed to be much the same – just moving an apostrophe around.... little did I know that these were the notorious 'pronomes febles' which were to become my principle challenge.

Initial summer employment as an English teacher in Lowestoft in the 1970s (on the basis that I had a pulse and English as a first language) was my first tentative step into the world of EFL. On completion of my degree and post-graduate teaching qualifications, I worked at the EOI Drassanes in Barcelona. I then went on to work at several language schools in London before joining forces with ARELS / FELCO to help their drive for higher standards in all member schools. Moving away from London, life took me in a separate direction as I became involved in third-sector management. However, the call of education grew ever louder as my own daughter started school. I retrained and started work in primary education where my areas of specialism were literacy and dealing with challenging children. I now divide my time between Poole and Girona and between teaching English and being a student of Catalan.

THE POLITICAL HOT POTATO

As soon as I met my fellow students I recognised that, in general terms, students of Catalan divide into three very different groups. The first group, the most vocal and the most demanding, are the Spanish speakers who have discovered that not speaking Catalan is an impediment to their professional progress. Some bear this news well, get on with the task in hand and make progress. Others whinge endlessly as they try to work their way to the Holy Grail of 'Nivell C'. They are also the ones who most frequently challenge the teachers and insist that what they say (usually a Castillianisation of Catalan) is what they have heard and therefore surely must be right? Perhaps it is difficult to accept (as we know with all languages) that there is often a substantial difference between spoken and written language. In any event the teachers bore this onslaught with unflinching civility and equanimity, which should be applauded. I am not sure I would be that patient!

The second group comprised those who were studying because they had fallen in love with/ were living with/ had married a Catalan. This group provided a fascinating microcosm of Catalan society today. Together they represented over a dozen nations with their stories of how they came to be in this part of Europe. Also interesting was the fact that some of this group found it difficult to practise speaking and listening to Catalan because their partners (Catalan spea-

Contributions

kers themselves) would only talk to them in Spanish! This was especially true for some of the older members of the group. Indeed, in some cases, they could practise with their children but husbands/partners would not change the habits of a lifetime.

The final group were those very few people who were just learning it because they wanted to – foreigners like myself with no ‘Nivell C’ to reach or emotional ties to a Catalan citizen. We were the rarities.

THE COLLECTIVE BEING

After so many years of being on the teaching side of the desk it was an interesting experience to return to being the student. Like a true Brit I studied the course plan, wrote the dates tasks were due onto my calendar, and went out and bought the books we had to use. This approach was not universal. As the date for the first written assessment came and went, many expressed surprise as some members of the class handed in the essay – surely next week would be fine? More surprising still were the people who still hadn’t read/ bought /looked at the set reading book the day before we did the test! Approaches to learning were very varied! There also seemed to be a number who believed that if enough of the group asked for something (like another week to do assessed work) then it should, as a matter of right, be granted.

The greatest difficulty I had was adapting to the idea of writing as a pair or in a group. To me writing is an essentially individual activity and, no matter how I have tried this year, I have failed to adapt to the task as required. There is something in my cultural background that impedes collective creation – a cultural failing I must recognise!

LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH CATALAN

Another surprise in store was improving my English through my study of Catalan. My younger colleagues at school in England quietly considered me a ‘language anorak’. Over the years I have amassed a collection of words which I use to enhance the ever-diminishing daily vocabulary of general conversational exchange. It was with surprise and delight then that I often reached for my Catalan / English dictionary to find that a number of the words I found perplexing (colophon, cicerone, cricoid and many more) are virtually the same in English. It is interesting that the more baroque style of Catalan meant that their use had been retained and, indeed is commonplace, whereas in modern, more utilitarian English, they have largely dropped out of favour. Long may this happy state of Catalan continue!

WAS IT WORTH IT?

As I write, I have just received the glad tidings that I have passed –thanks in no small part to the patience of my teachers in the face of endless obscure questions. My British friends have asked me whether it was worth it. Surely I was fine with just Spanish? My answer is most definite: learning Catalan was one of the best things I have ever done. It has opened my eyes to a whole new level of understanding of Catalan culture and its people. It is also a salutary experience for any teacher to return to being a student. It is easy to forget how things appear from the other side and it has helped me to rethink my teaching. As for my teachers – they definitely got it right – I am coming back for more!

...

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... 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-S200 y EW-S3000.**

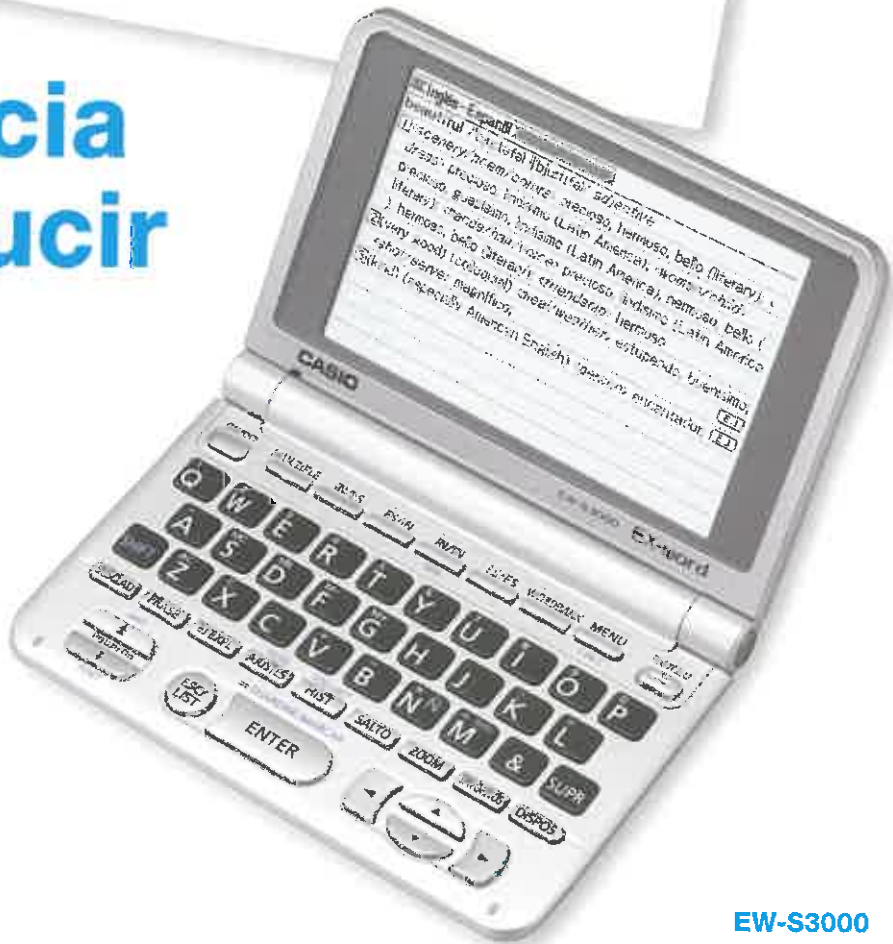
un idioma.
 oras en un
 as. Que, a
 significado
\$3000.

La diferencia entre traducir y definir

Los diccionarios electrónicos Casio EW-S200 y EW-S3000 contienen los diccionarios más prestigiosos:



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- Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (7th edition)
- New Oxford Thesaurus of English (2nd edition)
- Gran Diccionario de la Lengua Española Larousse



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The Experience of Language Teaching (ISBN 0-521-61231-5) CUP 2006

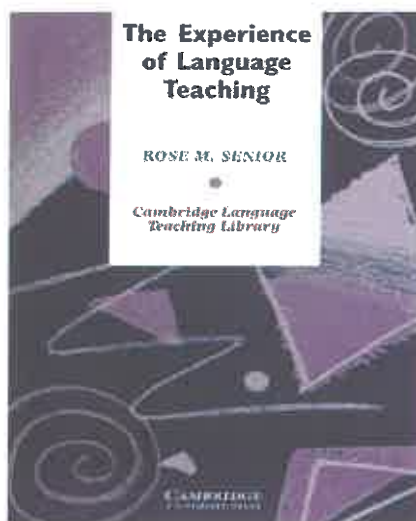
by Rose M. Senior

The Experience of Language Teaching provides a detailed picture of teaching and learning in communicative classrooms and it supplies a framework for understanding why experienced teachers behave in the ways that they do. The book draws on research conducted over a 12-year period (1992-2004) and five separate studies. All the 101 teachers interviewed were engaged in communicative language teaching, incorporating interactive speaking activities into their lessons on a regular basis. *The Experience of Language Teaching* is dedicated to language teachers everywhere. It highlights the complexity of classroom life, by identifying the wide range of factors that influence the on-the-spot classroom decision-making of experienced teachers. This book will be of interest to all kinds of teachers, teacher educators, researchers, and to anyone interested in finding out what it is like to be a language teacher at the present time. Rose Senior has written a thought-provoking book. Through the words of the practising teachers and herself, she has started a forum for discussion and reflection.

The book is divided into 12 chapters: 1. Establishing a framework for the book, 2. Training to be a language teacher, 3. Becoming a committed language teacher, 4. Establishing the learning environment, 5. The diversity of the language classroom, 6. Managing individuals, 7. Teaching flexibly, 8. Vitalizing the language class, 9. Maintaining the classroom community, 10. Frustrations and rewards, 11. What drives language teachers, 12. Towards a teacher-generated theory of classroom practice. Finally, a very extensive bibliography is given at the end of the book.

Each chapter includes a number of boxes that contain additional information and references designed to expand or illuminate the adjacent subject matter. In fact, you feel like reading more about specific methodological aspects after having read this book. I found myself nodding in agreement with Stevick's quotation in one of the boxes "Success depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analyses, and more on what goes on inside and between people in the classroom". This additional information in the boxes makes the book much more convincing and interesting, as it usually proves what language teachers do or say.

Being an "experienced" secondary teacher myself, I was especially interested in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. Chapter 6 describes how experienced language teachers go about managing individual students in order to maintain a spirit of social equilibrium within



their class groups. Chapter 7 focuses on the flexibility of language teachers as they balance pedagogical and social aspects of their classrooms and why they are able to make so many on-the-spot decisions in their classrooms. Chapter 8 focuses on the ways that the behaviour of teachers and students in language classes are mutually dependent. It describes in particular how humour, together with learning tasks that engage the whole person, is a powerful way of vitalizing the atmosphere of language classrooms. Senior highlights the benefits of using brainstorming and choral work to create good dynamics in the class. Chapter 9 describes the evolution and maintenance of classroom communities, showing that experienced language teachers have an intuitive understanding of group dynamics principles.

describes the evolution and maintenance of classroom communities, showing that experienced language teachers have an intuitive understanding of group dynamics principles.

In the book, you learn what other teachers do when they control the atmosphere of the class group, how teachers handle students with care, how they provide 'difficult students' with opportunities to redirect their energies in positive directions. Senior also discusses controversial topics such as TTT (Teacher Talking Time) or STT (Student Talking Time), 'being coursebook-dependent', and teaching flexibly. In another box, she quotes Rubin saying that "Textbooks too easily become a convenience that inhibits the imagination". Senior also comes to the conclusion that pedagogic eclecticism is, it seems, a key feature of effective teaching.

The author metaphorically compares language teaching with learning to drive: "When they begin their teaching careers, language teachers find themselves consciously thinking about what they are doing. Just as learning to drive a car involves listening to the sound of the engine, judging when to change gear, keeping the required distance from the kerb, reading road signs, deciding when to overtake and so on, language teaching involves focusing your attention on many different things at once." That means being responsive to students' needs.

In short, Senior wants to prove the complexity of language teaching and the different factors that may influence our teaching and the students' learning. In such a context, the opinions of experienced teachers must be taken into an account.

This is a book I recommend to all language teachers (experienced and inexperienced) who want to enrich their classroom practice (or experience) and motivate their students much more.

Reviewed by Josep Sala i Esquena