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A Note from the Joint Co-ordinators

Welcome to another edition of **CATS** and thank you, as always, to Carol Read and Eleanor Watts for all the hard work they do in producing this newsletter. It has become a flagship for the SIG; it is something to be proud of and in addition brings in a good deal of advertising income to support our other activities.

A member of IATEFL recently asked me why they should join the Young Learners SIG. Any member of IATEFL can attend a SIG event, access a SIG web site and even buy the newsletter separately. So why join?

I think this is approaching things the wrong way round. Can you imagine a world without the Young Learners SIG? No web site, no discussion list, no newsletter, no events. We rely on the support of our members for the income that allows these things to happen.

Membership is healthy and rising. But we can always do with more. The more members we have the better service we can provide. So if you know of any unfortunate people who have not yet joined, please sign them up! They can even now do this on-line at <http://www.countryschool.com/iatefl/>

We also rely on the goodwill and hard work of the unpaid volunteers that make up the YLSIG committee, for which many, many thanks. It's easy to forget that these are busy professional people often with families who somehow manage to run your SIG in their spare time! Welcome to our latest addition, Sandie Mourão, in Portugal. Her job is to keep an eye on discussion list postings, make sure they are relevant to the list, make sure everyone who posts a message gets at least one reply and to keep things ticking over during quiet periods. Many people have already experienced Sandie's bubbly enthusiasm and we have arguably the most successful SIG discussion list as a result.

Thanks also to Kari Smith, Co-ordinator of Testing, Examinations and Assessment SIG with whom Young Learners will be holding a Pre-Conference Event in Brighton in April. She came up with the idea of a joint PCE and she and Debbie Smith in Sri Lanka have been working hard to ensure that it will be a worthwhile and enjoyable day for everyone. We look forward to meeting you and renewing friendships there and at Annual Conference afterwards. To those who can't attend, you can be sure our newshounds will be working away to bring you the very best of conference selections for your next newsletter!

Best wishes

Chris Etchells
Debbie Smith

Editorial

This issue of **CATS** is largely based around a collection of articles derived from talks given at the IATEFL conference in Dublin last March and the Joint IATEFL SIGs / British Council Symposium held in Madrid in September 2000. I hope you'll find it varied, thought-provoking and buzzing with interesting ideas and that, when you next have a quiet moment to yourself, you'll get as much enjoyment out of reading it as I have out of putting it all together!

In the opening article, **Andrew Wright** explores ways in which the traditional game, Hopscotch, can be used for language teaching and provides a series of lively, creative ideas which combine the development of language skills with kinesthetic fun. This is followed by an article by **Gail Ellis** which highlights the educational value of parental involvement and provides a wide range of practical suggestions of how to encourage parents to participate and contribute positively to their children's learning.

In the first of the articles from the Dublin conference, **Magdalena Szpotowicz** reports on a workshop she ran with Daf Pawlec in which they explored the changing attitudes to testing and assessment brought about by educational reform in Poland and the implications of these for assessing the oral skills of 7-9 year-olds in Polish primary schools. In the second article, **Diane Phillips** provides sound practical advice for anyone wishing to embark on project work with their classes.

The articles from the Madrid Symposium are arranged to follow the order that people gave their talks on the day. **Herbert Puchta** discusses the natural aptitudes and skills young children bring to the classroom and the ways in which early foreign language learning can contribute significantly to their cognitive development. Taking Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences as a framework, he explores the ways in which foreign language learning can promote the development of a wide range of thinking and learning skills. My article on emotional intelligence follows on from this. In it I discuss the vital role emotional intelligence plays in children's learning and suggest a range of ways in which we can integrate the development of emotional intelligence with the development of English language skills.

In her article on a foreign language project in Portuguese pre-schools, **Sandie Jones Mourão** reports on the experiences of pre-school teachers who have introduced learning English as an integrated part of their children's school day. As well as describing some of the key strategies and techniques used, Sandie's article presents some fascinating data and thought-provoking results. **John Clegg** explores the issue of importing curricular contents into language lessons and the shift of pedagogical focus that the language teacher needs to make in order to do this successfully. His article is illustrated with a detailed example of how an EFL teacher might teach a science lesson to a class of ten-year-olds, giving equal weight to both the cognitive and the language demands.

In the rest of the Newsletter, **Maya Menon** reviews Jayne Moon's recent book, *Children Learning English*, **Chris Etchells & Sandie Mourão** report on the Madrid Symposium and **Chris Etchells** follows up on the storytelling theme of the last issue of **CATS** by providing us with all we need to know to find the best storytelling related sites and pages on the Internet.

Take care and enjoy your teaching!

All the best

Carol

Hopscotch

Andrew Wright

I live in a small town east of Budapest in Hungary. Guess what I saw on the pavement the other day in a housing estate near where I live! Yes! A hopscotch pattern! I am sure hopscotch is played by children all over the world and it would be most interesting to receive reports for **CATS** about local versions of it. The basis of the game is that a series of squares are drawn on the ground, usually with numbers written in each one. The children hop from one square to another. The word 'scotch' is an old word for score or 'make a line in a hard surface'. One explanation for the name 'hopscotch' is that the children hop over the scored lines!

But what about language teaching?

As I have said all my ELT life, 'Anything which is engaging and involves language is potentially language learning material.' Here are some ways you might use variations of the hopscotch patterns or other patterns drawn on the ground. (Normally outside but could be inside)

A traditional version of hopscotch

You might like to begin by asking the children to show you the local version of hopscotch.

Hopscotch: I like cats

Here is an adapted version of 'hopscotch' to help the children practice their use of the sentence pattern, "I like cats/milk/swimming."

IN CLASS

1 Play the game of miming and animal noise making and ask the children to identify who you are and to say whether they like or don't like the animal you are miming.

You: (strutting about and roaring) What am I?

Children: You are a lion.

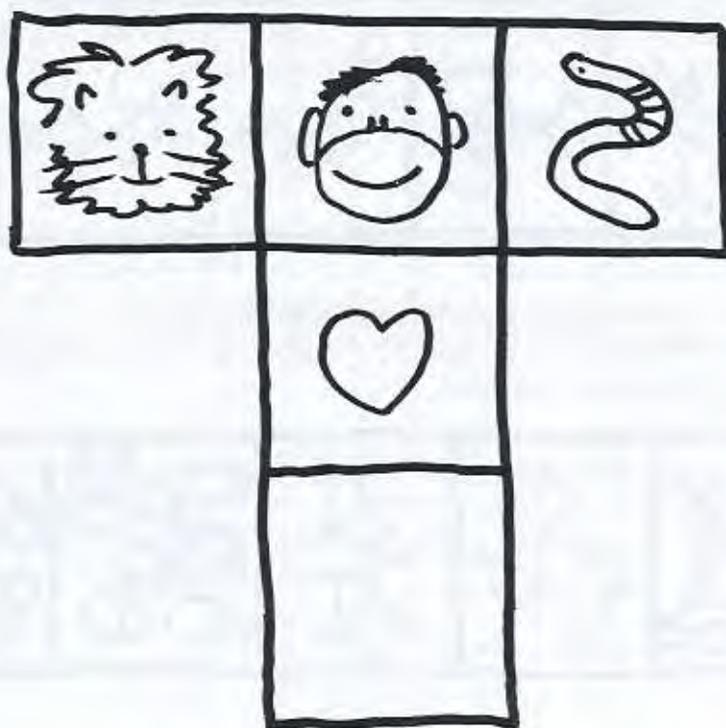
You: Do you like lions?

Child A: Yes, I do!

Child B: No, I don't!

(At this point, energetic and agile teachers can chase the child who says he/she doesn't like the animal in question)

2 Draw a T shape of squares. Ask three children to each draw an animal in the top three squares. Ask another child to draw a heart in the middle square. Instead of drawing the animals in chalk on the ground the children can draw on card and put the card on the ground.



3 Now the children take it in turns to hop on the squares, saying the appropriate words. You could do it first. This is the procedure:

Hop onto the first square and say "I" as you do so (You should have an object which represents you which you throw on the first square which represents you, for example, a toy, a pencil case, etc. Then hop onto the second square and say "like" as you do so (Alternatively, jump with both feet either side of the heart square and say "don't" as you do so). Finally hop onto one of the last squares and say what it is that you like or don't like.

4 Each group of four children now find their own patch of playground where they can draw. They draw a similar pattern and three different animals (or other objects). They should then play with their hopscotch pattern for a few minutes.

5 Each group visits the hopscotch pattern of another group and tries it out.

VARIATION 1

You might like the children to practice using three grammatically different endings, for example, cats, milk, swimming.

VARIATION 2

Other sentence patterns can be practiced in a similar way, **usually by adding more squares**. You and the children will need to accept a simple pictograph for each part of a sample sentence. Here are some examples for the children to try:

- *I can/can't ride a horse.*
- *I have got/haven't got a dog.*
- *I get up at 7 am, eat my breakfast at 7.30, get the bus at 8 am, get to school at 8.15 am, start my first lesson at 8.30 am, etc.*

VARIATION 3

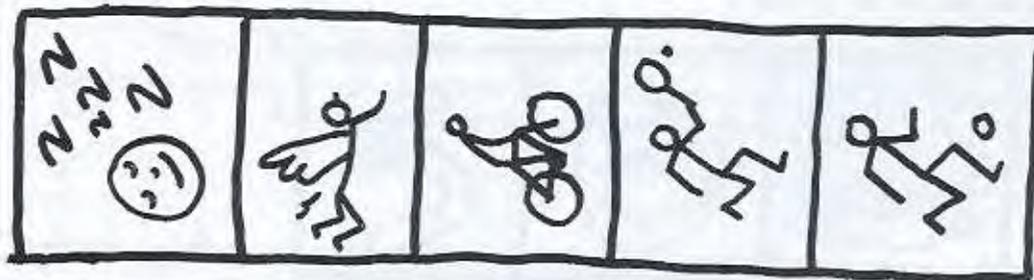
For those children who have reached quite a high proficiency level in English and have covered a wide range of tense forms the hopscotch pattern or similar can provide a very dramatic way of relating tense forms to experience.

Simple past

In this case, it is enough to have a simple row of squares.

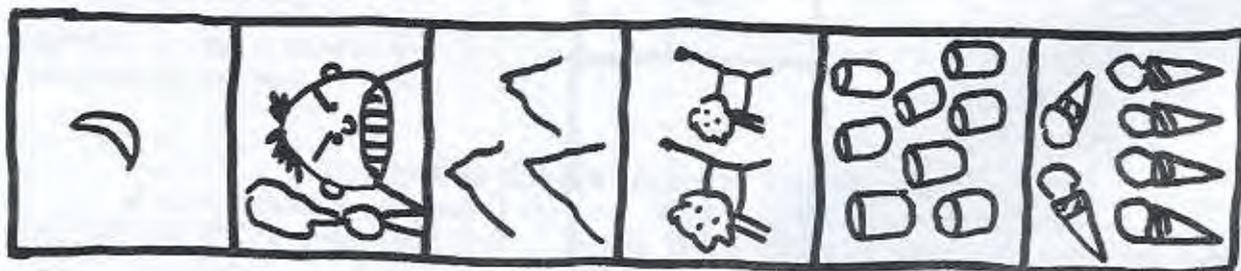
For example, a child hops onto the first square, mimes the action and says, "I am swimming." When they have come to the last picture they hop backwards on each picture saying the past tense form for each verb (but not miming, because the action is not taking place anymore!)

I slept. I flew. I rode my bicycle. I played tennis. I played football.



Alternatively, the children might like to make each picture a representation of a boast.

I am eating six icecreams. I am drinking eight tins of cokes. I am chasing two lions. I am climbing three mountains. I am fighting a giant. I am flying to the moon.



M.A. IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS (BY DISTANCE)

The EFL Unit of the Department of Educational Studies, University of York, runs the only distance specialised MA in TEYL in Britain. The course starts in July of each year (or in-country at other times of the year).

Course Director: Annie Hughes

This is a 2-year course and involves 8 multimedia self-study modules, plus participation in a 2-week preparatory course. Normally this will be held at the University of York each July, Alternatively, if there is a large group, in-country teaching is possible.

Students can choose to focus on one of the following age groups: 6-11 years, 11-16 years, or 6-16 years.

Assessment is by 8 module assignments over the course, some of which require the carrying out of small-scale classroom-based research projects.

Emphasis is on the linking of theory and practice, making extensive use of material from authentic classes.

For further information contact: The MA Secretary, EFL Unit, University of York, York YO10 5DD, UK. Telephone: ++44 1904 432481. Fax: ++44 1904 432483. E-mail: efl2@york.ac.uk

First of all the children hop along the pictures saying what they are doing and then hop backwards saying what they did. *I flew to the moon. I fought a giant. Etc.*

Future

Using the same pictures and design as in the example for the simple past tense, the children stand at the beginning, look at the pictures and say what they are going to do. To make it more interesting and challenging the child should not name every picture but, for example, alternative pictures, so that he or she has to hop over the intermediate ones.

I'm going to eat seven icecreams and then I'm going to drink eight cokes and then...

Note

Encourage the children to experiment with different designs and layouts of squares for hopping on. Board games have been used in language teaching for a long time...many board game designs can be transferred to patterns drawn on the ground and then moved about on by the children. This large scale kinesthetic involvement combined with ritual and with language is an excellent way of engaging the maximum amount of energy, involvement and memory of many children.

Andrew Wright is an author, illustrator, teacher trainer and storyteller in schools. As an author he has written Creating Stories with Children for Oxford University Press, Games for Language Learning for Cambridge University Press and 1000+ Pictures for Teachers to Copy for Longman.

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Parental Involvement

Gail Ellis

As more and more children are learning a foreign language at an early age, ie before their secondary education, either in mainstream schools as part of the curriculum or in out-of-school clubs or private schools, parents are increasingly asking how they can support their child's language learning. Research has shown (McConkey 1985) that children benefit in many different ways when their parents are interested in and involved in their education, and there is plenty of evidence too that most parents want to be involved. At least two in three is the commonly cited figure. Furthermore, child developmentalists such as Bruner, have described parents as 'the only true educators'.

Teaching children by its very nature requires a great deal of contact with parents, although working with them is not always easy. Teachers need to be prepared and willing to take on this aspect of parent care as part of their role, by making themselves available to talk to parents about what their child is doing and why, and to regularly update them on their child's progress. Teachers need to know how best they can do this in order to capitalise on parents' eagerness to support their children's learning and to encourage less eager or confident parents. There is, however, very little provision on training courses to equip teachers with the appropriate attitudes, interpersonal skills and strategies for working with parents or on how to best involve them in their child's learning. The ultimate objective of encouraging parental involvement is to develop a partnership between teachers and parents of mutual understanding in order to maximise their child's learning time.

As a starting point, it is useful to ask yourself how your school currently deals with this issue:

- What steps does your school take to involve parents in their children's learning ?
- How are parents informed about your language programme and methodology ?
- How effective is the system of written communication between school and home ?
- Does your school arrange meetings for parents ? What efforts are made to keep in touch with those parents who fail to attend the meetings ?
- How does your school carry out the registration and induction of children and parents who are new to the school ?
- How are parents encouraged to support their children's learning at home ? What provision is there to 'train' parents to do this in the most effective way ?
- Are parents encouraged to help in the school or help in classrooms ?
- Are there any ways of improving what you already do ?
- What new initiative do you think your school should develop ?

(adapted from Sullivan 1988)

Most parents see the provision of English in schools as vital for giving their children a better chance for the future. However, unlike other subjects such as mother tongue development, maths, history/geography, science, etc., where parents share a common language and possess some content knowledge, helping their child with a foreign language can be problematic if they do not speak any or only a little of it. They may feel insecure, inadequate and unable to support their child's learning. These parents need to understand that they can still provide an enormous amount of support and encouragement for their child.

Other parents may have unrealistic expectations in terms of results, about how much and how fast their child can learn, because they evaluate progress solely in terms of linguistic outcomes. At the Young Learners Centre at the British Council in Paris we often have parents express the wish *I want my child to be bilingual* when they sign them up for a 60 hour course ! Part of our role, therefore, is to help parents formulate realistic expectations, as this type of parent is also likely to make the most noise and blame a school for a perceived lack of progress if such results are not achieved. Parents also need to understand that the teaching of foreign languages to young learners contributes to their global development and also offers important personal, cognitive, cultural, social and affective gains, although these are more difficult to perceive and to evaluate.

Modern communicative language teaching methodologies may also differ to the way parents themselves learnt a foreign language, and to the way children are taught other subjects at school. Parents often have strong views on how languages are learned how they should be taught and these are often based on their own experiences of foreign

language learning, good or bad, successful or unsuccessful. They may perceive modern methodologies as 'less formal', 'not serious enough', 'less disciplined' and their value may be questioned. To allay such fears, these parents need 'methodological preparation' as defined by Dickinson and Carver (1980). This includes explaining about the foreign language learning process, methodological approaches and materials, what the aims of foreign language teaching are and how they are to be achieved so they understand what is going on in the classroom and why. It goes without saying, that pupils also need this preparation so they can explain to their parents what and how they have learnt in a meaningful way.

In the field of English language teaching, the issue of parental involvement has recently been receiving more attention as reflected by the inclusion of guidelines in the introductions to teacher's books of some major courses. David Vale in *early bird* (1990) an activity-based English course, provides a model letter to be translated (if necessary) and given to parents at the beginning of the *early bird* course, which explains the methodology used in the coursebook. *Super Me*, (Thomas and Gil 1997) *Pebbles* (Ellis and Hancock 1999) and *Superworld* (Read and Soberon 2000) amongst others provide short guidelines on how to foster parental involvement.

In what other ways can parental involvement be fostered ?

1. Providing 'parent training'

Parent training is not a new concept. Like learner training it is another strand of the movement in education and language teaching which has been advocating the development of an awareness of learning and, ultimately, autonomy, as an educational goal. A need for parent training has surfaced recently due to the challenging demands made by parents in today's competitive market place. The main focus of parent training is to help parents understand how their children can learn a foreign language and how they can support them.

There are a variety of ways of delivering parent training all of which have an informative and awareness-raising purpose. Whatever the delivery mode, the content should, as far as possible, relate to the specificities of each learning context.

• Course brochures and guides

Course brochures and parent guides allow a school to state its pedagogical objectives and to explain its methodological approaches. The advantages of using the written form to convey information are the following :

- a written record can be read by parents at their leisure and at their own pace and they can reflect on the content. It is often difficult to assimilate or recall what may be said in a meeting.
- Parents can share the information with other members of the family or with other parents. It can also be used to form the basis of a discussion with the teacher.
- The message is credible and accountable. Written documentation provides no doubt about the school's approach to language teaching and can also act as a safeguard for the school.

Brochures or guides should be written in clear, accessible language and avoid jargon. They can also contain attractive photographs, examples of pupil's work, and quotes from teachers and parents. If necessary, they should be produced in the home language.

• Open Days

Open Days are usually organised to allow parents or prospective parents the opportunity to visit a school, meet and talk with teachers and other parents and pupils, visit language classrooms and look at pupils' displays of work. They may even offer the possibility of watching a demonstration lesson. Teachers will be able to answer questions, and brochures or guides given to parents will provide a written record of objectives as described above.

• Meetings

Parents are busy people and it is not always possible for them to find the time to attend meetings. A school may organise one meeting a year at the beginning of the school year, a meeting each term or more regular meetings. Whatever your school decides, try to organise meetings at times you know are convenient for most parents. Give plenty of forewarning so parents have the opportunity to organise their work and home life around the meeting. The meeting allows the school to explain its pedagogical objectives and approaches and the possibility of

illustrating these with video extracts or other visual aids. Keep to the time you have allotted for the meeting. Do not overrun – this can be very frustrating and is a sign of poor preparation or decision making. Build a question/answer slot into the meeting. A break in the middle of the meeting or at the end with drinks will allow parents to discuss issues informally.

The advantages of meetings are the following:

- parents can learn from other parents as each ask different questions or make different suggestions
- meetings allow parents to take a wider perspective and possibly acquire a broader understanding of how children learn

• **Courses or workshops**

Courses for parents can be general or address very specific aspects of foreign language learning. They can be one-off or serial (several meetings organised over a period of time). As above, parents are busy people and the one-off course, for example, a three-hour course one evening or at the weekend may be an important parent-convenience factor. To get the most out of your course, advertise it well in advance, state clearly its objectives and the content and the mode of delivery, for example, talk/demonstration, workshop, audience participation, etc. All of this, helps parents build realistic expectations. You may wish parents to conduct a short pre-course task or read an article before attending. The preparation of course handouts are also very useful as they enable parents to concentrate and listen instead of having to take notes. Bibliographies allow parents to follow-up areas of personal interest after the course.

The British Council's teaching centres in Singapore, Korea and France currently run short courses and workshops for parents. In Singapore, workshops focus on raising parent's awareness of standard English grammar and to identify common errors in use; to raise awareness of the features of English phonology and provide strategies for helping children improve their pronunciation; to equip parents with strategies for helping children improve their writing in examinations. In Korea, courses focus on practical suggestions on how parents can help their children learn and a demonstration of common classroom activities (dialogues, dominoes, pelmanism, vocabulary card activities, and an alphabet game). Parents are given copies of the games to take home and use with their children. In Paris, a three-hour course addresses the following:

- What is a successful language learner?
- How do children learn languages (their mother tongue and a foreign language)?
- How can I formulate realistic expectations for my child?
- How can I help my child?
- Materials to use
- Techniques to use

At the end of this course, parents complete a personal action plan.

Courses allow parents to investigate areas of interest in depth and, as above with meetings, to learn from each other and establish a feeling of group solidarity:

This course was very interesting and provided me with a great deal of information and answers to certain questions that I had asked myself. It was very interesting to listen to the other parents talking about their problems and to listen to their questions which complemented mine.

The participation of other parents contributed a great deal to the interest and value of the course. The handouts were very useful. (feedback from Paris course, January 2000)

• **Handbooks**

There are now a number of excellent handbooks aimed at parents that can be read in their own time (see references below). There will also be local publications in home languages that you will know about and wish to recommend. Short bibliographies can be given to parents at registration, meetings, courses or by teachers. These bibliographies can also include home study materials, many of which are produced by local publishers with parents' guidelines in the home language. There are also detailed Parents'Notes for the *Muzzy* videos (Webster 1989).

- **Dispelling common misconceptions or fixed attitudes**

You may often hear parents express a variety of misconceptions or display fixed attitudes. Try to dispel these by informing and explaining or asking why parents feel the way they do. Such misconceptions could also form the basis of discussion groups or meetings. Here are a few misconceptions we regularly hear at the Young Learners Centre in Paris.

My child is bilingual. In addition to our EFL classes we also run classes for bilingual children (French/English). We often hear this comment at registration when parents describe what they believe to be their child's level and which many not always coincide with the result of our placement test. We feel this is because many parents living in monolingual countries often use the term 'bilingual' rather freely. They are under the impression that living with two or more languages is exceptional. However, over half the world's population is bilingual, so bilingualism is not rare which often comes as a surprise to such parents. Furthermore, bilingual means different things to different people. It is a term that is difficult to define and many definitions derive from a view of bilingualism which is idealised: *The bilingual is someone who speaks two languages perfectly.* In fact, bilingualism is a matter of degree depending on a number of different factors. Bilingualism is a term which is used when referring to 'natural' users of two (or more) languages developed in parallel (if not necessarily to the same extent or for exactly the same functions) because of early 'natural' exposure to them, most often because of family circumstances (for example, parents using two or more languages in the home, or a family moving to an English-speaking country where the child is educated in an English-speaking school).

My child is gifted/My child is useless. These comments reflect parents perceptions of their child's ability to learn a foreign language. Most schools will recognise each child's individual potential as a foreign language learner, and encourage the development of the different intelligences (Gardner 1993) required in foreign language learning. A link between intelligence and foreign language learning has been reported by several researchers. However, 'intelligence' as measured by IQ tests may identify high academic ability but are often poor predictors of other forms of intelligence. Learning a foreign language is an all-round ability involving a variety of skills and strategies which enable the learner to read and write, learn grammar and vocabulary as well as develop communication and social skills. If a child has been identified by an intelligence test as gifted, this does not necessarily mean he or she will find foreign language learning easy as many different forms of intelligence contribute to success in foreign language learning. Equally, if a child has been identified as a weak learner, it does not mean that he or she cannot learn a foreign language. Research has shown (Lightbown, P.M., Spada, N. 1993) that learners with a wide variety of intellectual abilities can be successful language learners. Probably the most important factor in a child's language learning, however, is motivation and success. The more one succeeds, the greater one's motivation; the greater one's motivation, the more one succeeds. Parents can help by showing an interest in their child's work and praising all efforts however great or small.

But my child's got karate at that time ... If you work in a private school where a child comes for out-of-school activities, it may sometimes be difficult to find a mutually convenient time for the child to attend English classes. Parents need to understand that learning a foreign language is a long-term investment. It is going to take a lot of time and hard work. Therefore, the earlier a child begins systematic foreign language learning, the more time he or she has to achieve a desired performance level. However, whenever the start, optimal conditions (see Rixon, S. 1999 for a discussion on this), regular practice and reviewing are essential to maintain the level already achieved and to make further progress. Foreign language learning is a complex process and one of the main reasons for failure is a lack of continuity. If an English class does not coincide with the time a parent has requested, and it is not possible to rearrange one of the activities, then parents must be aware of the consequences and decide which is the priority for their child.

I want my child to become bilingual. As stated above, this comment reflects very ambitious and probably unrealistic expectations. The parent needs to understand that bilingualism can rarely be achieved by formal instruction alone, and will depend on many other factors such as the amount of time available for foreign language learning, as well as the amount of authentic exposure the child will have to the target language and the quality and quantity of instruction.

But I heard the teacher speaking (French) in the classroom. As teachers, if we have a class that shares a common mother tongue which we also speak, we sometimes use this for very specific reasons to facilitate learning of the foreign language. However, if parents hear the mother tongue being spoken in the classroom they sometimes misconstrue the reasons for this, as they may feel very strongly that the 'no mother tongue rule' is the best way for

their child to learn the target language. Teachers need to explain to parents, either at meetings or in a parent's guide, why the mother tongue may sometimes be used as a tool to facilitate L2 acquisition.

2. Providing parent care

Parents are our customers and as professionals we must take great care to think about the relationship we develop with them and the service we offer. All parents are different, some are very demanding and questioning others are reticent. Some teachers welcome dialogue with parents others avoid it because they may feel threatened or attacked or they may simply prefer to keep a social distance. We can provide quality parent care by implementing some or all of the following actions:

- Teachers arrive in their class ten minutes before it begins to greet parents and make themselves available for questions as well as after a lesson, if possible and appropriate in your context.
- Establish a system for communication to take place between teachers and parents, for example, a small note book.
- Parents receive regular information from class teachers or the head in the form of letters, information sheets, termly reports, meetings, etc.
- Provide a suggestion box for parents to leave questions or suggestions
- Share information with parents and explain what you are doing and why
- Build in regular review sessions into your classes so that children understand what and how they have learnt and can explain their lesson to their parents
- Try to dispel and break down common misconceptions or fixed attitudes (see above) by informing and explaining
- Invite parents to look at children's work in the classroom
- Suggest ways parents can help their children at home: by asking their child what they have done in English; looking at their English books; asking children to sing songs or to repeat rhymes; asking their child to teach them some English and showing an interest in any materials they have produced, praising their children regularly so they feel proud of what they are doing.
- Organise and invite parents to special events (see below) or end-of-term presentations in which children act out stories, sing songs, recite poems, etc.
- Develop mutual respect
- Share information and communicate your skills to parents
- Listen to parents and consult them as well as be consulted
- Be honest about your feelings so that parents can be open about theirs
- Ask questions and be prepared to answer questions

3. Arranging special events

Special events provide an ideal opportunity to forge strong parent/teacher/school links. Think about the type of special events which are/could be possible for your school. Here are a few suggestions:

- **A Book Fair:** support the local book trade and invite a bookseller to come to your school to sell books. Make sure a few teachers are available to advise parents on the most appropriate books/levels for their children. If possible, invite an author/illustrator to talk about his/her books, tell stories, run a workshop, etc.
- **A Celebration:** organise a celebration to coincide with a festival that is appropriate for your context. This could be a Christmas pantomime, a play, a party, a presentation of songs, the acting out of a story, etc.
- **An end of term/school year party:** involving any of the above, plus the presentation of certificates, if appropriate.
- **Celebrate topic or story-based work:** if you are working around topics or stories, build up to an exhibition or display of writing, artwork and models to which parents and friends are invited. (See Ellis and Brewster forthcoming where suggestions are provided for concrete outcomes related to story work).

The above suggestions can contribute to encouraging parental involvement enabling parents to become partners in learning, so they can maximise their child's language learning opportunities through self-help, encouragement and mutual understanding between themselves, their child and the school.

I would be very interested in hearing from and sharing ideas with other teachers currently involved in encouraging parental involvement. gail.ellis@britishcouncil.fr

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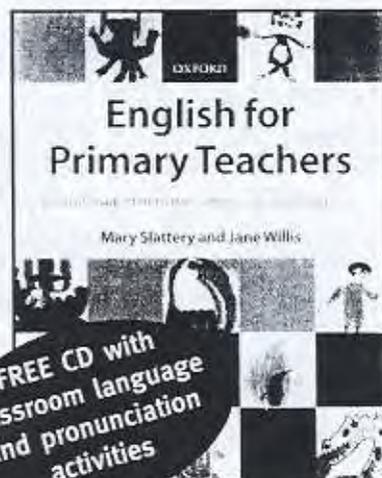
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Biased for Best: How to motivate children in an oral test

Magdalena Szpotowicz

Educational Reform in Poland focuses on the changing attitude to assessment, which should now become an integral part of learning. Participants at a workshop presented with Daf Pawelec at the IATEFL Conference in Dublin in March 2000 were invited to experience the techniques we used with young learners to teach and measure their progress in vocabulary learning and developing speaking, and to join in the discussion about the effectiveness of such practices in the YL classroom.

In the workshop we first outlined the teaching context in Poland and specifically the changes introduced by the educational reform in September 1999. For those concerned with teaching young learners, the important modification was lowering the age of compulsory foreign language teaching to 10, i.e. the 4th grade in the primary school.

Another crucial improvement resulting from the reform, is a new approach to assessment. In the reformed school we are to evaluate students' effort and competencies, rather than the amount of factual knowledge they can recall. Additionally, when promoting students' progress, teachers focus on achievement and positive outcomes and not so much on students' unsuccessful attempts or their lack of knowledge. The information children get about their learning is to be more comprehensive than so far and take into account learners' participation, their problem areas and special abilities. That is why assessment is going to have a double role:

- assessment viewed as feedback on students' progress - non-evaluative
- assessment used for measuring students achievement – evaluative.

The latter is equally important because so far the Polish school lacked clear assessment criteria and clear attainment targets. For this reason, the second tendency is to establish them, as well as to design relevant exam standards for different stages of education.

English in state schools

Although there is choice to introduce other foreign languages at any educational stage, there is in fact great pressure on the parents' and local authorities' part to choose English. The demand for English teaching is growing not only in the classes where foreign languages are obligatory, but also in lower primary classes as well as in kindergartens. The Ministry of Education recognises this need and its intention is to lower the age to 6 or 7 in the near future. Obviously with such a fast growing demand there is a notorious shortage of qualified English teachers who would be prepared to teach young learners. Those who already teach face many problems resulting from the lack of knowledge about young learner methodology and children's developmental characteristics.

To address some of the issues teachers raise, in the second part of the workshop we concentrated on the following questions:

- how to test young learners or measure students' progress and achievement in L2
- how to incorporate assessment into the learning-teaching process.

We focused on 7 to 9 year olds i.e. the Polish lower primary school where English is increasingly being introduced and where it is usually taught by inexperienced teachers.

Testing young learners

In the past, the way students were assessed and monitored was grammar- oriented and that is why it was demotivating and stressful. In such tests children were almost bound to fail. Now teachers are encouraged not to concentrate on teaching or testing grammar but to focus on vocabulary and language skills. Official documents, like the Core Curriculum, stress that such a shift is necessary for more effective teaching and learning.

At the primary school level, testing and assessment are usually part of teaching. The teacher's assessment is informal and based on observation. If we use tests and need to measure students' achievement, the tests should be similar or exactly the same activities as those we use for practice.

However, because the test atmosphere is stressful for children, students do not have to know they are being tested. It may be more comfortable for them and better for the test results, if they are not aware of the testing situation. If the task is interesting for them, young learners will be motivated to concentrate anyway.

In Polish primary schools, teachers have most problems teaching 1st graders, children at the age of 7, who are only starting to develop literacy skills in their mother tongue. At the beginning of the year it is necessary to use a non-text approach and gradually to introduce spelling of individual words and simple sentences. Instead, many teachers struggle trying to teach writing and reading at this early stage.

In our workshop we encouraged the participants to select those testing techniques which would be useful for Polish 1st graders (7 years) who have so far only been learning orally. Below is the list of the techniques selected in the session.

The suggested list of techniques for testing oral skills in 7 year olds

- The pupils in groups receive sets of cards representing words which they have learnt recently. The cards are placed face down on the desk and the children take turns to draw the cards and let the others or one peer guess "Is it a pen?" "Is it a rubber?" The child who guesses correctly wins the card. The teacher monitors her students and notes down her comments.
- Responding with one word to a question asked by the teacher pointing to a poster or a flashcard. "What's this?" The learner produces an answer, "This is a .. It's a .." or just the word.
- Memory game: This testing technique enables a recall of vocabulary from memory. The learners one by one try to produce the longest list of things and objects. "I like tea and juice and cola and milk and lemonade and .."
- Picture dictation: Matching the words uttered by the teacher with the pictures or colouring particular elements of a picture according to the instructions given.
- Number dictation: Listening and writing the number which is uttered by the teacher or other peers.
- Listening and circling the picture representing the word which is being uttered by the teacher (one of four).
- Matching words and pictures which represent them.

Research project

In the following part of the workshop, participants experienced the teaching and testing techniques which were used in the research on vocabulary acquisition with a group of 7-8 year old learners of English. The participants were encouraged to learn 7 Polish words (equivalents of hare, tortoise, kangaroo, hamster, camel, rat and jaguar). They repeated chorally and individually, then mimed and guessed in Polish what animals the gestures represented. Later everybody got a set of cards with pictures of animals as well as a set of crayons to colour in. Finally, the participants were put into pairs and asked each other about the colours of their pictures, e.g. "What colour is your *szczur*?" "My *szczur* is grey." After this learning session some testing was applied (in the real research it took place 5 days later). The recall test, where the participants were asked to remember the names of different animals when asked "What is this?", was done first. Next, in a recognition test, they got worksheets with pictures of animals and were supposed to write appropriate numbers next to the pictures called out by the teacher (T: "Number 3 is a *chomik*"). The very last stage of the workshop was devoted to analysing actual test results obtained in the research project in spring 1999. In groups participants compared the results individual children achieved (case studies), with their behavioural and learning profiles (descriptions) prepared by their teacher. It was interesting to see what kind of students (concentrated, absent-minded, careful, quiet, etc.) remembered how many words. We also looked at the relationship between the lexical group (animals, words connected with toys and everyday activities or "adult" household equipment) and the rate of remembering.

This session took its audience from the very general overview of the new situation in the Polish educational system through discussions on good teaching and testing practices up to a specific example of a research carried out on a small group of young learners.

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Project Work – Step by Step

Diane Phillips

Project work can be hard work, especially if you are new to the approach. However, it can be very rewarding. At a workshop at IATEFL, Dublin we managed to produce ideas and plans for a number of exciting projects. If you would like to try I hope you find the following guidelines helpful.

Introducing the project

- Spend time at the beginning of the course discussing/negotiating the project with the children (and maybe their parents).
- Raise the learners' awareness of the value of learning a language in this way and the part they have in making it work.
- Discuss the end-product(s), the language they will be learning, the skills they will be practising, the way their progress will be monitored and assessed, the choices they will have.

A number of choices can be presented to the children for discussion at the beginning of the project and at stages throughout the project. Answers to these (and other) questions can be discussed and decided:

- Should everyone do all aspects of the project, or would be better to allocate certain tasks to certain people?
- To what extent can they take responsibility for finding information and providing materials etc.?
- How much can they do outside of class time?
- How do they wish to make best use of your time? For example, can they get on with work so that you can conduct group/individual 'consultancies'?
- How do they wish to display their work at the end of the project?

Any decisions that the learners make will help foster a feeling of ownership of, and responsibility for, the project and increase their motivation.

Storage and display of the project work

At the same time as planning the project you have to decide:

- how to store on-going work which is being collected to make up the final end-product
- how the end-product is going to be displayed

If you have regular use of a class room a lot of work such as posters, pictures, stories, charts, maps, reports etc. can be displayed on the walls. If the end product takes the form of an exhibition the display is built up as the project progresses. If you can't leave work in the classroom you may need to use portfolios, or boxes for the storage of the things the learners have made.

Planning

Step 1: The Product

The end product of the project is important and should be carefully planned for. However, it shouldn't be given undue prominence to the extent that the process is neglected. It's better to have a small amount of high quality work than a mass of badly presented, poor quality stuff. Most importantly it should be the *learners'* work, not the teacher's, which is admired. In general, do not be over ambitious in what you can achieve in the time available.

The end product can take a number of forms. Some examples include:

- **a wall display** – a poster presentation, a map or picture of a historical place e.g. Cambridge, or their own town, with accompanying cassette guide; a frieze – e.g. underwater world with fish, octopus, sea horse, ship wreck, pirate treasure chest.
- **a report** – written and/or oral (with graphics, charts, statistics etc.)
c.g. people's favourite TV programmes; for older students - news coverage/treatment of different types of media.
- **a booklet/guide** – a tourist guide in English to the student's own town/city; to the school/the Study Centre for new students; a recipe book; a magazine or newspaper; survey of cafes/coffee shops
- **a model** - an island; a house/block of flats; an 'invention'
- **a video** – of a 'short film', a 'TV programme', the School News, an information guide
- **an event** – a live debate with audience (e.g. for older, advanced students - UN Council, Any Questions); a fashion show; a drama production/show; an exhibition, a party; an international evening etc.

Step 2: Activities

Next, list the stages and activities needed to achieve the end product(s). For example, for a project on the *media* one of the activities might be 'to conduct a survey in the local town/village on people's favourite television programmes'.

Step 3: Language

Under each of the headings make a note of grammar points, vocabulary areas, and skills that are needed for each activity. For the 'TV survey' you might list these points:

- grammar points – 'yes/no' and 'wh' questions (What kind of? How often? etc.)
- vocabulary areas – types of TV programmes
- skills – speaking (explaining, asking for clarification)
listening (to the answers)
writing notes
drawing graphs with captions

Step 4: Group/Time planning

If different groups are doing different things - organise the class into groups/individuals and decide on the group product objectives – what each group is going to do.

Draw up a draft time plan – listing the activities, and deciding on the short term and final deadlines. Older/higher-level learners can do this for themselves.

Draw up a chart with a day-by-day plan for each group listing the:

- product
- activity
- language
- skills
- any work done out of class
- materials/equipment

Display the Plans on the wall. Each student can have a copy as a working document to be ticked off/amended so that eventually it is a Record of Work.

Presentation of the Project

Finally, when presenting the project to others you have to decide:

Who? To other classes, other teachers, parents and friends, the wider public?

Where? In the classroom, the hall/on stage, outdoors, in the Video Studio?

How?

- A display can be staged as for the opening, or preview, of a new art exhibition with guests being sent invitation cards, drinks and nibbles provided, and talks from the 'artists'.
- A video can be treated as a film at the cinema with popcorn and ice cream for the 'audience'.
- An event such as a live TV debate or a show will involve invitation/admission cards or programmes, and refreshments?
- Your children can devise a questionnaire or 'trail' for the visitors who are viewing the project display, with a prize for the person who finds out the most information.

Evaluation of project work

It is important to allocate time for the evaluation of both the process (the doing) and the product (the tangible results). You need to build in slots within the timetable in which you can look back at *what* you have done, *why* you did it, and at *how successful* you have been. Time for group/individual feedback also needs to be planned.

Example tasks include:

- looking at and reviewing each others' finished work
- selecting the best examples from the different groups for inclusion in the class magazine or for a wall display
- awarding prizes for the best contributions
- giving short presentations about the work different groups have done
- showing 'work-in-progress' for comment: a video clip or audio recording, a short sketch

You can help this process by providing structured feedback tasks, for example:

For each poster display make comments in the boxes:

People in the group	Title	Three things I particularly liked	One suggestion for improvement
Group 1			
Group 2			

Acknowledgement and Further Reading

With thanks to the very many teachers on Bell Young Learners' courses who have developed a wide range of creative projects with children and teenagers.

For further ideas and activities on specific projects see *Projects with Young Learners* (1999). Phillips, D., S. Burwood and H. Dunford. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

I would welcome any feedback, queries and comments on diane.phillips@bell-schools.ac.uk

Dr Diane Phillips is Head of Young Learners for the Bell Educational Trust. She is co-author of Teaching Practice Handbook (1995) Heinemann, and Projects with Young Learners (1999) OUP. She is a member of the UCLES Working Party for Teacher Training Courses for Young Learners.

Teaching for Thinking in the Young Learners' Classroom

Herbert Puchta

There are mountains of evidence from recent research into the workings of the child's brain that early foreign language learning, if done properly, can contribute significantly to the cognitive development of the child. These findings come on top of observations of how young children are especially well able to learn a foreign language. As Susan Halliwell has pointed out, they bring along a whole set of specific aptitudes or skills:

The ability to grasp meaning

Before toddlers know the exact meaning of individual words, they are able to understand the sense of complete utterances. Intonation, mime, gesture, and the context between what was said and the environment of an utterance help them to decode what they have heard.

The ability to manage with limited linguistic means

Children frequently "play" with language and try to increase their language abilities, which are often quite limited, by transferring what they have learnt into other contexts and by making up new words or expressions. Frequently, for example, words in the mother tongue are "pronounced in English" when a child can't think of the word in the target language. For the teacher, all these phenomena are evidence of the children's learning process.

The ability to learn indirectly

Very young learners do not learn vocabulary, structures or phrases as separate entities. They are intrigued by stories and try to understand them. They like the sounds of the new words that the teacher introduces and enjoy repeating them. They have fun with songs and chants and move enthusiastically when they sing along. They want to find the answers in a guessing game and eagerly use the structure that the teacher has introduced. They act out scenes from a sketch in class, and when they do, they imitate the voices of the animals or other characters they are playing so well that their pronunciation comes very close to the models that they had previously heard on the video. In all these cases, and in many others, children are unconsciously learning very important linguistic skills. Here, language is not an end in itself, but a natural means of reaching a communicative goal.

The ability to learn through fantasy and imagination

Children know a glove puppet is not alive. And yet, when the teacher uses such a puppet to communicate with the children, the line between make-believe and reality is blurred. Play becomes reality, and in such play situations children make the foreign language their own.

The ability to interact and speak

Children have a natural need to communicate with other children and with us. This may not always be easy for us as teachers, especially when we want to get them to listen to us or to one another. But at the same time, it is an important skill, which forms the basis for their interaction in the target language.

The latest research into the human thought process and the question of how we can best support the development of a child's thinking capacity reveals a further important capacity that children possess:

Children potentially have the ability to think and to think about their thinking

Why potentially? Cognitive psychologists (see for example Fisher 1992) stress that thinking is not some natural function like breathing, walking, seeing and talking. Thinking does not necessarily improve with age and experience. Thinking needs to be developed. Thinking needs to be facilitated alongside the child's acquisition of the new language.

Although research is still a long way from having fathomed out all the secrets of the human brain, there is already a body of findings which provide us with valuable insights into the workings of the brain. Many of these findings are very exciting and of immediate relevance to language teaching.

There is evidence that what we need in order to learn language successfully is not so much talent, or the famous L.A.D. (Language Acquisition Device), but a number of highly diverse cognitive skills and mental acts, underlying which there is a repertoire of basic thinking processes. Lipman (1984) offers an interesting metaphor in order to illustrate this: When we watch a car mechanic at work, we notice that he has some basic skills that makes it possible for him to use the individual tools he has in his tool kit, like a screwdriver, a wrench, pliers etc. Most of us share these basic skills. What we do not have, however, is the special knowledge that the car mechanic has that tells him how to organise and sequence the use of these tools in order to successfully repair a car. Likewise, in Fisher's words "The higher order skills that we use when we engage in elaborate and sophisticated thinking are not different skills, but the same skills used in more sophisticated combination." (Fisher 1992, p. ix)

Children process information in the same way as expert adults, but expert adults have more efficient networks and processing systems. In Gardner's words, "The un-schooled 5-year-old has very powerful ideas and theories which he or she attempts to apply everywhere. The mind of that child is original, rich and creative, but often subscribes to explanations which are simplistic or misconceived. [...] If a student is to 'understand deeply,' he or she must immerse himself or herself in the subject matter, learning to think of it and to approach it in a variety of ways." (Anglin 1995, pp. 32 - 33)

Facilitating deep understanding in the young learners' classroom

The reason why teaching young learners is such a great opportunity and a real challenge is the fact that we can help them develop what Howard Gardner above calls "deep understanding" of what they are learning. Deep understanding in our case does not of course mean that the purpose is to get six-year-olds to develop a linguist's metacognitive understanding of the syntax or the morphology of the language they are learning. Deep understanding means that children develop a genuine interest in what they are learning and a curiosity to find out more about it. Deep understanding goes beyond mere mechanical learning of a few songs and rhymes and dialogues.

Deep understanding happens when children's intelligence (or rather "intelligences") are activated at the same time as they are learning a new language. Deep understanding happens when children solve a problem, learn to think critically and become creative. Deep understanding happens when children learn to focus their visual and auditory attention and perception. Deep understanding happens when children immerse themselves in the rhythm of the foreign language and react to it with their body and their heart. Deep understanding happens when children develop empathy with others and learn to view the world through another person's eyes. Deep understanding happens when children start to think about their thinking. Deep understanding happens when we "teach for thinking."

If teaching a foreign language to young learners offers opportunities to develop the important capabilities mentioned above, we need to furnish teachers with materials and methods that can provide appropriate support for these processes.

Developing learners' multiple intelligences

Generally speaking, various human abilities which are independent of one another are subsumed under the collective term "intelligence". Researchers in intelligence speak of a multitude of "intelligences". Howard Gardner, for example, claims that there are seven different areas of intelligence, i. e. "multiple intelligences". Modern research in intelligence also clearly indicates that intelligence is not a gift with which human beings are born and which stays with them for the rest of their lives in the form of a higher or lower IQ (intelligence quotient).

Intelligence is quite unmistakably influenced through learning processes. Simply put, it can be said that intelligence can be learned. Following on from what we discussed earlier concerning the teaching of thinking, we can say that learning a foreign language early helps develop and stimulate a child's intelligences in a number of ways. Let us now look at Howard Gardner's categories and how they can be facilitated in early foreign language learning:

Gardner's intelligence categories:	Methods of activation:
Linguistic intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematically developing the ability to decode the meaning of the foreign language through a multiplicity of different kinds of text. • Developing the child's sense of hearing by using activities for phonetic and articulatory differentiation. • Encouraging the desire to play with language. • Stimulating the unintentional discovery of linguistic rules. • Offering associative aids to noting vocabulary and phrases.
Musical-rhythmical intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging the ability to differentiate rhythms through chants and rhymes. • Encouraging the ability to differentiate rhythms through songs and activity songs
Interpersonal intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing fundamental social abilities as an inherent principle: learning to listen to one another, tolerating linguistic mistakes, developing patience etc. • Encouraging empathy through role-playing games. • Encouraging the ability to work in a team by assigning co-operative tasks.
Kinaesthetic intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using the whole body when learning the language, e.g. through <i>action stories</i>, <i>activity songs</i>, movement games and dances. • Developing fine motor skills through puzzles, drawing and painting tasks
Visual-spatial intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the visual-spatial perception through discovery pictures • Encouraging the visual memory through picture puzzles
Mathematical-logical intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sorting and putting pictures into order • Establishing logical perception through logical sequences • Puzzles
Intrapersonal intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing the ability to reflect as a basis for one's own speaking. • Prioritising and ranking, based on personal preferences. • Evaluating, making choices on the basis of one's own criteria.

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Emotional Intelligence in the primary classroom

Carol Read

Discoveries in neuro-science and the functioning of the brain – that ‘sleeping giant’, ‘enchanted loom’ or ‘biological supercomputer’ as it has variously been described - have given rise to the recent trend of paying as much attention to the *emotional* brain as to the *thinking* brain, not only in education but also in areas such as business and management. This trend has been reflected in popular books, such as those by Daniel Goleman (1996, 1998) as well as in recent publications in the field of language teaching (e.g. Williams and Burden 1997, Arnold 1999).

For many of us as teachers of children and also for some of us as parents, at last our intuitive, common sense hunches about the importance of affective factors in determining how children get on, not only in our language classes but also at school and indeed throughout their lives, is the focus of serious interest and research. For those of us who may be working in multicultural classrooms, as I currently do in Spain, an understanding of the emotional brain is also a key issue as we experience and struggle with the daily realities of how vital emotional competence is in enabling children to adapt and thrive in their school context.

As well as being highly relevant for teachers, emotional intelligence is also fashionable. However, as is very often the case with fashion, it is not actually quite as new as it seems. Humanistic approaches to language teaching, which highlight the value of positive emotions and interpersonal relationships, have been around for years and good primary practitioners have long been concerned with the holistic development of the children they teach. As early as 1920, Thorndike sowed the seeds of today’s emotional intelligence when he developed the concept of ‘social intelligence’ which he defined as ‘the ability to act wisely in human relations’. Although ‘social intelligence’ had a low profile in the mid-twentieth century, a variation of it was taken up again in the 1980s by Howard Gardner (1983) in the two personal intelligences (inter- and intra-personal intelligence) that form part of his Theory of Multiple Intelligences. More recently, Salovey & Mayer coined the actual term ‘emotional intelligence’ (1990) and Goleman has subsequently spearheaded its rise to fame in the popular mind.

The brain and its role in emotional intelligence

The brain has a crucial and infinitely complex role to play in the way we exercise our emotional intelligence. In order to demonstrate this in a very simple way, you may like to try doing the following kinesthetic ‘brain activity’, based mainly on information from Goleman (1996) and Schilling (1996), as you read. This activity, incidentally, can also be simplified and adapted as a listening comprehension to do with young learners (as from about the age of 11) as part of a topic on ‘the brain and our feelings’ if you wish:

- i) Make a fist with one of your hands and wrap the other hand over the top. Imagine this is your brain and identify the following parts:
 - a) the wrist of your first hand represents your *Reptilian brain* – this is the part that deals with basic functions such as breathing, heart rate and instincts such as fight or flight.
 - b) your fist represents your *Limbic system or Mammalian brain* and controls things such as your hormones, thirst, hunger, sexuality, metabolism, your immune system, emotions, health and an important part of long-term memory.
 - c) the hand wrapped around your fist represents the *Neo-cortex or thinking brain* and, if spread out is just three millimetres thick and the size of a double-page of newspaper. This is the part of the brain responsible for all the higher intelligences such as thinking, creating and talking which make us unique as human beings.
- ii) Now put up the index finger of the hand you have made into a fist and read on:
 - d) your index finger represents the *Amygdala* or the centre of your emotional mind. All incoming data to the brain passes through the Amygdala and is instantly scanned for personal emotional significance, which in turn produces pleasure, excitement, sadness anger etc., before going to the cerebral cortex for

processing. If the personal emotional significance is great, data leaving the Amygdala can be highly charged and may completely override logical thinking. The Amygdala is like a guard or watchdog, scanning for signs of emotional trouble and ready to charge into action regardless of the outcome. When the Amygdala declares a crisis, it can override the rest of your brain, as for example, when you lose your temper, 'go bananas', can't think straight or your mind goes a blank. Goleman refers to this as 'emotional hi-jacking' (1996, p.13)

- iii) Now put up your thumb and your little finger on the hand wrapped round your fist and read on:
- c) your thumb and little finger represent the *Pre-frontal lobes* in the Neo-cortex. They form part of the networks on which emotion and feeling rely but in contrast to the Amygdala act more like a control tower or strategist. This part of the brain is able to control feelings and allows us to reappraise situations and produce a calmer, more considered response. However, as it is slower to respond, it can easily be over-ridden by the instant reaction of the Amygdala which may disrupt our ability to think and reason.

Although the neural pathways and the structure of the brain's emotional guard or watchdog (the Amygdala) cannot be changed, the primary goal in developing emotional intelligence is to improve the skills of the control tower or strategist (neo-cortex) which is capable of managing and shaping its responses. In our role as educators of children, no matter how limited our contact time may be, we have a responsibility to do what we can to ensure that the development of emotional intelligence in our pupils is not left to chance.

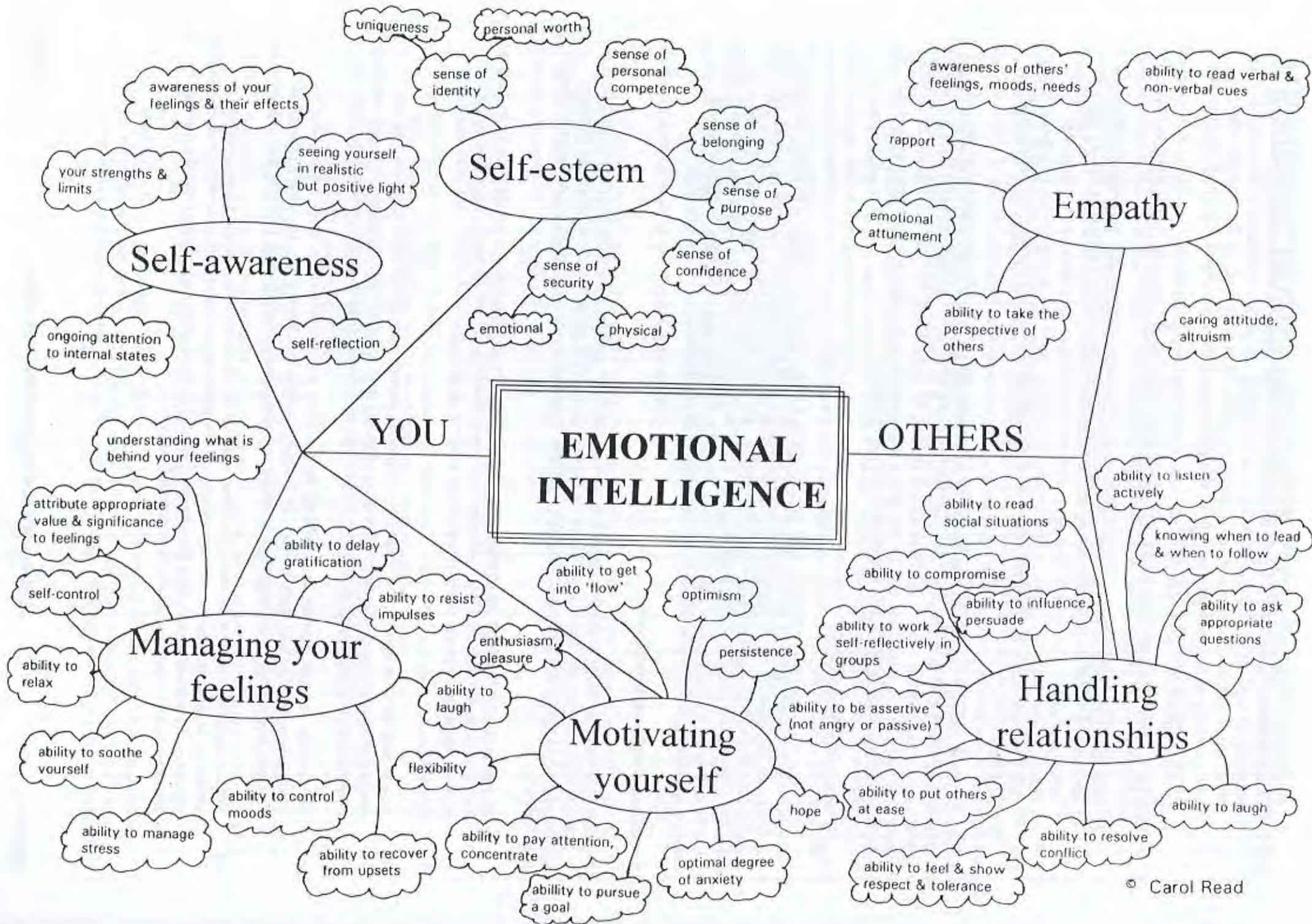
What is 'emotional intelligence'

Emotional intelligence refers not only to things within ourselves but also to the way we are with others. Goleman has defined it as 'the capacity for recognising our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.' (1998, p.317). My understanding of the key ingredients of emotional intelligence are summarised in the brain map on the next page. These are derived from my reading as well as my own experience and thoughts in this area. The brain map is necessarily simplified and schematic and there is more overlap between the categories than can be conveyed on a single page.

Developing emotional intelligence

The range of things we can do to develop emotional intelligence in the primary classroom permeates every level of our practice, from syllabus and lesson planning to classroom organisation, selection of materials and choice of activities as well as our own behaviour and attitudes in class. In general terms some examples of things we can do are as follows:

- i) we can develop **self-esteem** by emphasising what children *can* do (rather than what they can't), by valuing their contributions and effort, by displaying their work, building on their strengths, providing positive reinforcement, using praise (appropriately) and creating an atmosphere where diversity is valued and respected.
- ii) we can help children become **self-aware** by integrating learner training and self-evaluation into our teaching and by giving children opportunities to develop individual learning styles and strategies as well as to identify their preferences for activities which draw on different aspects of their multiple intelligences.
- iii) We can help children **manage their feelings** by modelling positive behaviour, by giving children opportunities to talk about their feelings, by listening to what they have to say, by using stories which illustrate feelings which are important for children and exploring these through role play and dramatisation.
- iv) We can **motivate children** by communicating enthusiasm, optimism and a belief in their abilities, by setting (or helping children to set themselves) realistic goals, by providing activities with a suitable level of challenge, by explicitly modelling the processes needed to reach goals and by providing the necessary frameworks and support to allow for successful outcomes.



- v) We can develop **empathy** by providing a positive role model, by talking about other people's points of view in stories, role play and real life and by encouraging children to notice how they themselves and others feel at different moments and in response to different situations.
- vi) We can help children **handle relationships** by being sensitive to friendship groupings, by training children to do pair and group work, moving from short, controlled tasks to ones where they have more autonomy and responsibility in a gradual way and by doing activities which explicitly promote things such as cooperation, listening and turn-taking.

Using stories and other activities

In addition to the above, stories are an easily available resource which can provide a wonderful vehicle for integrating language development with aspects of emotional intelligence in a natural, relevant and enjoyable way. There are many stories which allow children to develop language skills at the same time as explore their own ideas and feelings on issues which are important for their lives. Some of my own currently favourite stories which can be used to develop language skills in conjunction with fostering aspects of children's emotional intelligence are *Rod the Frog* to develop a positive sense of self-identity and self-esteem, *What is an elephant?*, an adaptation of a traditional Indian story, to develop empathy and interest in other cultures (both in Read & Soberon, 2000), the traditional story, *The Ugly Duckling*, to promote tolerance and kindness (see Read, forthcoming 2001) and *Something Else* (Cave & Riddell, 1994) to promote the value of friendship and respect for people who are different from yourself (see Read in Ellis & Brewster, forthcoming 2001).

There are also many individual activities which teachers can do to develop specific aspects of children's emotional intelligence. A range of these have been described by Hoffman & Bartkowitz (1999) and by de Andrés (in Arnold, 1999), with particular regard to developing children's self-esteem, as well as by Schilling (1996) with a focus on older, secondary school students. Two of my own personal favourite language activities which can also contribute to the development of children's emotional intelligence are as follows:

- 1 **Snap dragon:** Children follow instructions to make a traditional 'snap dragon' from a square sheet of paper. They colour the four outside squares different colours, write numbers 1-8 on the inside and write positive messages under these e.g. You're great! / You're wonderful!. Children then take turns to play with their snap dragons in pairs e.g.

Child A: (*holds out the snap dragon*) What's your favourite colour?

Child B: (*chooses one of the colours*) Red.

Child A: R-E-D (*spells the letters and open and closes the snap dragon three times*) What's your favourite number?

Child B: (*chooses one of the numbers*) Five!

Child A: (*opens and closes the snap dragon five times*) One... two... three... four... five (*then reads out the message under the number*) You're great!

As well as providing a framework for asking 'What's your favourite ...?' and practising numbers and colours, this activity encourages turn-taking, active listening and a desire to interact with others. Through being positive about others, children tend to see themselves in a positive light too, thus enhancing their self-esteem. Activities like this can also help to make children aware of how they feel when people say nice things to them and to promote care in the way they handle their own relationships.

- 2 **Group poem about feelings:** Divide the class into groups and either give each group, or let them choose, a starter line written on card e.g. *I feel happy / sad / angry / frightened when ...*. Give each child a strip of paper and get them to individually complete the sentence with something which is true for them. Once they are ready, children read the sentences on each other's strips of paper in their groups and order them on their desks to make a poem. At this stage, they can also edit, change or add to their sentences. They then think of a last line together using the word 'But ...' and write out the final version. An example of a poem written by a group of 11-year-old boys in one of my classes using this technique is as follows:

*I feel frightened when ...
A person shouts at me in a dark street
I go down the tunnel of terror
A lion wants to attack me
I see a thief robbing a bank
A scary film makes me shake
I have an exam
But really I am BRAVE.*

As well as enabling children to express their feelings, this activity involves working collaboratively and can be done at quite an elementary level since, individually, all the children are required to do is write one or two sentences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a vital area to address in our teaching and there are a range of things we can do to integrate the development of children's emotional intelligence with the development of English language skills. By paying attention to emotional intelligence, we help to give children the opportunity to blossom and flourish not only as language learners but also as people. We do this through the materials, activities and the methodology we use in class and, not least, through the way we are ourselves, for as Goleman says, '... how a teacher handles her class is in itself a model, a de facto lesson in emotional competence - or the lack thereof. Whenever a teacher responds to one student, twenty or thirty others learn a lesson' (1996, p.279).

Quite a thought to keep in mind next time you go into class!

And if you have any more thoughts on emotional intelligence and related issues, I look forward to hearing from you at c.read@arrakis.cs

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Integrating a foreign language project in Portuguese pre-schools

Sandie Jones Mourão

I work as a peripatetic language specialist, teaching in several pre-school institutions in central Portugal. Even when all the children in a pre-school group have English lessons, very little of their foreign language experience remains in their classroom to afford them the luxury of connecting it to their daily learning and development. I choose topics and themes which come from their world, and we play games and sing songs that little children in England sing and play, but I do not believe this is enough when we are working with children as young as four and five years old. Children need to be given the opportunity to engage in a FL, to play a game in the FL, to talk to their peers in the FL and to be surrounded by things which remind them of the learning experiences they have all had with the FL.

I began this project in September 1999 attempting to provide evidence that Portuguese pre-school teachers or *Educadores* could successfully take on the role of generalist foreign language teachers, by integrating a foreign language into their pre-school programme in a way a specialist outsider is unable to.

The Portuguese Education System

The Portuguese education system is made up of nine years of compulsory schooling, called "*Ensino Básico*", spanning from the age of 6 to 15 years old. This is divided into *1º ciclo* (6 to 10 years), *2º ciclo* (10 to 12 years), and *3º ciclo* (12 to 15 years). Pre-school education is non-statutory, but the state provide pre-school care for children aged 3 to 6 years, 1998 figures show that pre-school education reaches only 54% of the countries 5 & 6 year olds.

National Curriculum objectives for the *1º ciclo* include "*the learning of a first foreign language and the initiation of a second*". Pre-school education, however, has no official programme, but curriculum orientations for education in Portuguese pre-schools were published in 1997. Here it states that there is a "*possibility of sensitising the children to a foreign language*".

What is meant by sensitisation? I like the definition provided by Driscoll (1999: 20), who describes sensitisation programmes as facilitating a limited use of the foreign language and highlighting the motivational and attitudinal aspects of learning. Children's achievement is not measured against any linguistic objectives. A sensitisation programme also lays emphasis on encouraging a positive attitude towards other languages and cultures.

The project "Linguas Estrangeiras na Educação Pré-Escolar"

In September 1999 I began working with 12 *Educadores*, two who would work in French and ten in English. All these *Educadores* were interested in FLs, hence their enthusiasm in participating in such a project. Together they came up with the following objectives for the implementation of a foreign language in their pre-schools:

- To develop and increase motivation towards learning a foreign language;
- To develop a positive attitude towards other peoples and cultures by making the children familiar with another linguistic form of communication;
- To develop an awareness of different sounds and disperse any fears children may have of the unknown, enabling them to confront a different linguistic form with a sense of security and delight;
- To provide opportunities for the children to play with the foreign language, using an informal fun approach

Nine *Educadores* continued through to June 2000 with the project and all are including a FL in their educational project this year. A triumph! I shall be sharing only some of the results with you, highlighting some strategies, techniques and activities that have been especially successful.

Children's attitudes

The children were positively motivated towards the foreign language. Results give a very clear picture of how well the children took to the foreign language. Participation was excellent. In reflections, all *Educadores* noted that

children requested new words regularly, and some stated that parents related similar experiences, another show of their interest in the foreign language.

Several of the groups of children involved were heterogeneous in ages from 3 to 6 years old. The three-year olds were generally less participative, however, comments from the *Educadores* during our meetings, and in reflections, indicate in some cases that the three-year olds were quicker at picking up the new words and using them in context, even before the equivalent in the mother tongue.

"I have a little girl, who can say 'pink' but can't say 'cor da rosa'".
(Field notes from visit to a pre-school)

All *Educadores* described their children using the foreign language regularly during the day:

- Children greet each other in the foreign language
- Children use the colour words in the foreign language while colouring e.g. "Passa me o 'red'!" (Sic).
- Children sing together in the FL while they are colouring.
- Children compliment each other in the foreign language e.g. "very good!"
- Children give each other instructions in the FL e.g. "legs crossed!"

Not all the *Educadores* included FL culture in their activities. Those who did noted that the children were interested, and especially liked to compare the festive activities:

2.12.99 While we were out collecting moss for our nativity scene the children asked: "In England do they have nativity scenes?"

"Do they decorate a tree and what else do they do?"

"Do they have Christmas parties at school?" (Reflections translated from the Portuguese)

As a specialist EFL teacher, I would never have the opportunity to participate in these activities or partake of their fruits.

How did the *Educadores* organise their FL time?

I had suggested that the *Educadores* have a special time for the foreign language, giving the children the comfort and support of a routine. They went through a process of trial and error to discover the best time for both themselves and their children. Routine was an important factor as several mentioned it in their reflections and during our meetings.

Some *Educadores*, were able to work with the foreign language everyday, others only managed two or three times a week. A couple of *Educadores* are able to incorporate the foreign language more than just once a day. I was surprised at just how much time the children and the *Educadores* spent on the FL. They complained (happily) that the children enjoyed it so much that often the sessions devoted to the FL would run for up to an hour with the children voicing their disappointment when the session was over!

With so much FL in the day, several *Educadores* expressed concern about the reduced time that they had to work in Portuguese. This was especially the case in the state schools, where three hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon was not enough before the foreign language appeared. The *Educadores* were not concerned with the inability to work with content, because this could be done in the foreign language, but in the time taken away from the input in Portuguese.

Some techniques for integrating the foreign language

What appears to be emerging is the regularity with which all *Educadores* speak the foreign language with their children, often in child-initiated activities and situations. It has meant the children and the *Educador* work with the two languages in parallel. The common unifier is the children's interest and not a theme or a story.

1. Incidental language use

This is a technique, which is being used in Modern Foreign Language Projects in the UK. At the beginning of the project I encouraged the *Educadores* to use the foreign language to organise their children, and begin inserting the language into routine activities, called 'incidental FL use' (Rumley & Sharpe 2000: 7). Several *Educadores* were enthusiastic. These moments appear to have been most successful.

- Using morning routines like register taking, placing a child's personal emblem in the presence chart, saying its name and colour.

- Talking about the weather and the days of the week.
- Using an English song to indicate who should go and wash their hands for break.
- Asking the children to 'stand up', 'sit down', 'come here', and 'speak quietly' or lining up (in this case in French) "garçon, fille, garçon, fille..."

The constant use of the foreign language and the ease with which the *Educadores* were able to insert words meant that throughout the day the language was being recycled in all manners of contexts. This in itself is a form of integration.

2. Storytelling in the foreign language

The *Educadores* are more than willing to tell stories in the foreign language, using an activity that they would use in the mother tongue very naturally. *Educadores* translated Spot stories, only available in Portuguese, and a couple of traditional Portuguese stories, two of which appeared in CATS Summer 2000.

Other English stories were used. "Brown bear, brown bear what do you see?" (Carle & Martin 1995) was probably the most successful. Several *Educadores* made versions with the children who took them home to tell their parents.

The following extract, from my observation notes, shows how one *Educador* used the story once the children were familiar with it. The session was in English, and I have translated nothing.

Educador: Good afternoon children!

Children: Good afternoon (*Educador's name*)

Educador: Do you want to play with English?"

Children: Yes!

Educador: "Come here T... (4.10 yrs.)" (*Indicating for the child to sit on her lap*). What do you want to play? *The child chooses the story of the brown bear from the activities available and tells the story to his peers.*

T...: "Brown bear, brown bear what do you see? I see a red bird, looking at me! Red bird, red bird, what do you see? I see a ..."

While he is telling the story his peers quietly say the story with him, or watch calmly, if he makes a mistake they carefully correct him. When he's finished, he puts the book back, and the children clap.

Educador: Well done T! Let's see! (*Her name, her name*) what do you see? *Pointing emphatically to her eyes and looking around the circle.* I see (*child's name*), looking at me!

T...: (*Own name, own name*), what do you see? I see (*another child's name*), looking at me!

JP (5.5 yr.): (*Own name, own name*), what do you see? I see (*another child's name*), looking at me!

This goes around the circle, with even the three-year olds participating. Then another child is invited to sit on the Educador's knee.

Educador: D (3.5 yr.) Come here! Do you want to...

D: ... play with English!

Educador: Yes! *And D chooses another game and they play!*

(Field notes 15.2.00)

Other stories used successfully were:

- *Where's my Mummy?* (Hawkins & Hawkins 1993) Four *Educadores* used this story; making masks and encouraging the children to role play the story.
- *The frog family* (from Phillips 1993: 19). One *Educador* turned her foreign language corner into a mini lake and the children role-played the story repeatedly. The children then went on to make a book, and now it is in their library corner.

3. The foreign language corner

The final technique, is the setting up of a FL corner. A FL corner gives the children an opportunity to engage in "free play", in child-initiated activities as opposed to "directed play", which is more teacher directed. It was hoped that in these free play moments the children would be able to "play around" with the foreign language, to play independently of the teacher.

A FL corner needed many resources; a selection of FL games, visuals, books, cassettes and a cassette player, maybe some portable headphones, puppets which the children associate with the FL, images from a story they have been read in the FL ... the list was endless. The pre-school teachers who worked on a FL project became convinced of the appropriateness of such a corner and of its value in the pre-school. The children chose the corner regularly, and were able to play independently of their pre-school teacher using the FL.

The FL corner was not an easy thing to set up. The *Educadores* needed to produce a lot of materials turning it into a rich area full of flashcards, games, pictures, stories, puppets and masks. The walls were covered in posters, song sheets and children's drawings. It was considered a lot of extra work and some of the *Educadores* found it difficult providing resources for it to become a dynamic, stimulating space. However the constant presence of visual images, games and sounds which the children associated with the FL meant that at any moment of their day they could choose to do something in or with the FL.

Several *Educadores* emphasised the need to make sure the corner changed regularly. One teacher made the corner into a mini stage set. She began with a pretend pond so the children could play at frogs based on a story from Phillips (1992), "The frog family". Another set was a vegetable garden; here the children played with the story "The Enormous Potato", an adaptation of Tolstoy's "The Enormous Turnip". Later the children made a giant castle so they could play with an adaptation of "The selfish giant" by Oscar Wilde.

No matter how much hard work the corner created, the positive results far outweighed the difficulties. It was fascinating to observe the children's ability to use the FL freely with very little adult support. *Educadores* noted peer teaching at all levels. Children helping each other to remember key words or phrases, to pronounce words properly and even to get words in the right order. The FL corner successfully enabled the pre-school children to engage in the FL.

Setting up a play area for the FL could be the solution many teachers have been looking for. Using the corner to provide free play in the FL not only offers children the opportunity to have fun with the language, try it out, gain confidence and help peers, but also very importantly, the corner naturally integrates the FL into the children's everyday school world.

Conclusions

The number of projects involving FLs and children as young as 5 and 6 years are on the increase throughout Europe. If countries continue to focus on specialist FL teachers in the learning environment then these projects will never be as appropriate as they ought to be. Children need to be given opportunities to connect their learning to all they are involved in at home and at school. Who better than to do this than their generalist classroom teacher? The generalist teacher knows the children, knows where they are in their learning curve, how to work with them on good days and bad days and most of all is able to use any situation at any time of the day to include the FL.

The *Educadores* who were able to remain in my project have emphasised their pleasure in seeing and hearing their children use the foreign language. Several were not all together convinced that this kind of project would have positive results. They have been the most enthusiastic of all the participating teachers.

"I think it was very important, enriching for me and the children. I'm happy because I think they have benefited from a richer personal experience." (Extract from interview)

This project though small has shown that generalist teachers are very capable of working with foreign languages and motivating their children to new sounds and new cultures.

I have shared only a tiny proportion of some very exciting results. This study was the basis for a dissertation to complete my Masters in Education at the University of Manchester (Mourão 2000).

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Teaching science in the EFL classroom: how to import curricular contents into language lessons

John Clegg

In the ELT world we are used, not unnaturally, to thinking about language teaching. Our conventional view of the English language teacher, is of someone who teaches English, uses English language textbooks, ministers mainly to the English language needs of students, receives training in how to teach English language, and so on. We do not often think of them as doing all the other things which teachers have to do in school, such as helping learners develop socially and emotionally, confronting them when they behave badly, supporting them when they are miserable. Neither do we spend much time on teachers' whole-school experience, such as collaborating with colleagues, negotiating with parents, dealing with senior management or coping with inspectors. In particular, it is uncommon for EFL teachers to be asked to think about language as the chief means by which school learning in general takes place. In this article I will discuss the teaching and learning of thinking skills and subject-matter knowledge as well as language.

Foreign language teachers can teach more than just language. Primary teachers, more than secondary teachers, tend to know that. Many Primary EFL courses use a partially theme-based curriculum which often kicks in more explicitly after, say, two years of language-learning. Some also include cognitive skills in the syllabus. Training courses for primary teachers aim to teach teachers to devise lessons based on topics and tasks, as well as on language objectives. In what follows I will outline a lesson in which a teacher in the upper primary school imports science learning into the language teaching classroom. I will focus especially on the pedagogical skills which this kind of teaching requires of the teacher and which he/she may use less frequently in conventional primary EFL work. What I would like to show is that, as long as certain principles of content-based FL teaching are observed, it would not be difficult to teach this lesson in the EFL classroom.

1 A lesson

I will take, as an example, a lesson in primary science which I base on a British primary science textbook (Harrison and Moorcroft 1996). The learners are 10 year-olds. They are going to learn, by carrying out simple experiments, that temperature is a measure of how hot or cold things are, what melting is and that it happens at different temperatures for different materials. They will establish the melting point of several substances: margarine, cheese, chocolate, butter, ice and a candle. They will do this by putting each substance in a plastic bag and lowering it into water at different temperatures: cold, cool, warm, hot and boiling. Table 1 shows an analysis of the lesson. Columns 1 and 2 outline the activities which the teacher and the learners will do; column 3 shows the forms of interaction which they will adopt in doing the activities.

The main activities of the lesson are as follows. The teacher introduces the concept of melting and the aim of the lesson which is to find the melting points of different substances. She shows the children the substances which they will test. She then gets them to predict the melting points: she introduces the idea of guessing in the whole class context and then gets the children to predict in groups and to enter their guesses in the chart (table 2). She monitors and helps during groupwork. She then introduces, again in front of the whole class, the apparatus they will need and gives instructions as to what they will do. She also demonstrates how they will carry out their experiment, and she shows them how to

Table 1: Taking account of language and learning in lesson-planning: A science lesson

Stage	Teacher	Students	Inter-action	Cognitive demands	Language demands	Language support (BB = board)
1	Introduces topic, aim and substances: question and answer	Respond	Whole-class	Thinking skills: describing objectives, describing substances. Concepts: substances, melting	Listening (+speaking) Vocabulary	Vocabulary: realia, vocabulary on BB
2	Gets learners to predict melting points	Predict	Whole-class	Thinking skills: predicting Concepts: temperatures	Listening (+speaking) Grammar	Predicting: chart 1 (see table 2); BB prompts or substitution table (see table 3)
3	Monitors and helps	Fill in the prediction chart	Group-work	Thinking skills: predicting Concepts as above	Speaking Vocabulary Grammar	Talk in groups: realia, vocabulary lists on BB, use of L1, chart, BB prompts, or substitution table
4	Introduces vocabulary for apparatus. Gives instructions Demonstrates	Listen and observe	Whole-class	Thinking skills: describing objects and processes, giving instructions, demonstrating. Concepts: apparatus; sequence of activities	Listening Vocabulary	Vocabulary: realia, lists on BB, apparatus, instructions on BB, chart, demonstration
5	Monitors and helps	Do the activity Record results in the results chart Check them against their predictions	Group-work	Thinking skills: giving instructions (to each other), describing processes and results, comparing results with predictions Concepts as above	Speaking Grammar Vocabulary	Talk in groups: pictures, realia, word lists on BB, use of L1, chart, BB prompts, or substitution table
6	Orchestrates report-back	Report back on their groupwork	Whole-class	Thinking skills: reporting processes and results, comparing results with predictions, drawing conclusions Concepts as above	Listening Speaking Grammar Vocabulary	Oral report: filled-in charts, BB prompts or substitution table (see table 3)
7	Introduces writing task Monitors and helps (Or: for homework)	Write	Individual work	Thinking skills: reporting objectives, materials, processes, results, conclusions Concepts as above	Writing Grammar Vocabulary Discourse	Written report: all BB work, all book contents, all charts, writing frame (see table 3)

From Harrison and Moorcroft (1996)

enter their results in the chart. When it comes to using hot and boiling water, she will do the experiments herself, while the children watch. The children carry out the experiments, observe and record their results, and compare them with their predictions. The teacher monitors and helps. When they have finished, she calls them back to the plenary classroom, gets them to report what they did, and to draw conclusions from their results about the melting point of different materials, which she puts on a large version of the chart on the board. Finally she asks them to write a brief report of their experiment and its results.

2 Analysing the cognitive demands of the lesson

When a language teacher teaches curricular subject-matter, she needs to take extra care over lesson-planning: in particular she needs to think about cognitive skills and curricular concepts, as well as language. So the first thing she needs to do is to establish what cognitive skills her learners will be engaging in when they perform the learning activities in this lesson (or, since it may take time, this sequence of lessons).

Table 2: a chart for predicting and recording results

Material	will melt in: (x or √)/melted in: (x or √)				
	cold water	cool water	warm water	hot water	boiling water
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

The children will use 2 versions of the chart: one for predicting (*will melt in*) and one for actual results (*melted in*).

Columns 4, 5 and 6 of table 1 show the cognitive and linguistic demands which these activities make on the learners and the kinds of support which the teacher might give them in meeting these demands. By 'cognitive demands' I mean the cognitive skills which the activities require the learners to perform; these are listed in column 4. For example, the learners have to know the key *concepts* (especially in stages 1 and 4) involved in the lesson (e.g. objects, degrees of heat, apparatus, the concept of melting etc). They will also have to use certain *thinking skills* to handle these concepts in different ways (e.g. describing, predicting, comparing, concluding from data etc). The analysis of these cognitive processes is important. Until the teacher has asked herself what the learners will do, cognitively, in the lesson, she cannot help them with the language which they will need to do it. And to provide this language support, she also has to know, of course, what simple forms of words we use when we do this kind of thinking (e.g. predicting: *I think the butter will melt in warm water*; reporting: *it melted in warm water*, etc).

3 Analysing the language demands of the lesson

Once the teacher can see what the learners will do in cognitive terms, she can predict the language they will need to use and chooses which items she will need to help them with, as in table 1 column 5. She describes these aims in the terms in which language teachers are used to using. The learners will, for instance, use *language skills*. For example, in the plenary classroom they will listen a lot and speak

less; in groups they will speak more; and at the end of the lesson (or for homework) they will write. They will also use certain *functions* and the key phrases which express these (e.g. predicting, comparing, reporting etc). Because these are identical cognitive processes, I have listed them in table 1 in column 4. In addition the children will use certain items of *vocabulary* (to describe concepts such as substances to be melted, apparatus, the concept of melting, etc). They will also need to use certain items of *grammar* (e.g. *I think... will...* for predicting; *...melted in hot water...* for reporting, etc). Finally, they will need to use features of written *discourse* (e.g. *first, then, next, finally* etc) for expressing sequence in their reports.

This analysis of cognitive and language demands may sound complex, but it is in fact what a language teacher does in a conventional language lesson, applied here to the processes of learning subject-matter knowledge at school. A language teacher who is experienced in bringing subject-matter learning into the language classroom learns to do this kind of planning routinely in a matter of moments, as experienced language teachers conventionally do in FL lessons. To analyse the cognitive and linguistic demands of a lesson is, however, is one of the key abilities which differentiates what happens in content-based language learning from conventional language-learning, and a language teacher who wants to work in this way will need to acquire it.

4 Providing language support

Now she knows the language demands of the lesson, the teacher can see at which points the learners will need language support. With this groups of 10 year olds who may have been leaning English for two or three years, she may feel that she will need to help them with the key vocabulary of the lesson, with key functions such as predicting and reporting, with the grammar of reporting (i.e. past simple tense) and with the use of connectors in their written reports. How she might do this is outlined in table 1, column 6 and exemplified in table 3. She will use very simple support strategies from the repertoire of the average language teacher. She supports:

- key concepts: by putting lists of vocabulary items on the board as she introduces them, and by using visuals such as the items in the classroom
- thinking processes: (such as predicting, reporting etc), by the charts (table 2) which guide the learners' thinking; and also by supplying suitable phrases on the board or substitution tables (see table 3).
- oral work: by prompts or substitution tables on the board, visuals, the charts and realia; also by allowing the learners to work (especially in groups) partly in their L1
- listening (especially to instructions) by using visuals, items in the classroom and demonstration
- writing by means of all board work, all visuals, the charts, and especially a writing frame (see table 3).

5 What this requires of the EFL teacher

Teaching subject contents in the EFL classroom in the way I have described does not require foreign language teachers to learn many new skills, but it does mean that they will alter their pedagogy in some specific respects. These are the most important changes which they will need to contemplate:

- be interested in teaching subject knowledge
- resist feeling daunted by not being a subject specialist (cooperate with an informed colleague)
- shift the language emphasis somewhat away from controlled input and practice and towards providing support for the language demands of lessons

Table 3: Language support for a science lesson

Stage 2: Helping learners with predicting

Either: Prompt on the board: E.g.: *I think ... will melt in ... water*

Or: Substitution table, as follows:

I think the	butter Flora margarine Clover margarine chocolate cheese candle ice	will melt	in	cold water cool water warm water hot water boiling water
				a fridge
			at	room temperature

Stage 6: Helping learners with reporting

Either: Prompt on the board: E.g.: *The ... melted in ... water*

Or: Substitution table as follows:

The	butter Flora margarine Clover margarine chocolate cheese candle ice	melted in	cold cool warm hot boiling	water
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Stage 7: Helping learners with describing the experiment

Use a writing frame, e.g.:

We wanted to find out at what temperature different things melt

We used the following apparatus:

Firstly we

Then we

After that we

Finally we

We thought the ... would melt in ... water; but it melted in ...

We thought the ... would melt in ... water; and we were right.

We learned that melting happens at different temperatures for different materials.

- include some cognitive/content objectives in syllabus and lesson planning
- plan some lessons or longer units of work around cognitive/content as well as language objectives
- analyse the cognitive and language demands of these lessons
- where necessary, provide language support for the learners in meeting these demands
- emphasise forms of support such as visuals (pictures, realia, charts, diagrams, etc), key vocabulary and phrases (e.g. for marking language functions), support for writing (e.g. writing frames)
- be flexible about the use of L1, especially in monolingual groupwork

Reference

Harrison, P. and C. Moorcroft. 1996. *Science in Action Book 3*. pp 40-41. Dunstable: Folens

John Clegg is an education consultant based in London. He works mainly with teachers who teach the primary and secondary curriculum through the medium of English as a second language in bilingual schools in Europe, English-medium schools in Africa and multicultural schools in the UK.

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BOOK REVIEW

CHILDREN LEARNING ENGLISH by Jayne Moon
Macmillan Heinemann ELT, 2000, ISBN 0-435-24096-X

This review by Maya Menon was first published on the ELTeCS electronic lists, the network of ELT professionals.

They say you shouldn't judge a book by its cover. Perhaps, but isn't it wonderful if a book cover could encapsulate graphically what lies in the pages between? That is just what the cover of *Children Learning English* by Jayne Moon achieves. Published by Macmillan Heinemann English Language Teaching for The Teacher Development Series edited by Adrian Underhill, the purple and blue cover bearing a drawing of an eight year old smiling person is bound to awaken the interest of anyone teaching children, English or any other subject. Why? Because it looks cheerful and student-centred and has the name TEACHER emblazoned across the drawing. But here is a glimpse of what is inside.

I read *Children Learning English* (CLE) not merely to review it. I also read it with the self-serving intent of gaining fresh insights to the domain of teacher development. Written by Jayne Moon, a TESOL expert with first-hand teaching and training experience in over 14 countries across the globe, *Children Learning English* is an excellent sourcebook of classroom and teaching-learning strategies for English Language teachers of learners ranging from six years to 12, perhaps even older. While the 12 chapters of the book can be read and worked through in a sequential manner, it is also possible for teachers to zero in on individual chapters that have current classroom utility.

The first three chapters shed light on children and their special characteristics, how they think and learn and practical strategies for responding to their differing needs. The remaining nine chapters focus on teaching English and the variety of roles the teacher could play. One chapter examines the positive and caring classroom conditions required for effective language learning and learning through interaction amongst peers in pairs or in groups. Another chapter explores the purpose of 'talk' - both teacher talk and pupil talk, in acquiring fluency in the language. Yet another looks at ways of supporting children's language learning. Chapter 7 considers teachers creating their own materials for the classroom and suggests a step-by-step method for evaluating the activities pupils do using these materials. Chapter 8 urges teachers to reflect on the why and how of their lesson planning. It also takes a teacher through the content (what to teach) and organization (lesson procedures) of effective lesson plans. The next chapter examines language learning using a cross-curricular approach, weaving in elements of Math, Art, and Science into the teaching of English. Chapter 10 involves children in the making and using of resources. This should really have been placed immediately after the discussion in Chapter 7 on teachers creating their own materials. That would have ensured a natural sequence. Chapter 11 provides useful strategies to carry out formative (ongoing) assessments and the final chapter focuses on ways to become successful learners.

All the chapters are well organized beginning with an introduction to the chapter and ending with a summary of what the chapter dealt with. They emphasise the social aspect of language learning, where learning is mutually constructed by the teacher and the students through dialogue. The author has incorporated reflective tasks and Action Plans for teachers to do interspersed with her comments on the tasks. Apt illustrations, tables and checklists liven up each chapter. There are frequent cross-references that assist users of the book to look up other chapters dealing with related topics.

I found CLE an essential guidebook for teachers and teacher educators for 3 reasons:

- It helps us understand a little better the abilities and attitudes children bring to the classroom.
- It helps teachers to think about how they can make use of this improved understanding of children's abilities and attitudes to adopt constructivist pedagogies in the teaching of English as a foreign language or a second language.
- It encourages teachers to develop themselves in simple practical ways. To quote author, Jayne Moon, "I want to help you to examine your own teaching and beliefs.... Change can only take place if we become aware of the assumptions and beliefs which underpin our practice"

In the epilogue, appropriately titled *Looking Forwards*, the author urges all language teachers to break the 'Cycle of Standing Still', become more aware of their own professional growth and move forwards. I end echoing Jayne Moon's words and hope that all readers and users of *Children Learning English* will feel inspired and excited by their own teaching and will continue to develop and grow as teachers.

Report on IATEFL SIGs / British Council Symposium The British Council School, Madrid 7 – 9 September 2000.

The Special Interest Group Symposium, held every two years, is a joint effort of all 14 of IATEFL's Special Interest Groups. The event is designed to be a showcase of the latest in ELT with each SIG offering a series of talks, presentations, workshops and panels from a range of speakers.

Committee member Sandie Mourão of Portugal was attending her first Symposium and was presenting for the first time. Here is her personal response to the Symposium, first published on the Young Learners SIG discussion list in September 2000:

"The opening plenary was by Peter Medges, who set us all thinking about humour in EFL and the lack of it in today's course books. His message, amongst all the one liners and good old jokes was that a teacher should not forget that learning is fun and both students and teachers will and should naturally turn to humour in their lessons. Make the most of it!

Next day! Herbert Puchta first thing in the morning. Sound advice based on Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. He is a super presenter and kept us all spellbound although I was familiar with what he was talking about. Carol Read spoke about Emotional Intelligence using Daniel Goleman's books as a reference. I had read nothing about this, so was captivated and especially enjoyed the story she told about Rod the frog who didn't like being green 'it's HORRIBLE...!'

I was on after Carol, and I talked 'enthusiastically' about the FL project I am involved in with Portuguese pre-school teachers and some of the techniques that have evolved, including a FL corner. I was especially happy that at the end of the talk several teachers were keen to chat and share experiences. Things are happening very fast in Spain and several teachers involved in EFL projects within the state system were present at the symposium sharing their problems and triumphs. Isolation seems to be one of the big problems and training the non-native primary teachers was another of the areas we talked about over the couple of days.

An injection of ideas came next, from Rebecca Jones. How to focus on the children and what they can do to provide their own activity resources saving teachers precious time.

After lunch, Tina Kirk gave a really exciting Drama and EFL session. Lots of super ideas, including forming words and letters with our bodies, enacting scenes and using the characters to revise occupation vocab, present continuous. We all enjoyed the get-up-and-do-it of that session!

Later John Clegg gave us a very interesting talk on language learning across the curriculum. He demonstrated very clearly how we can use FLs in all curriculum areas, and especially focussed on the use of substitution tables and writing frames, which I found fascinating.

That was the YL track. Next day, I caught Luke Prodromou's amazing presentation called 'transforming teachers'. He looked at the labels teachers are given: 'nose wiper, counselor, manager' etc and linked it all beautifully with metaphors and how we can transform our teaching. We listened to classical music and looked at paintings, heard poems and listened to prose... all wonderfully linked and beautifully flowing, leaving me wishing he had been my teacher trainer. A really fabulous presentation.

Other talks included Karl Kaliski on Task Based Learning and its use in teacher training courses for the CELTA courses. Some really interesting points. Finally a presentation on training EFL teachers in Poland by a PhD student, Sylwia Wisniewska. Again fascinating stuff. I came out of the room wishing I had heard more from other countries about how teachers are trained and the problems that are faced. From what I heard Sylwia say it seems many of the problems are shared.

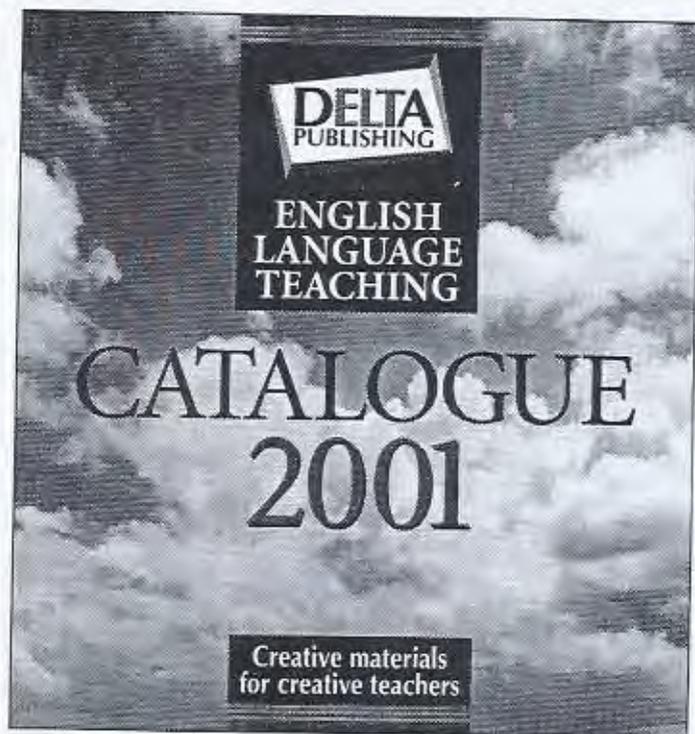
The closing plenary was given by David Crystal and we all sat spellbound for an hour while he talked about the changing face of the English language. He was appropriately introduced as being wise and able to use different voices. He was certainly very wise and thrilled us all with anecdotes and left us with thoughts of how we should care for the world's minority languages in the 21st century.

That was the Sig Symposium. Most talks were 50 minutes and left little time to discuss what had been said which was a great pity, we were all so packed with things to see and listen to that there was little time to get together between sessions. However I was pleased I'd attended! I am organising a YL conference here in Portugal in 2001 and I took lots of mental notes of what to do and not do!"

Thanks Sandie for that excellent and enthusiastic summary. A model for others to follow. For me, the Madrid Symposium came at the end of a long summer completely absorbed in the task of running a summer school for children in the Scottish Highlands. So Madrid came as a complete change of scene and, to be honest, a rest. Madrid I found beautiful, vibrant and a little dangerous. A heady mix. After the Symposium I found a work by Mark Rothko ('Green on Maroon') in the amazing Thyssen Gallery. I could have stood in front of it all day. And for me the conference helped to bring together strands of thought from all sorts of areas which feel they'll add up to something significant.. I suppose that's what makes conferences so worthwhile: it's not just the content of the event itself but the people we meet, the places we see, the challenge to think and feel in new ways..

See you in Brighton!

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NEWS FROM THE NET 5:

Story Telling

This 'News from the Net' follows the theme of the previous newsletter by looking at story-telling related sites and pages on the Internet.

Some of the web addresses are quite long: if you prefer to follow the links directly please visit www.countryschool.com/ylstories.htm where you can find an on-line copy.

Jumping-off points:

http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/comatt/childlit.html

Children's and Adolescent Literature Resources from the wonderful ERIC clearinghouse.

<http://www.educ.ucalgary.ca/litindex/>

Doucette Index – k12 literature lesson ideas for children. Tick the 'show websites' box and leave the title/author boxes blank to access lots of stories and accompanying classroom activities.

<http://www.webring.org/cgi-bin/webring?index&ring=fairytales>

Ring of Fairy tales, Folk tales and Mythology lists about 140 different sites related to these themes.

<http://www.tiac.net/users/papajoe/memindex2.htm>

The Storytelling Ring lists many more resources, organizations, events and the tellers themselves

Selected sites:

<http://www.seanet.com/~eldrbarry/>

Eldrbarry's Story Telling page includes The Art of Storytelling: getting started, telling techniques, etc. Includes several 'raven' tales – native American tales of the Pacific North West coast – for you to take into your classroom.

<http://www.mtsu.edu/~kgregg/dmir/03/0303.html>

Good Story Telling offers advice on the characteristics of a good story and straightforward advice about storytelling in bullet point form.

<http://www.realbooks.co.uk/>

The Real Books web site is dedicated to the promotion of the use of real books – books written for native English speakers – in English Language teaching. Advice on choosing real books for beginners and how to use real books. Real Book News is a biannual publication designed for adults working with young learners of English. It can be downloaded from the site.

<http://www.storyarts.org/>

Story Arts Online: lesson plans and activities, story library and a monthly newsletter.

<http://www.caringkids.com/main.html>

Caring Kids: contemporary realistic fiction and fantasy for children aged 8-12. Set mainly in the Middle East the stories aim to raise children's awareness about social issues, instilling in them the idea that individuals can make a difference and nurturing emotional intelligence.

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/cgi-bin/toccer?id=AesFabl&tag=public&images=images/modeng&data=/lv1/Archive/cn g-parsed&part=0>

Aesop's Fables: electronic text of the famous moral tales from the Ass and the Grasshopper to the Weasel and the Mice.

<http://www.candlelightstories.com/KidsFlash.asp>

Attractive commercial site: the 'Storybooks' link is particularly resource-full.

<http://www.write4kids.com/>

The Children's Writing Resource Centre is about creating writing for children. It includes a free library of 'how to' information for new and experienced children's writers, with a free ezine: 'The Children's Writing Update'

<http://www.darkgoddess.com/fairy/>

Fairytales, Origin and Evolution is a site for those who'd like to go beyond sanitised (Hollywood?) versions of fairy tales to their real roots. The site examines the origins of literary fairy tales, who wrote them, who was supposed to read them; how they have changed and evolved over the years.

<http://www2.h-net.msu.edu/~nilas/seasons/>

Stories for the Seasons offers seasonal nature stories with a related bibliography for story tellers, teachers or readers who are seeking stories and legends about animals, plants and the land itself.

<http://www.beaumont-publishing.com/efl/chainstories.htm>

Chain Stories: ask your students to start a new story or continue one of the existing ones.

<http://www.ozemail.com.au/~reed/global/mythstor.html>

Animal legends, creation stories, the environment.

<http://www.carolhurst.com/titles/featuredtitles.html>

Dozens of children's books reviewed, with suggestions for accompanying activities.

<http://members.nbci.com/darsie/tales/index.html>

Tales of Wonder: folk and fairy tales from around the world.

http://www.geocities.com/frankie_meehan/

Frankie's ESL Worksheets: activities for grades 6-10 ESL classes (Roald Dahl stories, Greek myths, The Pearl, Rice Without Rain, etc.) and grades 8-11 International Baccalaureate classes (The Great Gatsby, I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, etc). Thank you Frankie!

http://www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/teaching_techniques/childlit_socskills.html

Friendship and Stories: article on using children's literature to teach friendship skills to children with learning difficulties, with suggested texts and a sample lesson.

<http://www.ongoing-ales.com/SERIALS/oldtime/>

Texts of fairy tales, poetry and children's story books.

<http://www.magickeys.com/books/index.html#books>

Children's storybooks online: beautifully illustrated books for young and older children to read online.

<http://www.afroam.org/children/myths/wisdom/page1.html>

Myths and Fables from Around the World: another collection of online illustrated stories.

<http://www.mamalisa.com/world/puerto.html>

"Rice pudding, I want to marry a Mexican who knows how to sing." If you love the ambiguity of that wonderful sentence then visit Mama Lisa's world of children's songs and rhymes from around the world. See also her book recommendations at <http://www.mamalisa.com/books/>.

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/Rhymes.html>

Collection of illustrated rhymes for very young learners, with crafts, printouts and suggestions for use in lessons.

<http://www.eduplace.com/tview/index.html>

TeacherViews: Teacher-submitted reviews and accompanying activities on a host of children's books, grades 1-8

[gopher://ftp.std.com/11/obi/book/Fairy_Tales/Grimm](http://ftp.std.com/11/obi/book/Fairy_Tales/Grimm)

Text of brothers Grimm tales, from the Adventures of Aladdin right through to The Wolf and Seven Kids (small goats, not children).

<http://www.macscouter.com/Stories/>

Scouting stories suitable for telling round the camp fire: Indian stories, Ghost Stories, Humorous Stories, Western Stories, Stories with a Moral and some Story telling tips.

<http://ylsig.listbot.com>

Finally don't forget our own discussion list and archives where many stories for use in the classroom have been - and I hope will continue to be - swapped and discussed.

To those of you who have been eagerly awaiting the promised article on student publishing on the Internet, my apologies: a busier than expected summer schedule intervened and I am now working on this for the next issue. If any of you have anecdotes or advice in this area please get in contact.

Thanks also to Beatriz Lupiano in Argentina. By the time this newsletter is printed I hope to have updated the list of web resources at <http://www.countryschool.com/ylresources.thm> and re-organised them along the lines she has suggested. Sorry it's taken so long, Beatriz, and thanks for your patience!

Best wishes

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Christopher Etchells is Director of The English Country School. He is Joint Co-ordinator of The Young Learners SIG with particular responsibility for the SIG web site at <http://www.countryschool.com/younglearners.htm>

Next issue: creating web pages with students