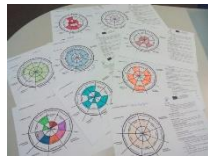


Proceedings.
APAC-ELT
Conference
2018



METHODOLOGY
SELF-ASSESSMENT OF
SKILLS



MATERIAL
SCREENCASTING
SOFTWARE, ESCAPE
THE ROOM SUPPLIES



**HANDS-ON
EXPERIENCES**
AUDIOVISUAL
COMMUNICATION

APAC ELT JOURNAL



Busy times

The doldrums of summer are long past, and now we are in the midst of the maelstrom once again. There are so many things going on in our schools and in APAC! In schools, we are already administering our first exams, implementing class projects, working out the final details of initial outings, sparking inspiration and motivation among our students (while also putting out occasional fires of a different nature).

In APAC, it's also a busy time. As you have seen from our newsletter, we are implementing an autumn workshop. It will take place in just a few days! And it's bound to be a great experience for all. We would like to congratulate the members of the board who put it together. It's important for teachers to take part in programs like this at the beginning of the school year, to get new ideas and to begin their students' path to knowledge with a bounce in their step.

Since the last issue of the journal, there have been some changes in the make-up of the APAC board. The biggest one is that Carmen Santamaria

Every time you
stop a school,
you will have
to build a jail.

Mark Twain

has resigned as one of our secretaries. It's quite a loss to us, as she is very hard-working and enthusiastic, and we will miss her quite a bit. But, she says she will give us a hand whenever we need help with something, so we will take her up on her offer (without abusing her goodwill and good nature, we hope)! She is a whirlwind of energy, and we wish her well in all her projects.

Speaking of projects, we on the APAC editorial team are anxious to hear about the projects all of you are involved in. In fact, we are dying to hear from you. We have no articles for the January issue! So, please take it upon yourself to write up a short report about something that you have done in class that worked very well. It only takes a few hours of dedication to put your experience down in black and white (with some pictures, if possible), and that little thing can spread and have a great impact in someone's classroom far away from you.

In this issue we have a handful of articles, but they can all influence your teaching in one way or another. The first one is by **Elisenda Abad**, and it details quite a few projects she carries out with her students, bringing different aspects of YouTube videos into the classroom and helping her students come up with similar types of output. We hope it gives you a lot of inspiration. The next article, by **Maite Maneu** and **Elisabet Codern**, stems from a European Erasmus + KA2 project with schools in Spain, Belgium, Sweden and Iceland. Its goal was to help students improve their speaking skills and to become more autonomous in this area. The article describes several tools that the participating schools developed and that you could try out with your own students. The third article, by **Edward Lockhart** and **Wendy Lockhart**, introduces teachers to Escape the Room materials and methods. It offers a starting point for those of us who want to try a new way of gamifying our activities. It is a really interesting proposal, and, although it requires a fair amount of preparation when one starts out, over time it is bound to yield great benefits, as teachers and students get used to doing these kinds of tasks. There is a lot of potential here for mixed-ability groups.

In the next article, **Sidney Martin** and **Sara Baró** offer a different way to provide students with feedback. Rather than writing comments on students' work, teachers can use the different kinds of software discussed in the article to record themselves as they comment on different aspects of assignments. This can save teachers time and give students listening comprehension practice while also conveying more nuances to them. In the fifth article, **Vardush Hovsepyan** discusses Armenian and Spanish teaching systems from a student's point of view and looks for a way to combine the both systems into one. It is interesting to see what is emphasized in different countries; it can help us understand students from distant lands better. And, last but not least, we have a "short and sweet" article by Kieran Donaghy on how to take advantage of brief videos to promote creativity among students. It has a great list of resources at the end.

Well, we hope you enjoy the articles and that you find a few hours between now and Nov. 30 to write up one of your own!

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APAC JOURNAL

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From the President and Vice-President

Àngels Oliva & Usoa Sol

Dear APAC members,

We hope you have had a great summer break and started the new academic year full of energy and optimism. The world of education is in flux, not just in Catalonia but all over the globe. The way we understand teaching and learning has changed dramatically during the past few decades, and everyone is looking for answers in different movements and methodologies. Working well and training are important, but so is sharing what we do. Learning is not possible without negotiation, and this applies both within and beyond the school, to students, parents and teachers alike. In the words of the great John Dewey, “Education is a social process; education is growth; education is not preparation for life but is life itself.”

When we feel part of a team, we feel more motivated, more creative, more confident about trying out new things. But for many, the collaborative part is perhaps the most difficult one to go with when one agrees to work in a cross-curricular way as part of a project: adjusting to working with teachers from other disciplines, opening up our plans and our classrooms for (gasp) other people to see and perhaps comment on what goes on. This is, quite definitely, going out of our comfort zone, but it is also an essential part of moving on and tackling the problems in our context. To be able to create something positive in our schools we need to share, and in order to share we need to communicate with the other people involved in this context. Only then, as part of a tightly knit network, deeply embedded in our local context but with ties well beyond it, can teaching teams feel empowered to design our own approach to educating 21st-century citizens.

What can we do at APAC to collaborate in this process? Well, we have kept ourselves busy these past months, putting this issue of the *ELT Journal* together, getting ready for next year’s ELT Convention, revamping our web page and setting up the first APAC autumn workshop.

APAC wants to offer all creative teachers a place to share their projects and be inspired by others’ ideas, to grow as professionals and to feel a sense of belonging. Join APAC’s ELT Convention 2019 and **RELEASE YOUR INSPIRATION**. Check out [APAC’s webpage](#) to register, or send us your proposal by November 1st.

DATES: January 31st, February 1st and 2nd

VENUE: Campus Ciutadella, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona

If you’re ready for some action and can’t really wait until the 2019 Convention, we have organised a flash training session along with the Consorci d’Educació de Barcelona that will take place in the centre of Barcelona on October 27th. *Communicate, Innovate & Create 2018* is a hands-on workshop on the importance of creativity in learning, with practical ideas to implement in your everyday practice. Check out APAC’s webpage for more information, and keep your eyes and ears open, as registration will start soon via the Consorci’s webpage.

APAC offers you a platform in which to share, learn, question and create. A place in which you can grow as a teacher and help others grow as well. This is what we hope, and this is what we set as our goal at the start of every academic year. Thanks for everything, and keep up the good work!

APAC’s board
October 1st, 2018

2017 APAC-British Council John McDowell Award

The judging panel's verdict:

For **Type C, projects presented by classes**, the panel of judges has awarded an **Honourable Mention** and a **First Prize**.

- **Honourable Mention:** This is accompanied by a 300-euro voucher for educational material.

The Honourable Mention was awarded to **the 2nd-year ESO students of Col·legi Manyanet Sant Andreu** in Barcelona for their project, *Famous British Couples*. They were guided by their teacher, **Lurdes Pujadas**.



Recipients of the Honourable Mention in Type C.

- **First Prize:** This is accompanied by a 1200-euro voucher for educational material.

The First Prize went to the project *Launching a solidarity campaign to support four Syrian kids stranded in Greece*. It was presented by **the 2nd-grade students of Sant Jordi Elementary School** in Mollet del Vallès and their teachers, **Maria Mont** and **Mònica Franco**.



Recipients of First Prize in Type C.

For **Type B, research projects presented by Baccalaureate students**, the judges awarded two **Honourable Mentions** and a **First Prize**.

- **Honourable Mention:** This is accompanied by a 100-euro voucher for specialised material.

It went to the research project *The American Dream: Myth or Reality*, by **Albert Escolà**, of **Escola Pia** in Sarrià. His work was guided by **Conxi Curto**.



Conxi Curto, Albert Escolà and Àngels Oliva.

- **First Prize:** This is accompanied by a tablet sponsored by APAC.

It went to **Marina Molowny** for her research project *Elementary School Students' Participation and Motivation in CLIL and NON-CLIL Based Classrooms*. Ms Molowny is from **Francisco de Goya High School** in Barcelona, and she was guided in her project by **Ana Cristina Mora**.



Marina Molowny, Ana Cristina Mora and Àngels Oliva.

In regard to **Type A, projects presented by teachers**, the panel of judges awarded an Honourable Mention and a First Prize.

- **Honourable Mention:** This is accompanied by a 200-euro voucher for specialized material.

It was awarded to **Elena Vercher** for her project, **Filming English**.



Àngels Oliva and Elena Vercher.

- **First Prize:** This is accompanied by a laptop computer featuring a tactile screen sponsored by APAC.

It was awarded to **Judit Vilalta** for her project entitled **Task-development and accomplishment using formative assessment tools**. As Ms Vilalta was out of the country, the prize was received by her parents.



Angels Oliva and the parents of Judit Vilalta.

The judges would like to congratulate all the participants on their fine work and encourage everyone to present a project for the 2018 APAC-British Council John McDowell Award.

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Instructions &
call for entries

John McDowell Awards 2018

APAC, The British Council & Trinity College London

APAC, The British Council and Trinity College London invite all members of APAC to submit their entries for projects carried out during the academic year 2017-18. We call on English teachers, teams of teachers and student teachers to participate in one of the three categories according to the conditions established below:

Category A - funded by APAC and Trinity College London

- This category is addressed to **individual teachers or student teachers**.
- Submissions can be:
 - a research project or inquiry in the field of ELT,
 - design of innovative materials/didactic sequences that include a theoretical framework, goals and conclusions.

Category B - funded by APAC

- This category is addressed to **Batxillerat students and their research tutors**.
- Submissions should be a finished research project written in English either about a topic related to anglophone culture or to other fields of knowledge.
- The research tutor should write a brief cover letter listing the key points of the project and student's expertise.

Category C - funded by the British Council

- This category is addressed to a **school or class group and their teachers**.
- Submissions can be didactic sequences or projects that have been carried out during the previous academic year.
- Submissions should include an introduction, goals, contents and conclusions. Contributions by students and other members of the school need to be detailed as well.

John McDowell Awards 2018

Prizes

A jury made up of members of APAC's board and the British Council will award prizes to a **winner** and a **runner-up** for every category:

Category A:

- ★ *First Prize Winner:* Flight and one-night accommodation to attend Trinity's *Future of ELT* conference in June in central London.
- ★ *Runner-up:* 200€ coupon to be used at Come In English Bookshop (Barcelona)

Category B:

- ★ *First Prize Winner:* Tablet
- ★ *Runner-up:* 100€ coupon to be used at Come In English Bookshop (Barcelona)

Category C:

- ★ *First Prize Winner:* 1.200€ coupon to be spent on resources or materials for the school
- ★ *Runner-up:* 300€ coupon to be spent on resources or materials for the school

APAC will inform winners during the month of January, and prizes will be officially announced during the Opening Session of APAC's ELT Congress 2019, with the attendance of all winners. The results will also be shared in APAC's ELT Journal and on its webpage (www.apac365.org).


Instructions for participants:

- **Materials submitted should be in English**
- **Information that must be included in all categories:**
 - Category (A, B or C)
 - Full name + surname(s) of the candidates who are APAC members
 - Level and context
 - Phone n°, e-mail address and postal address (including the school's address, if applicable)
- Candidates must submit their projects online by **December 15th 2018** at www.apac365.org or by post to APAC: c/Girona 53, baixos, 08009 Barcelona.
- Only APAC members may apply.
- APAC may publish all or part of the projects.

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APAC 
Associació de Professors d'Anglès de Catalunya

2019 APAC-ELT Convention

Release Your Inspiration

DATES: January 31st, February 1st and 2nd, 2019

Teaching is a creative field, there's no denying it. We have to meet the needs of many learners with a wide diversity of interests, learning styles, levels of attainment and degrees of motivation. We also have to avoid falling into a rut and teaching "the same, old same-old" using the same photocopies, flashcards, powerpoints and Kahoots as previous years.

However, creativity has its limits. If we rely solely on our own wits, we may not realize that there are even better ways than our own to ratchet up our teaching and take it to a new level. We need to see what others are doing, and we need to tell them about our innovations as well. Out of this synergy can come big things.

So, this year, we have given our ELT Convention the motto "Release Your Inspiration". We want attendees and presenters to let their imaginations fly free and talk about interesting ways to reach students and make our teaching more effective. In the previous sentence, we had used the word "ingenious", but we toned it down to "interesting", because "ingenious" stems from putting together many instances of "interesting".

We hope you will all come to the convention, starting on January 31st, and breathe deeply of the creativity around you, and then go back to your classroom and release your inspiration!

Deadline for presentation proposals: November 1st.

[Registration and call for papers](#)

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The power to decide
WHERE TO GO NEXT

Welcome to our
WORLD OF ENGLISH

www.britishcouncil.es

How to Take the *Youtuber* Phenomenon into the EFL Classroom

Elisenda Abad

This article is a slightly modified version of a previously published article (Abad, E. (2017): "How to Take the Youtuber Phenomenon into the EFL Classroom". *English Is it!* (ELT Training Series), Vol. 9, pp. 82-92. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona. <http://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/handle/2445/119685>)

Abstract

Generations of teenagers are changing so fast, and, as teachers, we must be up-to-date with our students' interests and needs. This teacher, by listening to and talking to her students, discovered that they were all fascinated by the world of *Youtubers*. Therefore, she browsed on the Internet to see what she could take from this phenomenon and bring into her EFL classes from a pedagogical and competence-oriented perspective. In this article, this teacher presents six projects designed by herself which connect the *Youtuber* phenomenon with the key competences and the curriculum of 1st ESO (7th grade). These are: *A room tour*, *30 random facts about me*, *20 songs tag*, *epic vlog*, *10 photos tag* and *10 seconds challenge*. Each project is presented as a handout detailing the steps which were followed before, while and after doing the project.

Introduction

When I started teaching, I had in my mind that before introducing the content of the syllabus, I had to find engaging, interesting, up-to-date tasks which I could adapt in order to respond to the students' demands, needs and wants while improving their language skills. This has been one of my main EFL teaching practice mottos since I started teaching.

As teachers, we are in charge of turning our students' likes into what we consider pedagogically suitable for them. I always give students a handout where they can write down which songs, TV series, films, famous people, etc. they would like to deal with in class. This has helped me to get to know them at the start of the year, and to adapt the curriculum to their needs and desires. Today's teenagers are changing so fast that keeping up to date with them can help to achieve a real and close teaching and learning of English.

In 2016-2017, I taught three 1st ESO classes (7th grade) at a junior high school in Badalona. Reading and listening to these 1st ESO students, I realised that their idols had changed quite a lot since the first groups that I had taught when I started my teaching career. The students used to highlight singers and football players. Last year their lists started naming people who they feel closer to: *Youtubers*.

Although I was a bit familiar with the *Youtuber* phenomenon, I started to browse videos of my students' main *Youtube* idols to analyse what was so appealing about them. I observed that I could take advantage of some of their video content and use to fit it in the syllabus. Additionally, I visualized my students turning into *Youtubers* and carrying out two projects along those lines each term.

By finding inspiration in the *Youtuber* phenomenon, I saw that my students were more motivated to learn English. They started to look at English as a real-life language beyond the coursebooks. Before each project was presented, students were already eager to know what it was going to be about and what they were going to do.

In early junior high school, students must learn how to describe a room, introduce themselves and talk about their hobbies, write and talk about music, describe a place and an experience, talk about their memories from a picture, give commands, etc. These specific aims can be met through the contents that *Youtubers* have on their channels and can easily be turned into different English projects. I designed six projects which follow the contents of the syllabus, reflect the *Youtuber* phenomenon, and can be used in other grades in junior high school.

When dealing with these contents from a *Youtuber* perspective, learners acquire different key competences such as competence in linguistic communication, competence in social and civic skills, learning to learn, autonomy and personal initiative, competence in interaction with the physical environment and competence in processing information and using ICT.

When I devise projects, organization and variety in format is a must to avoid possible boredom. To implement the *Youtuber* phenomenon in the EFL class, I carry them out in different ways over the course of three terms. I will refer to them in the same form. Two projects can be done on paper and presented in class, two other projects are recorded at home, one is presented through *PowerPoint* and *Google Drive*, and the last one is written and performed in the classroom. These six projects are part of a school year. However, they can be easily put into practice separately, in twos, and in sequences of threes. They can also be done in different terms and be adapted to all grades in junior high school.

The educational system here provides for a weekly, one-hour, split-group class. I implement these six projects with each half of a class once every week. However, depending on the number of students, these projects can easily be carried out with whole groups from the start. The projects next will be presented by term. Each project contains three main parts: before doing the project, while doing the project, and after doing the project.


FIRST TERM		
1/ A ROOM TOUR	Video	Showing and describing what there is in students' rooms
2/ 30 RANDOM FACTS ABOUT ME	Poster	Drawing and explaining 30 random facts about students
SECOND TERM		
3/ 20 SONGS TAG	Poster	Matching 20 songs which 20 different moments and/or emotions
4/ EPIC VIDEO BLOG (VLOG)	Video	Describing a place and what can be done there
THIRD TERM		

5/ 10 PHOTOS TAG	<i>PowerPoint/ Google Drive presentation</i>	Sharing and describing 10 relevant photos in the students' lives
6/ 10 SECONDS CHALLENGE	Game performance	Performing a 10-second challenge game to give commands to students

In the “before doing” section, there is always a table which is part of the students’ handouts. The students’ handouts are not included in full here because each is 2 page-long. However, they can be downloaded from my wiki site *English Learning World* (Individual and group projects, section 11: *Become a YouTuber for a day*). The tables in the “before doing” section include the topic of the project, the level, the timing, the approach, the objectives, the key competences, the instructions, and the evaluation criteria. In the “while doing” section, there is a detailed description of the number of sessions devoted to the project and the process students follow to accomplish the task. In the “after doing” section, the day of the presentation is described along with the how students proceed to evaluate their peers.

Main Body

FIRST TERM

1.  **A ROOM TOUR**

A. BEFORE DOING THE PROJECT

In the first session, students are given a 2-page handout containing the instructions for the project. They are read aloud and explained so that all the students know what they are expected to do (Projects 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 follow the same guidelines).

Topic: DESCRIPTION OF A ROOM
Level: 1st ESO (7th grade) – Half of the group
Timing: 2 1-hour sessions to write the description in class
 1 week to record it at home
 1 session to present it and evaluate it
Approach: Individual work
Objectives:
 - To round off the unit
 - To describe a room
 - To revise furniture and decoration vocabulary

- To put into practice grammar structures (*there is/there are*)
- To use main prepositions

Key competences:

- Linguistic communication
- Social and civic skills
- Learning to learn
- Autonomy and personal initiative
- Interaction with the physical environment
- Processing information and using ICT

Instructions:

- a. Written paper: how they should develop their pieces of writing
- b. Video: how they should record the video

Evaluation:

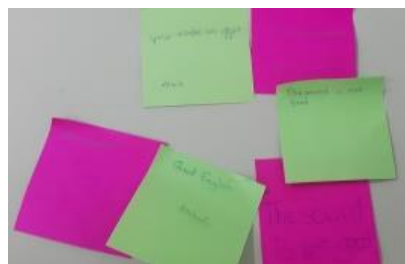
- Written paper: 50%
- Video: 50%
- Peer evaluation after presentations

B. WHILE DOING THE PROJECT

Students write a description of their room. The teacher monitors them and helps them with the language. A week is given for students to record it at home. They are asked to be in front of the camera while talking to the teachers to make sure that they are not reading from the paper. They are asked to study the text but to explain it and not read from it when the recording time comes.

C. AFTER DOING THE PROJECT

Students are asked to share their videos through *Google Drive* or bring them on a USB flash drive. The videos are shown in class and evaluated by their peers. Some of them have green *post-it* notes on which they are asked to write positive comments on their classmates' English level, competence in communication and use of ICT. Some others have fuchsia *post-it* notes in case there are improvements to be suggested.



2.

30
RANDOM
facts
ME

30 RANDOM FACTS ABOUT ME

A. BEFORE DOING THE PROJECT

Guidelines as indicated in project 1.

Topic: PRESENTING WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU LIKE

Level: 1st ESO (7th grade) - Half of the group

Timing: 3 1-hour sessions to write the list and make the poster in class
1 session to present it and evaluate it

Approach: Individual work

Objectives:

- To round off the unit
- To introduce yourself to the others
- To revise basic vocabulary about hobbies and personality
- To put into practice the *present simple* and the verb *to be*
- To use main prepositions

Key competences:

- Linguistic communication
- Social and civic skills
- Learning to learn
- Autonomy and personal initiative
- Interaction with the physical environment

Instructions:

- a. Written paper: how they should develop their pieces of writing
- b. Poster: how they should compose the poster

Evaluation:

- Written paper: 50%
- Poster: 50%
- Peer evaluation after the presentation

B. WHILE DOING THE PROJECT

Students are asked to write a list of 30 random facts about themselves. The teacher assists them and corrects the mistakes as they finish. Another class hour is devoted to putting together a poster. They are told that they can bring printed pictures, pictures from magazines, glitter, coloured papers, and anything else that they wish to include on their posters. They are not allowed to write the list of random facts on the posters; they can only write key terms or use printed pictures and drawings to help them when delivering the oral presentation.

C. AFTER DOING THE PROJECT

On the presentation day students bring their posters and show them. They have to say their list of random facts without reading them from the paper which they have previously written in class. Once their performance is over, the posters are hung on the classroom walls.



SECOND TERM

3.



20 SONGS TAG

A. BEFORE DOING THE PROJECT

Guidelines as indicated in project 1.

Topic: TALKING ABOUT MUSIC AND EMOTIONS
Level: 1st ESO (7th grade) - Half of the group
Timing: 3 1-hour sessions to write and compose the poster
 1 session to present it and evaluate it
Approach: Individual work
Objectives:

- To round off the unit
- To identify a song with an emotion
- To reflect upon the music that we like in different contexts
- To put into practice the *present simple*, the *present continuous*, and the verb *to be*
- To be aware of our similarities with our partners

Key competences:

- Linguistic communication
- Social and civic skills
- Learning to learn
- Autonomy and personal initiative
- Interaction with the physical environment

Instructions:

- a. Written paper: how they should develop their pieces of writing

b. Poster: how to organise the poster

Evaluation:

- Written paper: 50%
- Poster: 50%
- Peer evaluation after the presentation

B. WHILE DOING THE PROJECT

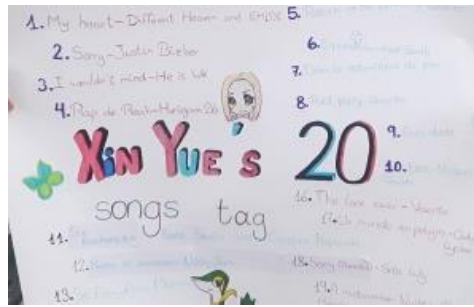
After reading the instructions on the handout, students learn that they have two sessions to think of a song for each category:

1. Favourite song	11. Song that I identify with
2. Hated song	12. Song that I used to like and now I hate
3. Song that makes me sad	13. Song from my favourite album
4. Song that reminds me of someone	14. Song that I can play on an instrument
5. Song that makes me happy	15. Song that I would sing in public
6. Song that reminds me of a specific moment	16. Song that I like listening to in the car
7. Song whose lyrics I know perfectly	17. Song of my childhood
8. Song that makes me dance immediately	18. Song that nobody expects me to love
9. Song that makes me fall asleep	19. Song for my wedding
10. Song that I secretly like	20. Song for my funeral

Apart from writing the song title and the name of the singer or band, they have to give a reason for their choice. After finishing the list, they have another session to prepare their poster. They can decorate it as they feel like, as long as they include the twenty categories, the song title and the singer or band.

C. AFTER DOING THE PROJECT

When presenting the project, students hold their posters and show them to the other classmates. They are allowed to read the categories, the song title and the band's or the singer's name but they have to explain the reason for their choices to the audience.



4.  **EPIC VIDEO BLOG (VLOG)**

A. BEFORE DOING THE PROJECT

Guidelines as indicated in project 1.

Topic: DESCRIBING A PLACE
Level: 1st ESO (7th grade) – Half of the group
Timing: 2 1-hour sessions to do the project in class
 1 week to record it at home
 1 session to present it and evaluate it
Approach: Individual or pair work
Objectives:
 - To round off the unit
 - To describe a place
 - To revise vocabulary of a certain place
 - To put into practice the following grammar structure (*there is/there are*)
 - To put into practice the *present simple, frequency adverbs, and can/can't*
 - To use main prepositions
Key competences:
 - Linguistic communication
 - Social and civic skills
 - Learning to learn
 - Autonomy and personal initiative
 - Interaction with the physical environment
 - Processing information and using ICT
Instructions:
 a. Written paper: how they should develop their pieces of writing
 b. Video: how they should record the video
Evaluation:
 - Written paper: 50%
 - Video: 50%
 - Peer evaluation after the presentation

B. WHILE DOING THE PROJECT

Two sessions are devoted to the learners describing a place where they often go. Some students choose the streets that they live in, the parks where they play, emblematic places in the centre of Badalona or one-day trips in the mountains with their families. They have to describe what they see as well as what they do there. A week is given for the recording and the editing process to be completed.

C. AFTER DOING THE PROJECT

Students can share their video through *Google Drive* or bring it on a USB flash drive. For their partners to give feedback to them, the teacher has printed and laminated *Whatsapp* emoticons which express different feelings. Three different random students each time are asked to pick one or more cards according to their opinion on their classmate's performance in the video. Once they make their choice, they have to justify it by saying a few words.



THIRD TERM

5.



10 PHOTOS TAG

A. BEFORE DOING THE PROJECT

Guidelines as indicated in project 1.

Topic: DESCRIBING 10 MEMORABLE PHOTOS

Level: 1st ESO (7th grade)- Half of the group

Timing: 2 1-hour sessions to do the project in class

1 week to prepare the *PowerPoint/Google Drive* presentation at home

1 session to present it and evaluate it

Approach: Individual work

Objectives:

- To round off the unit
- To describe 10 memorable photos
- To describe specific vocabulary on memories
- To put into practice the *past simple* and the *past continuous*
- To put into practice the *present simple* and the *present continuous*
- To share with the others and get to know them better

Key competences:

- Linguistic communication
- Social and civic skills
- Learning to learn
- Autonomy and personal initiative
- Interaction with the physical environment

Instructions:

- a. Written paper: how they should develop their pieces of writing
- b. *PowerPoint* presentation: how they should prepare the *PowerPoint*

Evaluation:

- Written paper: 50%
- *PowerPoint* presentation: 50%
- Peer evaluation after the presentation

B. WHILE DOING THE PROJECT

Students are told that they have to think of ten personal pictures of different moments in their lives. In their descriptions, they have to include where the photo was taken, how old they were, what they were doing and why that photo is special for them. They have two sessions to do it with the teacher monitoring them and a week to prepare the *PowerPoint/Google Drive* presentation at home.

C. AFTER DOING THE PROJECT

In class, they show the *Powerpoint/Google Drive* presentation which includes the ten photos. They have to deliver the presentation without reading from the text that they have previously written. After each oral performance, two or three different students are chosen at random each time and given the role of judges. They have to make comments on the presentations.

6.

**YOU HAVE
10
SECONDS**

10 SECONDS CHALLENGE

A. BEFORE DOING THE PROJECT

Guidelines as indicated in project 1.

Topic: GIVING ORDERS AND CHALLENGING PEOPLE

Level: 1st ESO (7th grade)- Half of the group

Timing: 3 1-hour sessions to do the project in class
1 session to present it and evaluate it

Approach: Individual and pair work

Objectives:

- To conclude the academic year
- To give orders
- To challenge the others
- To revise all the vocabulary of the year
- To put into practice all the grammar structures seen throughout the year

Key competences:

- Linguistic communication
- Social and civic skills
- Learning to learn
- Autonomy and personal initiative
- Interaction with the physical environment

Instructions:

- a. Written paper: how they should develop their pieces of writing
- b. Performance: how they are going to challenge the others

Evaluation:

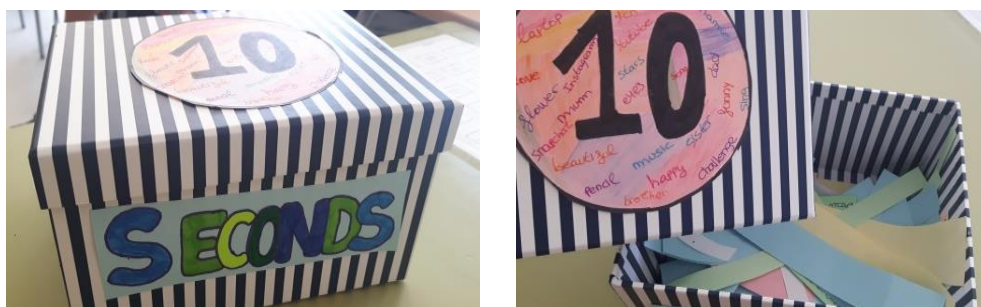
- Written paper: 50%
- Performance in class: 50%
- Peer evaluation after the presentation

B. WHILE DOING THE PROJECT

After having read and understood the instructions for their last project, students are requested to think about 10 challenges. They all have to include English language learning aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, reading or listening comprehension. While doing this, students are not only following the English syllabus but also becoming aware that English is a language of communication just like their mother tongues, Catalan or Spanish, are.

They are given some examples to illustrate what is meant by writing challenges. They have to start all their commands by “*You have 10 seconds to...*” and then give an order such as “*Name 8 words in English beginning with A-; Translate into English ‘M’encanta ballar’; Draw someone wearing a swimsuit and goggles;*” or “*Sing the chorus of a Justin Bieber song*”.

Once they have written their 10 challenges, the teacher corrects them. After that, they can copy them onto small pieces of coloured paper. The fast-finishers are in charge of decorating the box where all the papers are deposited on the oral performance day.



C. AFTER DOING THE PROJECT

All the papers are put into the box. Then, students are paired up at random. Each student has to take a coloured-paper and read the message aloud. Once the adversary has understood the task to do, the teacher sets the countdown timer to make sure that all the participants have 10 seconds for that. Each student has to face 5 challenges.

The names of the students who succeed in the challenge are noted down on the whiteboard. Later, they will compete with the other winners. Finally, there is a winner in each half of the group. After each performance, the other classmates, who are spectators, give their opinion on their peers' achievements and failures.

Conclusion

As has been portrayed in this article, English is a school subject whose contents can easily be reflected in everyday actions and in life in general. From there, these contents can be easily turned into very meaningful tasks for students. When students are familiar with what they are doing, teachers turn English into a more friendly and approachable matter for all. From my view, when we make our students feel closer to English, they become fully aware of its importance, and enjoy learning it the most.

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Biodata

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Speaking for Yourself. A Project to Foster Autonomy *Results of the European Erasmus + KA2 project*

Maite Maneu
EOI Girona
Elisabet Codern
EOI Girona

Introduction

The Official School of Languages of Girona (EOI Girona) has participated in several European projects since 2009, such as Grundtvig, Erasmus+, KA1, and KA2. This article is the result of our latest European Erasmus + KA2 project, which is called *Speaking for Yourself*, and lasted from July 2014 to July 2017. We worked together with other European institutions which shared some common features with us. The institutions in this project were: EOI de Roquetas de Mar (Almería), Het Perspectief and Stedelijk CVO Encora (both centres in Belgium), Järfälla Lärocentrum (Sweden), and Miðstöð Símenntunar á Suðurnesjum (Iceland). All of them are adult educational centres dedicated to language teaching. This article is a summary of the research we did for three years and the products that came out of this project. All the materials and resources are available on our web page: <http://speaking4yourself.hetperspectief.net/>

The project

The goals we set for this project were:

- To help students improve their speaking skills.
- To help students become more autonomous in the learning and practice of a foreign language, specially focusing on speaking.
- To help teachers in this process.

The methodology used to develop our work was action research.

As a team we stated that autonomous learning represented the empowerment of the student, which could be convenient in a learning background which happens more and more often outside the classroom. Not all students study in the same way (face to face, online blended ...) and they have specific needs and objectives. Autonomy can be the way to help students take their learning process into their hands.

The focus of the project is on speaking, which is the most important skill in terms of usage. It is the skill that students are less trained to practice autonomously.

We chose action research as it is an efficient methodology for empowering teachers to make improvements in their classes. Action research involves small-scale research done by the teacher to evaluate a situation within the class, a real context, in order to try to solve specific situations, aiming to make real change happen. It works as a cycle, because it leads teachers through different steps:

- Identify a problem
- Devise a plan of action
- Collect data
- Analyse the data
- Take informed action
- Identify new problems and start all over again ... (if necessary)



Analysis

To get data on the actual situation of speaking and autonomy, we designed a questionnaire for teachers asking about their speaking practice in class and outside class, activities, feedback, evaluation of activities and diagnostic testing. The results raised other issues like:

- Effective methods for analysing students' needs.
- How to monitor and coach students to become autonomous.
- Activities and materials

Speaking scoresheets (initial diagnosis sheets)

The project was based on the assumption that the students had to become aware of the different aspects involved in speaking so as to raise consciousness of their strengths and those aspects that they need or want to improve. To achieve this goal, we designed scoresheets or initial diagnosis sheets that would be the starting point of the autonomous work we wanted to promote.

These sheets are designed to diagnose the students' speaking abilities, taking the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as a starting point. The activities were classified according to speaking subskills, which include:

- Sociolinguistic appropriateness
- Competence and cohesion
- Spoken fluency
- Phonological control
- Grammatical accuracy
- Vocabulary range

These sheets can be used by the teachers during speaking activities conducted in the class to diagnose the speaking ability of one or several students. They can also be used by students as a tool for self-evaluation and reflection on their spoken production. As seen in the photo, to make it more visual you can colour the description that best describes the student, that is, if the student is at the level, or below or above it.



This diagnostic sheet serves students and teachers to reflect on their strengths and possible shortcomings, which means teachers can design a work plan and/or be able to advise them on how to improve their speaking skills autonomously.

Speaking Activities

To help students practise speaking autonomously, we designed a set of speaking activities geared towards different subskills.

After the diagnosis, teachers encourage students to set realistic goals that are achievable within a reasonable period of time, and from there a selection of activities is made available to the students for them to work on the speaking sub-skill to be improved. For example, if a student decides that he wants to improve his pronunciation, the teacher will suggest one or some of the activities from the tool box so that the student can improve this aspect.

Most of the activities need little or no teacher intervention. In many cases, students themselves can self-correct by using technology, such as mobile phone applications (e.g., acapela). In some cases, it may require a minor intervention or follow-up by the teacher. They are flexible activities and can be used in different ways. They can be used as they are defined or as a basis for other activities.

We believe that the tools and activities that we provide can be useful for promoting autonomy in the area of oral expression and for improving students' self-esteem and confidence when expressing themselves in a foreign language. Some can be used in the classroom, others can be done at home or anywhere thanks to the use of technology. The teacher and the student can decide what is best, in accordance with the existing degree of autonomy.

The main objective of these activities is to motivate students and encourage them to work independently, instead of just evaluating or correcting them. It is important to keep in mind that autonomy must be first trained in the classroom. In this sense, the teacher should train students by encouraging their participation in the decision-making process, and gradually leaving the learning process in their hands.

Digital toolbox

The final product of our project is a digital toolbox that includes all the material that was useful for this project. Within this toolbox we find four subsections:

- Speaking scoresheets (initial diagnosis sheets).
- Speaking activities (oral expression activities).
- Coaching and motivation (guidelines to motivate our students during the process).
- Further tips (additional ideas).

Finally, for teachers who want to work along similar lines, we offer coaching and motivation guidelines as well as some tips to prevent students from abandoning the endeavour during the process. Among others, we have reached the following conclusions that may be useful to you:

- Introduce autonomous learning gradually: start in the classroom familiarizing yourself with the activity.
- Help students adapt to the new way of learning (mindshift) as they need guidance

and training.

- Select a feasible amount of aspects (comments, plan for learning and practising) and set a realistic time limit.
- Find out the level of autonomy of your students, for example, using a questionnaire to help students and teachers reflect on self-learning.
- Integrate this orientation process into the curriculum, incorporate it into the classroom and focus on a selection of goals and aspects

Impact in our school

The work and research done in this project have had a positive impact in our centre in fostering autonomy when speaking.

- good tool for tutorials.
- adaptable to all languages and levels.
- personalized learning process.
- easy to adapt to Moodle or other platforms.

Other benefits were:

- extensive use of mobiles in class.
- use of apps to help students inside and outside of class.
- increased motivation and level of autonomy.
- usefulness in blended learning.
- promotion of life-long learning.

So, we encourage you to take advantage of our work and try it out in your own classes.

Biodata

Maite Maneu holds a degree in English. She has been an EOI teacher since 1988, first at the EOI Drassanes, then at the EOI Girona. She has been teaching advanced levels for a few years now. She's held different posts at the EOI Girona and she is currently the school principal. She has taken part in several European Projects (Grundtvig, Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2). She has given training courses for primary and secondary school teachers and new EOI teachers. She is also collaborating with the Departament d'Ensenyament in the writing of official certificate exams of English.

Elisabet Codern studied English Philology at the UAB. She is a former secondary school teacher and she is now working as an English teacher at the EOI Girona. She has been teaching for more than 30 years. She is actively involved in blended teaching. She's held different posts at the EOI Girona and currently she is the school secretary. Since 2009 she has taken part in several European Projects (Grundtvig, Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2). She is also collaborating with the Departament d'Ensenyament in the writing of official certificate exams of English.

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Analysis of the Escape the (Class)Room Dynamic for the English (or CLIL) Class

Edward A. Lockhart Domeño
Wendolyn Lockhart Domeño

Abstract

This paper explores the Escape the (Class)Room dynamic and how its game features make it an interesting proposal to use in class, either for just teaching English or for also teaching content. The article lays out different aspects to take into account when planning this technique, like tricks to use in mixed-ability settings or what skills to work on through it. The last part elaborates on ideas for implementing this in the classroom.

Introduction

Games have been an important part of human beings since we can remember. Children play to learn about the world and as an essential part of their development (Vygotskiï & Cole, 1978). But it is not only children that play. Many cultures, even some very ancient ones like the Greek or the Egyptian ones had games that were most probably played by adults.

Nowadays, games are present in many forms and shapes. Video-games, board-games, role-games, playground games and, of course, educational games can be counted by the thousands. At the time of writing this article, *boardgamegeek.com*, a webpage dedicated to analyzing boardgames, listed 101,204 different published boardgames. *Internationale Spieltage*, an international board game convention, is an example of how important games are in present-day society. This convention, that is held in Essen, Germany, manages to gather around 170,000 people every year.

Games have also been used in education and in the teaching of EFL. Most of the teachers are familiar with the ‘Simon says’ game and it is frequent to see bingo and memory games inside the English classrooms (the psycholinguistic value of some of these games, though, is something to be discussed in more depth later). In fact, some publishers offer or have offered games specifically designed for English classes. An example could be *Trolley Data Bank*, published some years ago by Plaza & Janés in Spain and now off the market.

A lot of activities that teachers use in class do have some of the characteristics of games, even if they cannot strictly be considered as such. Information-gap activities, for example, promote the collaboration of the students to attain a common goal. These game-like activities are usually tailor-made by the teacher or are inserted inside the textbooks or the teaching material. This could be the case of the Escape the (Class)Room dynamic. Note that ‘Class’ is between brackets to emphasize that it is an adaptation of the worldwide Escape the Room trend.

In an Escape the Room, the players, who go there voluntarily, are usually locked inside a room (or several) with clues and riddles that they have to guess and combine until they find the way to unlock their way out. The Escape the (Class)Room is based on similar principles, but it adds educational content to the whole process and is used in a teaching environment, obviously.

Review of literature

Games and game-like activities have been a common topic within the EFL teaching literature. Some of the reasons that make games such a common topic are laid out by Lewis and Bedson (1999) who say that:

- Games add variation to our plans, which can improve the motivation of the students and their will to use English in the class.
- Games can save preparation time once the teacher is familiar with them, especially if the materials are prepared to last.
- Games can engage those students that might be feeling unmotivated at some point in the class, especially those games that allow learners to move around.

They mention two types of games: *rousers* and *settlers*. The proposal of *Escape the (Class)Room* is closer to the rouser type, as it involves movement, competition, guessing and plenty of speaking. All this should allow students to burn up excess energy, but as the authors say in their book, it might also be easy to lose control of the class.

Another important point they mention is that “A game must be more than just fun” (p. 7). Bingos and memory games were mentioned earlier, and, although the students might find them funny and entertaining, if they are used only in the traditional way without any adaptation, they might lack psycholinguistic reasons to support their use in the English class. The students do not receive very much input, the input they receive is usually isolated and without a proper linguistic context, they do not have many possibilities to produce rich output, they are passive for a long part of the game, etc.

Games for the EFL class, therefore, should take this into account and should be designed in a way that students will not only have fun but will also take advantage of time, improving their command of the language. This can be done by including interesting content they can learn from, by providing rich and comprehensible input and by being sure that they will have many chances to actively use the language, amongst others.

Woodward (2001) describes this as ‘periphery learning’. She explains that periphery learning happens when the students concentrate on a certain task. When they do this, they absorb certain content and language subconsciously. She also considers that in order to get better in the different skills, the students must have chances to use them.

In the same line, Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) reflect on the need for teachers to find ways to actively involve students. They refer to CLIL settings, but this active involvement to improve learning should be taken into account by every teacher, no matter what age, level or content she is teaching.

In many games and certainly in the *Escape the (Class)Room* proposal that is going to be discussed further on, cooperation is essential and is implemented naturally. Johnson et al. (as cited in Jacobs & Hall, 2004) reflect on the fact that cooperative learning is positive in many important aspects, such as the self-esteem of the students, liking for school or general learning, amongst others.

Another thing that will be discussed in the following section will be mixed abilities. In many EFL teaching settings, teachers encounter a wide variety of language command levels that make teaching and learning more difficult. Catering for these mixed abilities has always been a challenge. Harmer described the importance of differentiation in the English class by quoting Tomlinson (as cited in

Harmer, 2007), who says that “In a differentiated classroom there are a variety of learning options designed around students’ different abilities and interests”.

Along these lines, Bowler and Parminter (2005) offer ‘tiered tasks’ and ‘bias tasks’ as two options to tackle the issue of mixed abilities in the classroom. These two types of tasks allow all the students of the class to work on the same content and the same activity by giving them more or less support or by having different degrees of demand placed on them. This way, what was thought to be a handicap for the teaching-learning process ends up becoming an opportunity for the learners to learn more meaningfully and to improve their self-esteem.

Coyle, Hood and Marsh (2010) highlight the importance of scaffolding learning in CLIL settings, which is very much related to the previously mentioned theory of tiered tasks. Teachers need to take into account the previous knowledge of the students to be able to plan really meaningful and effective activities. Each of the activities should support the learners depending on what they know and how far they are from what is expected from them in the activity. This way, the teacher ensures that all the students can face the challenge designed for them in every activity. This scaffolding, as was mentioned before, will become more important and also difficult, in settings with several mixed abilities.

Analysis of the Escape the (Class)Room dynamic

The Escape the (Class)Room dynamic that is going to be described in the following lines respects the ideas presented in the previous section. It is designed to improve the engagement and the motivation of the learners; it includes rich content that will help the students improve both their general knowledge and their command of the language; it involves the use of all the skills; it allows the students to be focused on the task and, therefore, activate their periphery learning; it takes into account the mixed abilities in the group and offers each student the input and output demands most suitable for their level through the use of tiered tasks (scaffolds) and bias tasks; and it is designed in a way that it can be used over and over again with very little preparation time.

A proper Escape the (Class)Room dynamic should take into account the interests and/or the needs of the target group. This analysis of interests and needs will allow the teacher to know the topic of the dynamic. Choosing a topic that is going to be interesting and engaging is one of the most important steps in creating a successful Escape the (Class)Room activity.

Once the topic has been chosen, the teacher must devise the different tasks the students will have to go through to be able to escape from the room or find the treasure (a sweet treat is usually welcomed by the students). These tasks should include several sources of input through reading and listening (videos can be an interesting resource for this), which should be rich both in terms of content and language.

This type of dynamic is much more powerful if the group is subdivided into smaller groups (three or four) that will have to collaborate to achieve the objective. Thus, the information that each student receives (reading or listening), should only provide the group with part of the solution. This will force them to have to collaborate and, therefore, to communicate and interact with each other. The teacher should design it in a way that the weaker students will receive more scaffolded or more simple input and the stronger students will have less support and/or a more difficult text.

In other words, some tasks will be tiered and others will be bias tasks so that each student can participate and learn no matter what their command of the language is. One way to do this could be by using different background colors. Each student will be assigned a certain color, depending on

their command of the language and each color will let the student know if a certain task or text is designed for them or for another group mate.

To design good tiered tasks, the teacher can provide more detailed scaffolds for the lower levels and less help for the higher levels. An example could be a reading or listening activity where the lower levels get images that allow them to understand the difficult words, the middle levels receive definitions of some of these words and the higher levels do not get any support.

Regarding the bias tasks, the weaker students might receive a text with three gaps that they must fill in, the average students another text with six gaps and the stronger students another one with nine gaps. In an ideal bias-task situation, these gaps should be complementary so then they can collaborate in the correction of their results.

Also, in some cases, the text or the audios will be different. The most demanding ones will be for the students with a better command of the language and the less demanding ones will be for the students that struggle a bit more.

Figure 1 illustrates the previous ideas with two different texts and two different scaffolds. The first text is shorter and has a scaffold with definitions and images while the second text is longer and more demanding and includes a scaffold with only definitions.

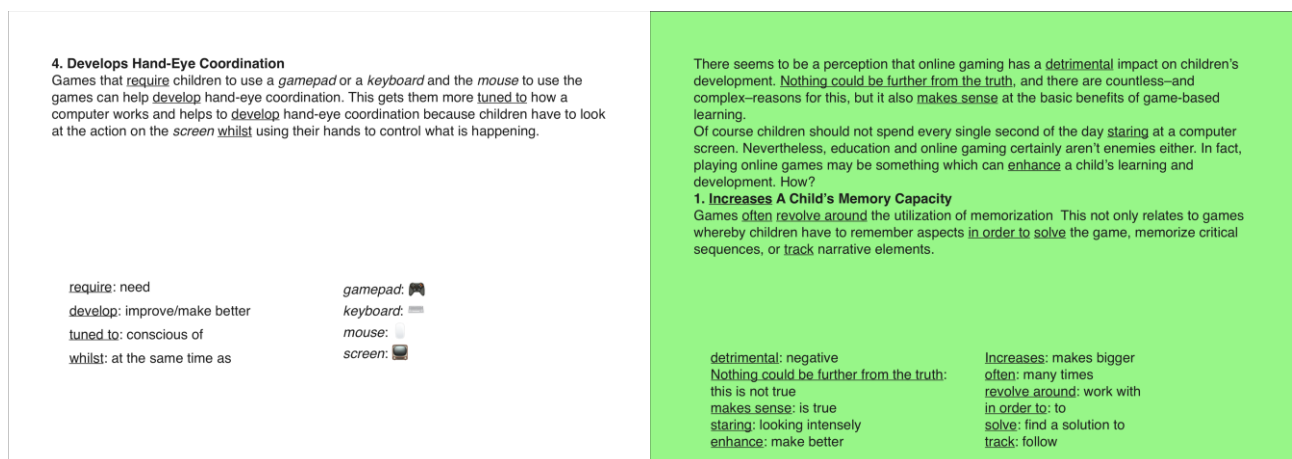


Figure 1: two different texts with two different types of scaffolds

Each of the tasks and/or texts will hide a secret code that will unlock the next part of their quest. The students in each group will have to collaborate to discover this code. The code can be a combination of letters or numbers and it can be disguised in materials displayed around the classroom. The code can also come from certain information that the learners are asked to find. An example of this could be asking the learners to watch a short video and answer some questions related to that video. Some of the answers they find might then be used for the code, combined with other answers that other members of the group might have found in their own videos.

The code that the students discover, if correct, would unlock a box or a cupboard. There, they should find the next set of clues and different tasks that they will have to follow to unblock the subsequent part. How many parts or codes the students should solve will depend on the reality of the group and on the level of difficulty of the different challenges. It would be advisable that the first time the group experiences an Escape the (Class)Room dynamic, the difficulty would not be too high so the students feel that they can do it (self-esteem). Once the group knows how the dynamic goes, as they

will soon get better at solving these types of challenges, the difficulty can rise so they feel challenged.

Lewis and Bedson recommend to “always end an activity when the fun is still at its peak” (Lewis & Bedson, 1999, p. 9). A danger that teachers fall victim to when designing this kind of a dynamic is to think of challenges that are too difficult to solve. The teacher has to pay a lot of attention to this and give some extra clues every now and then to keep the students from being lost for too long. When to give the clue and what kind of clue to give will depend on many factors, but it should not be too soon (the students will not have time to find the solution on their own) or too late (they will be past the fun part that Lewis and Bedson referred to in their book).

As the students will be working a lot in their groups, there is the possibility that they will use their mother tongue from time to time. The teacher has to encourage them and give them tools to try to avoid this as much as possible, but even so, it might still happen. Lewis and Bedson find this normal and not too negative. Nevertheless, the teacher should provide enough good scaffolds for every student to try and use the language as much as they can. Also, as the teacher will be quite ‘free’, she can go around the classroom trying to help the students and to monitoring their use of the language.

Practical ideas

For creating our own Escape the (Class)Room we can purchase some ready-to-use packs or the necessary items separately. The webpage breakoutedu.com offers several types of packs and bundles that include boxes, locks of different types, a hasp for using more than one lock, etc. Purchasing a pack also grants the teacher access to their platform with a lot of different BreakoutEdu ready-to-use proposals.

An alternative would be to purchase boxes of different sizes and locks of different types separately. It is important to be sure that the boxes come with a system to use a lock on them (usually a couple of holes on two separate parts of the box) big enough for the lock that we want to use.

We have to be careful when purchasing a letter-coded lock as each brand has their own combination of letters. This might force us to use a different code than the one we wanted. In an Escape the (Class)Room of a Sherlock Holmes theme, maybe we wanted to use the “Conan” (second name of the author of the books) as a passcode, but our lock might not allow us to do so, especially when the word we choose has repeated letters.

It is essential to keep track of what code is used for each lock at every moment. Once they are locked, if we do not use the correct code, we will not be able to use the lock again and some of these might be a bit expensive. This is especially important in school settings where more than one teacher might be using these materials.

Conclusion

The Escape the (Class)Room dynamic is a gamified way to approach content and language to the students in a motivating, engaging and challenging way. It is a game-like situation that respects some of the most widely accepted principles in the field of foreign language teaching.

It is time-consuming to prepare, especially the first times, but the product is long-lasting and reusable. Also, the students usually respond well to this technique and are willing to participate, so that initial effort usually pays off when using it in the classroom.

For using this dynamic, though, the teacher either has to be creative for designing the different challenges and riddles, or has to rely on what other teachers have previously created. If it is the latter case, the teacher could explore dedicated websites or rely on a strong personal learning network of teachers with the same ideas and concerns.

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Biodata

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Wendy Lockhart has been the director of Servicios Lingüísticos Lockhart since 2002. She has been an English teacher for over 29 years, teaching all levels and ages, and she has been training teachers for the last five years. She is a certified coach.

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Screencasting: Its Characteristics and Some Applications for Providing Feedback in Language Learning

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Abstract

This article introduces the activity of screencasting as a means of giving students comments on their written work in an audio and visual format. This can make the feedback clearer and more positive than the equivalent kinds of comments written down on their work. The article lists some software that is available for computers and some apps that can be used on smartphones and tablets.

Introduction

The use of technology has enabled teachers and students to communicate in different ways, especially in online and blended-learning (*blearning*) environments. Among the many multimedia communication tools teachers are experimenting with to deliver instruction or feedback, one can find screencasting technologies, also known as screen capture software (Brick & Holmes, 2008; Desouki, 2016), which allow teachers to provide asynchronous feedback in a way that it is much clearer than in written format since it brings audiovisual feedback into the mix.

What is Screencasting?

Screencasting is a video recording tool that allows you to record whatever occurs on your computer screen along with audio narration (Desouki, 2016). Such tools may include a “spotlight” for the cursor as well as the speaker’s image. Video editing and publishing is also possible.

Among the many reasons one might want to use such a tool, one can find delivering audiovisual feedback (e-feedback), providing explanations in response to queries or recording a lesson for students to watch after class, especially in flipped learning environments.

Screencasting and feedback in online, *blearning* or hybrid environments

Out of the many applications available in the market, we would like to focus on Screencasting as a means of providing feedback (also known, in this context, as *veedback* (Desouki, 2016)). One should bear in mind that technology by itself will not bring about success in achieving learning goals since it must be used within a pedagogical framework; for instance, in a collaborative learning context (Bultrón, 2014). According to students, the explanations provided are clearer and are better received since the instructor’s verbal feedback turns what may be interpreted as negative comments into positive feedback (Thompson & Lee, 2012). Since students often misinterpret the teacher’s written comments, which is one of the drawbacks with written feedback about students’

compositions (Mantle-Bromley, 1995; cited in Amara, 2015), computer-mediated feedback such as that provided through screencasting could give students clearer feedback (Desouki, 2016) and quality feedback as understood by Matsumura & Hann (2004), as it combines the best of two worlds: online electronic feedback and face-to-face feedback.

Screencasting tools allow teachers who work in flipped environments to record video tutorials for students to watch after class as well as to provide feedback. One of the advantages is that students can have access to the video 24/7 and they can watch it as many times as they please. If the recording is done in the target language, then it becomes a listening exercise.

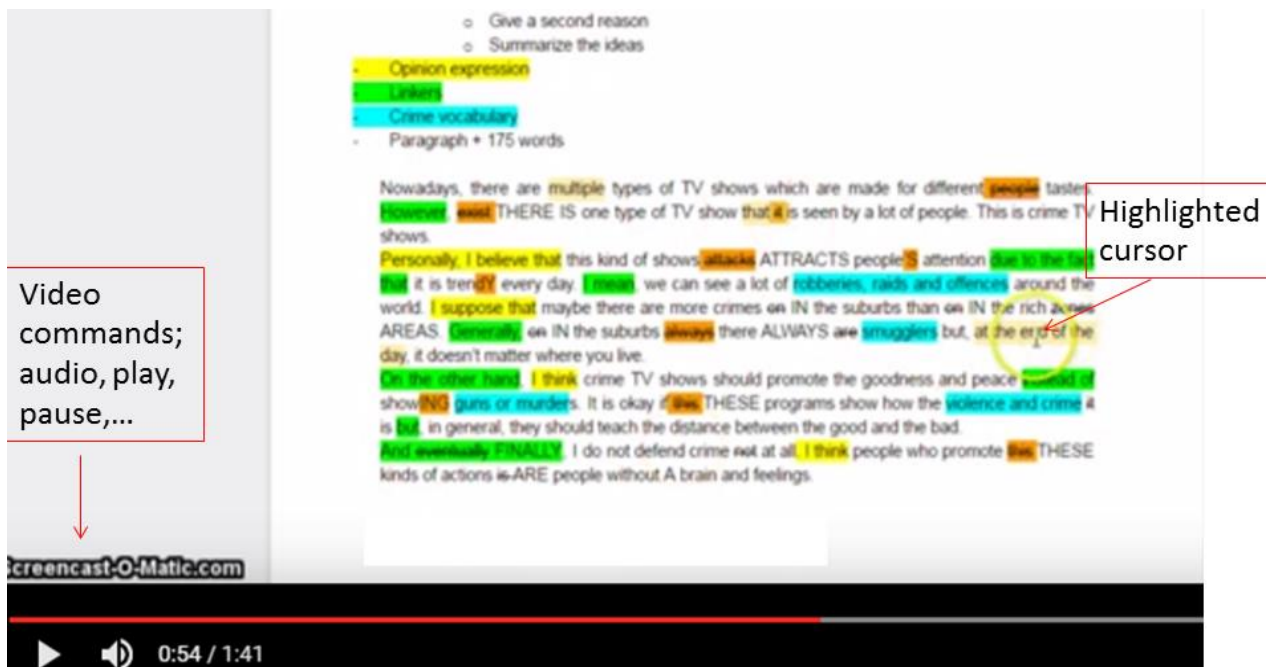


Figure 1: Snapshot of a video using Screencast-o-matic and providing a blended-course student with feedback about his composition.

Screencasting can also be used for students to report on their learning progress. For instance, students were asked in one of our courses to reflect on how their pronunciation had improved over a period of time as a form of self-assessment. Students then talked about their progress while focusing on the key points on a self-assessment sheet as they screen-recorded themselves.

Another application may be that of students describing a picture on their computer screen while their webcam is recording both their face and voice, which is a way to make sure that they are not reading from a sheet of paper, which would defeat the purpose of the speaking task. In addition, video images provide a lot of information about the speaker such as body language, and it comes closer to what real communication is like.

Tools: *Screencast-o-matic* and others. Screen recording apps for smartphones and tablets

Screencast-o-matic is one of the tools most-widely used by teachers, and you can either download it or use its web version on a laptop or PC. You can record up to 15 minutes of what is happening on your computer screen, and you can also embed a webcam picture. Once you have finished the

recording, you can publish the video online or save it on your hard drive. Before publishing it, you can watch it and edit it.

Here are some tips for screencasting. First of all, you should plan what you are going to say. A good plan is in order, and some rehearsing will result in a quality product. Also, make sure that you use a good microphone so that you get a clear recording. For convenience, you could purchase a good quality headset with a microphone attached to it. Use adequate lighting as well. Remember that the light source should be facing you (e.g., a lamp).

Once these preliminaries are taken care of, you can start recording. If you don't like how it's going or if you make a mistake, don't worry: the program includes a pause button for you to stop and start again.

Before you publish the resulting video, always check it! Should you find anything that you would like to delete, you can use the editing option.

Last but not least, you should have some space in whatever cloud you are using in order to save your video files, and then you can put links to them on your learning management system (LMS), for instance, Moodle.

Other tools available online apart from *Screencast-o-matic* are in Table 1:






Tool		Main traits	Link
Jing		Free; voice-over tutorials.	https://jing.en.softonic.com/download
ShowMe Interactive Whiteboard		Free; voice-over whiteboard tutorials; especially designed for iPads.	https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/show-me-interactive-whiteboard/id445066279?mt=8
Screencast-o-matic		Free; voice-over tutorials and webcam.	https://screencast-o-matic.com
Cam Studio		The free online screencast software.	http://camstudio.org/
Ezvid		Free video editor and screen recorder.	https://www.ezvid.com/

Table 1: Screencasting tools with main characteristics and links.

There are also some screencasting apps available for your tablet or smartphone, enabling you to send on-the-spot feedback to your students via email or *WhatsApp*. Some of them, such as *DU Recorder*, will allow you to edit the video (trim, remove middle, add music, add subtitle, crop, speed, and rotate, among other features), which saves you more time than when you perform these tasks on your laptop or PC.

Some of the advantages of using these apps is that the process is fast (it only takes a couple of minutes or even less to record the video), personalized (students can watch the video on their mobile phones right there in class without anybody else seeing it) and clear (especially if you are writing a note on your screen and recording an explanation at the same time).

One of the disadvantages is the size of the video which is generated. A single video is not a problem (averaging 11 MB in size) but ten could be. That is why videos should be short and their message straightforward. Again, it is a good idea to have some space in a cloud in which you can save your videos.

Here are some snapshots of feedback written on a notepad while the voice of the teacher is screen recorded as well.




		
<p>The teacher writes what the student needs to know (correction, observation, among other things) on a notepad. As you can see the bar at the bottom of the screen has the play-record-stop buttons. At the top you have the editing buttons (text, colour, eraser).</p>	<p>The student can see how the teacher is writing on the screen while explaining why this expression needs correcting.</p>	<p>Finally, the explanation is over, and the teacher can send the feedback to the student via email or <i>WhatsApp</i>.</p>

Table 2: Snapshots using AZ Screen Recorder.

The following is a table with some highly recommended apps:

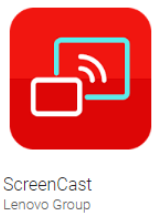


Tool		Main traits	Link
ScreenCast Lenovo Group		Free; downloadable to your smartphone and easy to use.	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.lenovoscreen.screencast&hl=en
AZ Screen Recorder		Free; downloadable to your smartphone/tablet and easy to use.	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.hecorat.screenrecorder.free&hl=en
DU Recorder		Free; screen recorder and video editor.	https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.duapps.recorder&hl=en

Table 3: Screencasting apps with main characteristics and links.

Conclusions

Screencasting is a widely adopted technique for creating video tutorials. However, very few teachers have adopted it for delivering feedback to their students. We have explored this new technique with interesting results in how we may deliver feedback, which undoubtedly is another example of how educational technology (edtech) is making a growing impact on our daily teaching practice. Edtech will allow us to provide more personalized and effective feedback to our students. However, one needs to test the different tools further and explore their benefits and limitations.

What do you reckon? Are you going to give screencasting a go?

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Biodata

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Oral or Written: That is the Question

Vardush Hovsepyan

Abstract

This article deals with the differences between the Armenian and Spanish school systems in terms of foreign language teaching and learning. It points out strong points and weak points in the two systems relating to what students work on in the area of oral production and how they work it, and it seeks out a happy medium between a strong focus on flawless, memorised output and spontaneous, less-than-perfect, communicative output.

Introduction

Oral communicative competence in a foreign language is one of the key competences in the Spanish education system, in which Spanish students start EFL lessons at a very early age. However, several studies have shown a lower competence among Spanish students in spoken English in comparison with peers from other countries. On the other hand, other countries such as Russia or Armenia, where students are required to learn their daily lessons by heart and reproduce them in class in order to be qualified have proven to perform better when it comes to speaking. But recent researches have shown that rote learning that involves memorising random words, texts or poems without context is often meaningless. Nevertheless, if learning by heart lacks authenticity, what are the alternative ways of teaching and learning that will enhance our students' oral competence?

Approaches and methods – Post-Soviet countries

To begin with, students that are tested orally achieve better results in communicative competence. Moreover, they have more opportunities to practise their pronunciation, as it becomes an essential part of conveying the message and making sure that it is thoroughly understood by their audiences – teachers and classmates. Being tested orally also provides students with the opportunity to speak in public, an important skill for their career development, business growth, self-confidence, etc. As Mino and Butler (1995) put it,

“The need for effective oral communication is paramount for managing and manipulating information, for communicating effectively to exist within our information society, and for understanding the oral communication skills to effectively respond in culturally diverse environments. Clearly, oral communication skills development is an essential prerequisite to prepare students to communicate orally outside the classroom.” (2)

In some post-soviet countries like Russia, Georgia or Armenia, students are mostly assessed through oral activities. In these countries, students are responsible for their actions, productivity and results. During my primary school years in Armenia, we were asked to learn the content of the lesson by heart in order to be ready to reproduce it flawlessly in the following class. In Russian and English classes, for instance, we were often required to memorise fixed expressions, words or sentences without a context. It was also quite common to memorise poems, as, according to the teachers, it was the best way of becoming familiar with a particular language structure and building up our vocabulary.

If we take into account Bygates' (1991) definition of oral competence as the ability to form abstract sentences that are produced and adapted to circumstances at the moment of speaking, the idea of reciting poems in the classroom can be useful, as students learn new words and expressions within a context. Yet this way of approaching second language acquisition can be effective only for those students who have good memory skills. On the other hand, Brown and Yule (1983) believe that oral competence is an interactive process in which meaning is built on by producing and receiving processed information. Thus, according to this definition, real-life contexts are important in order to learn a second language and foster interpersonal communication, which is "the process of message transaction between people to create and sustain shared meaning" (West & Turner, 2006, p. 10).

Apart from consisting of memorising and imitating, most classes in Armenia are noteworthy for their thoroughness and the intensity of effort they demand of teachers and pupils. Classes are usually teacher-centred, and, in the language classes, students are not supposed to work in groups, nor are they expected to make use of the critical thinking. As Olena Nikolayenko (2011, p. 87) argues in *Citizens in the Making in Post-Soviet States*,

"The teacher's task was to present learning material in an authoritative manner, and the student's responsibility was to memorize it without questioning. The teachers were stripped of any autonomy in designing curricula or using innovative teaching methods. [...] The top-down approach to education discouraged creativity, initiative and critical thinking."

Nonetheless, despite the lack of authenticity, meaningfulness, collaborative work or critical thinking, Armenian students' performance in speaking in a second or third language is better than that of Spanish ones. This is perhaps due to the favourable attitude of the pupils to the language as well as to the close relationship between teacher and pupil and among the various members of the class.

Approaches and methods – Spain

Throughout my own experience as a pupil in secondary and later in high school in Spain, I realised from the very first moment that classes were taught in a different way than in my country of origin. In other words, as students we were not expected to listen to the teacher explaining the lesson and memorise every single word we heard. On the contrary, classes were more student-centred, as we were directly involved and invested in the discovery of our knowledge. That was because, as Weimer (2002) and Wilson (2005) suggest, whenever possible, students should be allowed to make decisions about their learning process. In this sense, my English and French teachers were in charge of scaffolding and making our learning more constructive; that is, we were building new knowledge by connecting what we were learning with what we already knew. In other words, as Wessels puts it in her article *The Importance of Activating and Building Knowledge* (Wessels, 2012, p. 35),

"Activating and building background knowledge has particular importance for CLD students. All new vocabulary needs to be explicitly linked to prior experiences with connections made to past academic learning. This allows students to have the opportunity to make an immediate and concrete connection between their understanding and knowledge of the world and what they are learning in the classroom. By capitalizing and building on the knowledge that students have,

educators have a vehicle for providing grade-level content and meeting the language needs of each student.”

During my teaching practices I noticed that classrooms were even more student-centred than when I had been a student in the Spanish state school I had attended. Nevertheless, even though students were not asked to learn words, expressions, poems, etc. and had worked in groups collaborating in various tasks related to the unit, they failed to have good oral performance in English. This was an aspect I became interested in, as some people claimed that the Armenian way of teaching was more productive.

In search of a happy medium

After having been taught in two dissimilar ways, I came to the conclusion that a combination of the two would be the best. It is true that memorisation provides the brain with exercise and that memorising facts can be a keystone to learning; however, learning random words, expressions or even poems by heart can result in discouraging students from progressing. Therefore, I believe that memorising is not at all a bad way of learning if it is within a context. For instance, role-play activities where students are asked to memorise some sentences in order to interact with their peers and participate in a job interview as a candidate or pretend to be a travel agent who is in charge of recommending places to travel to are highly motivating and meaningful. After all, in their daily lives they are going to deal with similar situations.

Consequently, I believe that bringing role-plays into the classroom can be effective, as these types of activities are usually a powerful educational device. On completing their required schooling, ESO students should be able to use the target language to express themselves and interact orally and in writing in simple, everyday situations. Therefore, they should be provided with meaningful activities related to real-world issues. Role-plays enable the implementation of a creative, student-centred lesson committed to nurturing independent learning. At the beginning, students' output will be clearly planned, but in the long run, after having performed some different role-plays, the pupils will be discouraged from memorising their dialogues, and, in this way, spontaneous communication will be fostered.

At a first stage, students will have clear instructions regarding these activities. That is, to simulate a situation in a restaurant between a waiter and a customer they will have sentences starting with questions, and they will have to finish them and then try to say them out loud.

AT A RESTAURANT

WAITER: Can I start you off with anything to ----- ?

CUSTOMER: Yes, may I have some -----, -----?

WAITER: Yes, of course. ----- you ----- any appetizers today?

AT A RESTAURANT

WAITRESS: ----- help you?

CUSTOMER: Yes, ----- a hamburger, please?

WAITRESS: ----- else?

CUSTOMER: -----, a fanta, -----.

WAITRESS: Here -----.

CUSTOMER: -----.

Another good activity which will help students enhance their oral skills without having to memorise is storytelling through mind mapping. Teachers have to specify what the topic is about and then start off by telling the class about a personal experience to transmit confidence and to show how to carry out the exercise. In the outline that teachers will hand out to the students, they will see some words or expressions and they will have to construct the story.

EXAMPLE:

1. GO OUT
2. COME ACROSS SOME GUYS ARGUING
3. LOOK AT THEM OUT OF CURIOSITY
4. THE THREE GUYS APPROACH
5. RUN AWAY
6. CALL A FRIEND

The aim of this exercise is to come up with ideas around the specified words and sentences. They can work perfectly with past simple and past continuous structures, use some adverbs and some adjectives to describe the surroundings, the guys or the feelings of the main character. This activity not only fosters creativity but it also motivates students to communicate and interact with their classmates. Therefore, it is very student-centred and dynamic, two important aspects in learning a foreign language.

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Biodata

Vardush Hovsepyan holds a degree in English Philology from the University of Barcelona (2011) and two master's degrees, one in the Construction and Representation of Cultural Identities (2013) and another in Teacher Training (2016). Working with 1st and 4th of ESO students, Vardush considers that in order to improve her students' oral production it is important to combine learning a specific model of conversation by heart with subsequently creating new, similar dialogues or texts using the vocabulary of the unit.

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Short and Sweet: Using Short Films to Promote Creativity and Communication

Kieran Donaghy

We are now living in the age of the moving image. The advent of the digital revolution and the Internet, the proliferation of mobile devices, which allow us to easily and proficiently capture moving images; the introduction of inexpensive, accessible and user-friendly editing tools; and the emergence of distribution sites such as YouTube and Vimeo, have changed the way moving images relate to society, education and language learning forever. One very interesting development from all these technological advances has been the renaissance of the short film. Shorts have traditionally been treated as the poor cousins to feature films at film festivals, but the ability to create and screen shorts easily and cheaply has spawned hundreds of dedicated film festivals throughout the world. However, the biggest demand for shorts comes from the Internet, where their brevity makes them ideally suited. Internet users want short, sharp bursts of entertainment they can watch at work, at home or, increasingly, on the move on their mobile devices. The Internet is an increasingly popular alternative for short film-makers who can't afford to distribute their films on DVD. Film-makers can post their films online without spending a penny and reach thousands of viewers. The renaissance of short films is likely to continue for quite some time as newer, easier and cheaper ways of creating, distributing and watching short films continue to develop.

The rise of the short film can be exploited in language teaching. Showing an entire feature film may lead to cognitive overload and is often not possible given timetable constraints. In contrast, short films can be shown in their entirety easily within one class and they can have a great dramatic impact than feature films, which often lose their impact by being viewed over a number of sessions. As most short films are under 10 minutes long (many are less than 5 minutes long), they can be shown several times in a single class, and students are able to acquire detailed familiarity with them, which is important in enabling students to critically engage with the material on a meaningful level. As most short films can be watched several times, a different focus or activity can be used for each viewing, which may help to develop integrated skills (Chan and Herrero, 2010).

Another reason why short films are particularly useful to exploit in a single lesson is that they offer a complete narrative in a short space of time, which captures and holds learners' attention quickly. Students love stories, and short films tell innovative and creative stories. Short films are not necessarily governed by the same conventions as feature length films. Short filmmakers, because they are normally independent and not tied to big film studios, often have greater scope for innovation and creativity, which leads to more imaginative forms and narrative structures. These departures from more familiar forms and narrative structures very often provoke stronger responses from students, than the more traditional narratives of feature length films.

Another characteristic of many modern short films which can be exploited in language teaching is that they are silent or quasi silent. These short films with little or no dialogue can be used for different language levels, as the stories they tell are accessible and easy to understand (Chan and Herrero, 2010). They also give students the opportunities to supply the language by creating their own written or spoken dialogues.

Most short films focus on a single idea or make a single statement, which makes them excellent prompts for oral communication. Many short films deal with contemporary subjects and issues, such as bullying, racism, sexism, consumerism, and human rights, which are very relevant to the lives of students, who are perfectly capable of dealing with these subjects. Short films which deal with these contemporary issues are excellent beginning points for engaging student in a wide range of

conversational activity such as pair work, group work, discussions, debates and roleplays, stimulating an active engagement with language. Short films are excellent prompts for writing activities, such as writing an alternative ending, writing a prequel or a sequel, or writing from the perspective of one of the characters, which students find engaging and motivating. Because of their accessibility, brevity, innovation, and creativity short films are the perfect vehicle for using moving images in the language learning classroom and for promoting both written and oral communication.

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Links

Film English lessons

The Adventures of a Cardboard Box - <http://film-english.com/2011/11/04/the-adventures-of-a-cardboard-box/>

What is Being Creative? - <http://film-english.com/2011/11/04/the-adventures-of-a-cardboard-box/Obvious-to-you.Amazing-to-others> - <http://film-english.com/2016/02/15/obvious-to-you-amazing-to-others/>

Manifesto - <http://film-english.com/2011/12/11/manifesto/>

Move, Learn, Eat - <http://film-english.com/2011/10/12/move-learn-eat/>

Your Secret - <http://film-english.com/2011/09/07/your-secret/>

Lost Property - <http://film-english.com/2016/01/04/lost-property/>

The Reader - <http://film-english.com/2015/02/18/the-reader/>

The Notebook - <http://film-english.com/2015/02/13/the-notebook/>

Moments - <http://film-english.com/2013/03/04/moments-2/>

Paperman - <http://film-english.com/2013/01/31/paperman/>

Short Films

Vimeo Staff Picks – <https://vimeo.com/channels/staffpicks>

Future Shorts - www.youtube.com/futureshorts

Short of the Week - www.shortoftheweek.com

Creativity

What is creativity? - <http://www.creativityatwork.com/2014/02/17/what-is-creativity/>

Can creativity be taught? - <http://www.creativityatwork.com/2012/03/23/can-creativity-be-taught/>

Maximizing your creative thinker talent - <http://www.creativityatwork.com/2014/08/22/great-entrepreneurs-creative-thinkers/>

Seven habits of highly creative people - <http://www.creativityatwork.com/2012/03/06/seven-habits-of-highly-creative-people/>

Creativity in ELT

The C Group - <http://thecreativitygroup.weebly.com/>

Creativity in the English language classroom -

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/F004_ELT_Creativity_FINAL_v2%20WEB.pdf

Creativity in language teaching - <http://www.professorjackrichards.com/wp-content/uploads/Creativity-in-Language-Teaching.pdf>

Let creativity into the language classroom -

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2012/mar/13/creativity-in-language-classroom>

Biodata

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