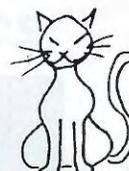


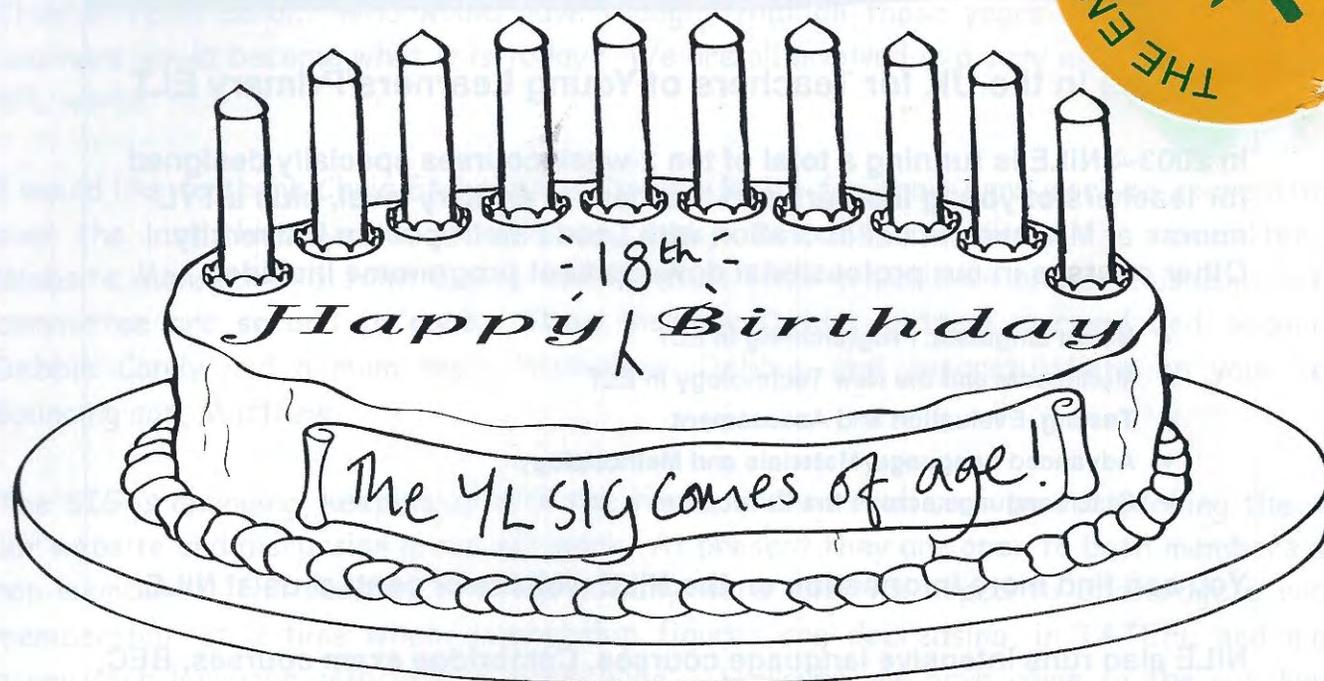
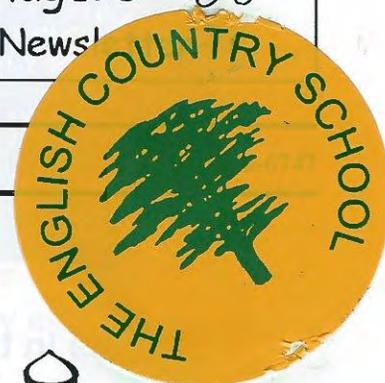
CATS



Children and Teenagers
The Young Learners SIG News

ISSUE 1/03

SPRING 2003



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Letter from the Joint Coordinators

Dear YL SIG Members,

It is with great pleasure that I take on the role of joint coordinator with Andy Jackson and welcome you all to this special birthday issue of CATS. I remember when Carol first came up with the idea of collecting contributions from people who have played a role in making the YL SIG what it is today, we were all delighted. I do however know it has been lots of hard work, but Carol is to be congratulated for providing such a super edition: THANK YOU, Carol. Who would have thought that all those years ago teaching Young Learners would become what it is today? We are all involved in a very exciting part of the EFL world.

I would like to thank Chris Etchells and Debbie Smith for their hard work as coordinators over the last three years; we are very lucky that they remain on the committee as Website Manager and Joint Events Coordinator. Their experience and enthusiasm on the committee are second to none. News includes Debbie getting married and becoming Debbie Candy and a mum too! Well done, Debbie, and congratulations on your very bouncing son, Matthew.

The SIG is changing, keeping up with the times, and we shall soon be remodelling the way our website and discussion group will work. At present they are open to both members and non-members. The reasons for this initially were that we hoped to encourage a wider membership, at a time when membership figures are decreasing, in IATEFL and many other such language associations world wide. However, we have come to the conclusion that the website offers a valuable resource to members, and anyone wishing to benefit from this should be encouraged to join the Association, so we are in the process of turning some sections of the website (including electronic copies of Newsletters and our Resources Index) into a members-only domain. The discussion group, for now, remains public to act as a shop window for the benefits of being a member.

I, for one, am very excited about this change. Please read the contribution from Chris Etchells in this edition, as he is responsible for the huge task of setting this up. A big thanks, Chris, for doing this, and hopefully by the end of this year, when you read the next newsletter, everything will be up and running!

Another dynamic plan for the SIG is the start of a bi-annual YL conference. We are very excited about this project, which we hope will start in 2005, therefore alternating with the general SIG symposium. The plan is to include events in countries that have a lower income and rarely get included in the events circuit, often because conference fees have to be so low that conferences do not generate an income. Our events coordinators, Debbie Candy and Gordon Lewis, are hoping that, with the support of local language teaching associations and the Wider Membership Scheme, we can set this up and at least break

even, providing an exciting event in a country whose teachers rarely get this kind of opportunity. We are looking for countries to hold future events in 2005 and 2007 so, if you are reading this and think your country would be suitable for such an event, do get in touch with us. You can contact me Nettlehouse@mail.telepac.pt or Debbie Candy debbie.smith@mistral.co.uk. In fact, if you are interested in working with the SIG and setting up a conference, no matter where you are in the world, we would love to hear from you!

Before I finish, I would like to mention a new addition to our SIG committee: Wendy Arnold, from Hong Kong. Wendy recently volunteered to take up the role of Discussion List Moderator, when Beatriz Lupiano sadly stopped doing this. As many of you will be aware, Wendy has launched herself wholeheartedly into the job and is very busy getting people to participate! A great big thank you to Wendy for standing in so happily and also for agreeing to be part of the committee. We are all sure she has lots to contribute and having someone based in Asia is a first for the SIG.

We are an active lot! I would also like to thank those committee members I have not yet mentioned: Andy Jackson, who is not only Joint Co-ordinator, but the Finance and Membership Officer too, and Eleanor Watts, who jointly edits our CATS newsletters, taking turns to do this with Carol. I feel very proud to be part of this group of hard-working professionals. We are all very normal people, who believe strongly in working to keep the SIG going. With your support as members I hope we will take the SIG into an exciting future of teaching YLs.

With best wishes,

Sandie Mourão

Are you a member of IATEFL?

Don't miss the free IATEFL publication

Storytelling in ELT

Edited by Amos Paran and Eleanor Watts

Coming soon!

A wealth of stories and teaching ideas for
very young learners to adults

Editorial

Carol Read

Happy Birthday to the Young Learner SIG! It has been an enormous pleasure as well as an honour for me to edit this special 18th birthday issue of **CATS**. I've also found out quite a few things about the development and history of the SIG, mainly thanks to the active help of **Opal Dunn** and **Leonora Fröhlich-Ward**.

I've learnt, for example, that the SIG was actually founded in 1985, rather than in 1986, as we had previously thought and put on the *About the SIG* page in the Newsletter for years! I've learnt that, as a part of the ELT profession in the context of IATEFL, young learner practitioners owe a huge debt of gratitude to the late **Peter Strevens**, Chairman of IATEFL from 1985-1987, who was one of the first people within the organisation to acknowledge the importance of teaching foreign languages to children and recognise our branch of the profession's differing characteristics and needs (see **Opal Dunn's Tribute to Peter Strevens** on the next page). I've also learnt of the dedicated efforts of a wide range of committed professionals - too many to begin to name individually here - in giving up their time over the years to the creation of a Young Learner Special Interest Group within IATEFL, which has flourished and blossomed into what it is today. The spirit of that commitment can easily be sensed in the Editorial by **Leonora Fröhlich-Ward**, published in the first ever newsletter in May 1987 and reproduced on page 5.

The articles in this Birthday Issue of the newsletter are mainly a collection of contributions from people who have been actively involved with YL SIG, in one capacity or another, both in the past and in the present. **Andrew Wright** offers us a fascinating perspective on and insights into young learner teaching through an account of his own personal history of teaching young learners over the last forty years. This is followed by a detailed and absorbing description of **Leonora Fröhlich-Ward's** inspired work with young learners in Germany and a lively account of **Opal Dunn's** early involvement and pioneering work in fostering the use of 'real' books in the language teaching classroom, something to which she is still passionately committed today.

In the next article, **Carolyn Graham**, our 'guest contributor' from the other side of the Atlantic, shares with us some of her magic and secrets for inventing jazz chants. In my view, Carolyn is one of the people who has been most influential in the way young learner teaching materials have developed over the last twenty years, and so it feels very special to be able to include an article from her in this Birthday Issue.

Melanie Williams takes a refreshingly original angle in her use of story and metaphor to convey some invaluable messages about assessment. This is followed by some amusing and cautionary advice on how to run conferences and how to be a participant by **Wendy Superfine** and **Shelagh Rixon**. Finally, **Andy Jackson** throws novel light on an old friend by explaining how to make gap-fill texts from the Internet.

In the rest of the newsletter, **Chris Etchells** gives advice on how to create an Internet magazine with students, **Debbie Candy** reviews a new storytelling handbook and **Gordon Lewis** reports on the highly successful YL SIG conference in Germany last year. Finally, don't miss the **CATS** Birthday Competition on page 33!

My warmest thanks to all the contributors and to all the supporters of the SIG. Enjoy this issue - and our new maturity now that we have come of age!

All the best,
Carol

A Tribute to Peter Strevens Chairman IATEFL 1985-1987

Opal Dunn

In the 1970s and early 1980s, young learners were the Cinderellas of learning English as a Foreign Language. There were no young learner global training courses for trainers and teachers, and most teaching was *ad hoc* based on a teacher's own professional training. Although a few teachers had been trained in the former UK teacher training colleges and understood child development and learning needs, they had not been trained in EFL. For the most part, teachers were Foreign Language graduates trained to teach languages based on the study of grammatical structure in secondary schools.

Bill Lee, founder and first Chairman of IATEFL, who had taught young learners himself and written one of the first young learner coursebooks, had been actively recruiting teachers of young learners into IATEFL. At the IATEFL Conferences in London in 1983 and in the Netherlands in 1984, participants working with young learners began to express dissatisfaction that the Conference programme was not relevant to their needs. However, it was not until the 19th IATEFL Conference in 1985, at the Metropole Hotel, Brighton that steps were taken to start a special group for young learner professionals.

Peter Strevens was by then Chairman of IATEFL having been previously Professor of Applied Linguistics and Director of the renowned Languages Centre at the then new University of Essex. In this capacity, he had been invited to lecture overseas by the British Council and was thus familiar with the world EFL scene. I had met him in Tokyo in the late 1970s and, at that time, discussed young learner needs and my work with young learners in Japan as well as my YL methodology books (*Beginning English with Young children* (1983) and *Developing English with Young Learners* (1984) in the Macmillan Essential Language Teaching series, edited by Roger Flavell).

In 1985, at the 19th IATEFL Conference in Brighton, I decided to approach Peter Strevens and discuss the possibility of forming a young learner group within IATEFL. Peter quickly understood the position and was willing to consider the proposal.

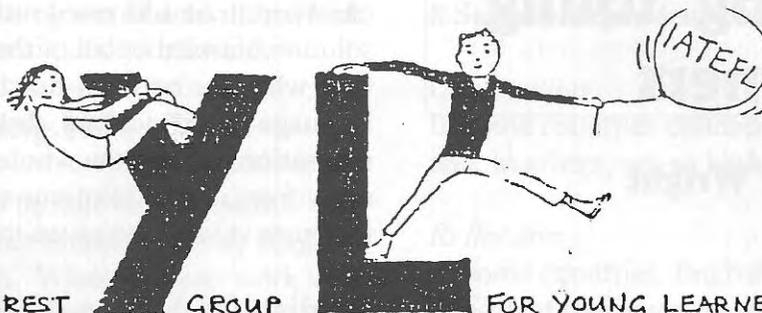
During the Conference, I had several meetings with Peter to discuss the setting-up of a YL SIG. Peter let me know that he was pushing the frontiers for participants working with young learners and that, without including professionals on the YL SIG Committee who were trained to work at Primary level, the SIG would not be credible.

Towards the end of the 1985 IATEFL Conference, Peter Strevens agreed to the establishment of the first two SIGs – the YL SIG, co-founded by Andrew Wright and myself, and a Business SIG. In these early days, membership of the YL SIG was small and no funds were available for meetings outside the main IATEFL Annual Conferences. At the Conference, Andrew Wright became Secretary for 2 years. From May 1987, Leonora Fröhlich-Ward resident in Munich, Germany, published and funded the first editions of the YL SIG Newsletter.

Throughout his period as IATEFL Chairman, Peter Strevens took a personal interest in the YL SIG. In 1986, he insisted that I was co-opted onto the IATEFL Committee, so that the YL SIG activities were known to the Committee and could be publicized by him on his travels overseas as Director General of the Bell Trust (Bell Schools also included YL EFL vacation schools).

Peter Strevens kept his interest in the YL SIG until his untimely death in Japan in 1988. In his death, the YL SIG lost the support of a friend and colleague who understood the foreign language learning needs of young learners and their educators.

From the First Ever Newsletter ...!



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

NEWSLETTER No. 1

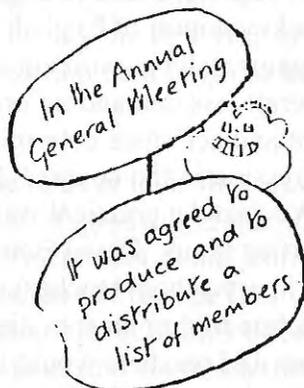
May 1987

EDITORIAL

I wouldn't be doing this job if I didn't think teaching EFL to young learners is a worthwhile occupation. Many of you may have been obliged to teach young learners after having taught older learners for many years and may feel you have been relegated to a post beneath you. This fits in with the attitude commonly shown by teachers of over-14's that teaching young children is a job which can easily be left to au pair girls or housewives, and that such teachers are less well qualified, or that their job is easier since: 'You are only playing with the children, aren't you?'

I protest against this attitude. Teachers of young learners usually teach other age-groups as well, and without teaching experience and skill, as well as a special 'rapport' to young learners, will not succeed. For young learners motivation in learning EFL depends on how much they enjoy their teacher; parents and schools, however, look for the learning progress of their children: both aims can only be achieved by qualified teachers of English.

L.F-W.



DIARY OF EVENTS

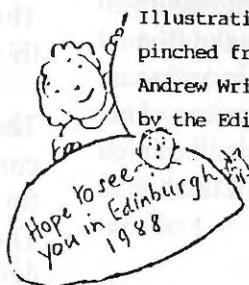
Saturday, October 24, 1987

The 1st SIG Young Learners Meeting is taking place in London. If you think you will be able to attend please contact the organiser: Daphne Green, Apollo Publishing, Realtex House, Leeds Road, Rawdon, Leeds LS19 6Ax, UK. She may be able to help in co-ordinating travel.

22nd International Conference
IATEFL, Edinburgh, 11 - 14 April 88.
Please note the dates of this conference.
We hope to greet many of you there.

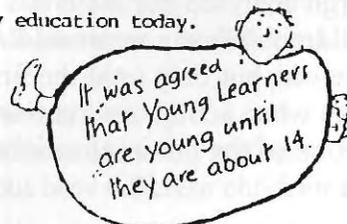
Illustrations

pinched from
Andrew Wright - adapted
by the Editor!



PREVIEW: Following articles have been promised already: Edie Garvie, Focus on materials for YL's; Ludmila Machura, Parents' Involvement in EFL for YL in Poland; Barbara Hruska and Tricia Herbert, Teacher's multilingual classroom material, Copenhagen; Jackie Holderness, Dutch primary education today.

Anybody interested in advertising in our Newsletter contact the Editor.



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D - 8000 München 60

My Personal History of Teaching Young Learners

Andrew Wright

Summary

My hope is to offer some ideas based on four decades of involvement with young learners which colleagues might find useful to consider when planning and reflecting on their own work. This paper sketches out my experiences and then offers a summary of conclusions left in my life's sieve after these forty years.

A foreign language for YLs in the 1960s

For eight years, I worked in a team of teachers and artists at the University of Leeds on an audio-visual method for teaching French to 8 year old beginners in Britain. This was to be the definitive and global method for all children. 16,000 children used the materials from the age of 8 to the age of 16. The National Foundation for Educational Research followed their progress. The method for the first three years was the first audio-visual method developed in Britain and was based on trivial stories illustrated by pictures. The children acted out the stories and were drilled in some language forms with the support of flash cards.

This was a step forward on much of what had been done before. And much teaching of English to young learners world-wide has not taken much of a step forward from the essentially trivial content of those *En Avant* materials.

In 1967, Julian Dakin and Tony Howatt from the University of Edinburgh analysed our materials and found that the children virtually never said anything about themselves, but only used the first person subject pronoun when acting out a part in a dialogue. The realisation of the full implications of that was a shock to me.

Towards the end of the 1960's, I worked with Michael Buckby at the University of York and became much more open to the use of significant

content and the value of conceptual development value in foreign language learning. Furthermore, I became aware that the needs of the individual child had to be addressed rather than a global solution branded on all of them. This was the time when the notional-functional description of language was conceived, driven by the same realisations and by the whole swing of society away from global solutions and more to the need for more value to be given to individual needs.

English for YLs in the 1970's

For five years, I worked at the University of York on a four year course for young learners aged approximately 8 to 12 learning English as a foreign language. We tried the material out with the help of 2,000 children in 8 European countries.

We wanted to produce a course which was a genuine alternative to any other course available and which was based on the idea that the English lesson should contribute to the child's overall development and not be concerned solely with learning English. The subjects and activities in the English lesson must be significant in the child's overall development and the 'new' language should have a significant role in that development. The child should learn English and learn other things at the same time.

The course, *Kaleidoscope*, was not a great commercial success and Macmillan who had financed it were understandably peeved by this. The course was too innovative and too demanding on the teachers experience, use of English and belief in the need to make English an agent in general development as well as an aim itself.

Later course writers were able to create courses which took the key notion of English learning through developmentally significant activities and make them overall less demanding on the teacher. Did the content and activities determine the language progression in the course? Not completely. We found a practical way of dealing with this important issue. David Betteridge (an experienced primary school teacher) and I brainstormed a hundred or so activities which we thought children and teachers would like and find worthwhile. We then gave these ideas to a linguist and experienced EFL teacher, Dr Nicholas

Hawkes, who sequenced them in order of what he felt would help the children to experience and learn the language items. We thus had a graded language course but arising out of activities which we judged to be interesting and worthwhile.

Training and writing 1976 - 2002

It is such a privilege to be able to work with teachers in the classroom and through my books. I have learned so much. Whenever you work with someone else or write something you have to ask yourself... what do I really think... and then later... do I still think that... is there another way of looking at it... and so on.

My work with teachers of young learners took me from the polar circle in Sweden to West Africa, to Hong Kong and Malaysia and to most European countries. I summarise my sieved thoughts below.

As a writer, I focussed on using topics in the *Kaleidoscope* course and then on using games in the Cambridge University Press book, *Games for Language Learning* and then, in the 1990s on the use of stories, with *Storytelling with Children* and *Creating Stories with Children* and later again on the use of art and crafts in *Art and Crafts for Children* published by Oxford University Press.

Creative language work 1990 – 2002

My creative language work with children has been based on helping children to make stories and books, to make stories and drama and to make poetry and performance.

Sieved thoughts from forty years

1 The first two years seem easy

Observation

Children often enjoy the first year or two of learning English and then begin to lose interest.

Reflection

Children come to us in their first lesson of English with one pound of goodwill in their bank book. We then often spend that pound during the first year or two and do not replace it or invest it. We do not offer ideas and activities which truly engage their minds and we retain their involvement only because we are spending their

goodwill. Then we notice that their interest is waning and it gets more difficult.

2 Socially dependent motivation

Observation

In some countries children are highly motivated and, in others, not so highly motivated.

Reflection

In some countries, English is clearly felt to be important to society, in terms of commerce and industry, tourism and entertainment. English is almost a second language rather than a foreign language for people to use one day in an indefinite future. Children hear and see English as important.

Motivation is the single most important factor in language learning. After all, children all speak their mother tongue; they are all good language learners. No method or approach can compensate for the lack of significant motivation.

3 Primary and secondary cooperation

Observation

In every country I have been to, there are problems between the teachers of the young beginners and the teachers in the secondary area. One Italian teacher pointed over the road at the secondary school and told me that her letters and phone calls to meet and discuss how they might be able to liaise for the benefit of the children had been consistently ignored by the secondary school teachers.

Reflection

The link between primary and secondary is crucial for the children and is largely the responsibility of the ministry and senior educational advisers and administrators. Not creating such cooperation can undo the work and goodwill of hundreds of thousands of children and teachers. It is a crime.

4 All learners are different, not just children

Observation

Teachers of young learners tend to be mystical about how different children are to grown ups.

Reflection

Simplistic notions lead us along easy exclusive roads without further thought. The simple belief

that 'children are different' may be going in generally the right direction but it prevents us from being open to alternatives and individual needs. All learners and learning situations are different. Grown up students vary between professionally motivated and generally motivated, between highly experienced learners and people with little learning experience, between highly sophisticated people used to all kinds of international and technological concepts and people from a peasant background. And that is quite apart from any individual differences in learning style.

Children also vary immensely around the world.

Attention span! "Children have a short attention span." Yes, as a general guiding principle, but we all know that they can be involved for hours with one thing eg watching videos.

Grammatical rules! "Never bother children with grammar...they don't think like that". Not true. Children constantly and naturally search for generalisations and some children can actually enjoy and benefit from explicit naming of grammatical parts just as children can begin to hear other generalisations and established strategies named. My own six-year-old self-corrects when I growl, 'word order' when she speaks in her second language, English. But, once more, 'no grammatical rules' is generally a good idea.

No written word! OK perhaps. English is so inconsistent, but what a pity for all those children who like reading and writing! And my sympathies go to the teachers who do introduce the written word, precisely for this reason.

5 Cross-curricular responsibility

Observation

Some teachers and advisers have put forward the view, very strongly, that the English lesson should be a part of the child's overall development (just as I have done from the 1970s).

Reflection

The idea of the English lesson as being part of the child's general development and an opportunity to do cross-curricular work is fine. But how qualified are language teachers to know what is a 'No-no' in other subject areas? Primary school

teachers regularly cut out identical butterflies and ask the children to colour them neatly. This is enough to ignite specialist art teachers because it is another nail in the coffin of the child's confidence in exploring and responding to the world, as a thinking person.

6 Society and language teaching are in constant change

Observation

Some people seem to think that change must be improvement.

Reflection

Change in language teaching is not brought about by improvements in the understanding of learning so much as in the changing of ideas in society as a whole. In the 1950s and 60s there was a commonly held view that rational approaches could lead to global solutions, for example, the introduction of high-rise housing. Towards the end of the 1960s, there was violent rejection of this belief and a cult of the importance of individuals 'finding themselves' began.

In the latter part of the century there was a rise in the popularity of mystical beliefs and homely wisdom and even this was reflected in language teaching, for example, in the rise of NLP. NLP? Neuro Linguistic Programming! If that helps you! Like all cults it makes use of the trinity and uses terms which exclude in order to make the converted feel included. (Actually it has a lot of sensible stuff collected in it. My mum said most of it and it is quite useful to have it collected together). But contrast the way in which NLP can be used, 'Use NLP to get and keep your man', with the earlier 'humanistics' movement and concern for the richness of other people as well as yourself.

Language teaching methodology reflected these general changes.

7 Research is still human

Observation

The NFER reported objectively on the experiment to teach French to 8 year old beginners in Britain. Well, selectively rather than objectively. They said that after 3 years in the primary school learning a foreign language there was, on balance, a negative attitude to the learning of a foreign

language at that age. OK, if true but they did not research into children's feelings about other subjects in the curriculum eg English and mathematics, nor did they research what children felt like after studying a foreign language in the secondary school for three years.

This highly selective research result was used politically to stop the teaching of languages to children under the age of 11 in England.

Reflection

Research can be highly subjective and used highly subjectively. The NFER report was even called, journalistically, 'Primary French in the Balance'.

8 Beckham's press-ups

Observation

Devotees of the communicative approach sometimes seem to assert that every activity should be communicative and meaningful and so on.

Reflection

This is ridiculous. Learning is an authentic activity and focussing on the language form instead of its content is an authentic way of helping the student to make his or her own. Beckham, a currently popular and talented footballer, spends more of his time doing press-ups and practising passing the ball than he does playing football. A communication freak language teacher watching a training session might hiss, 'That's not authentic football!' If Beckham were told to do training for five years before playing his first game of football that would also be ridiculous. He needs both, and so do language learners.

9 Personal inclinations coinciding with current ideas...or not

Observation

I remember a teacher asking every student in her class what his or her father's job was and showing no interest in the answers. She told me after the lesson that she was committed to the communicative approach and to the use of realistic, everyday topics eg fathers' jobs.

Reflection

Teachers minds and bodies may or may not coincide with the current idea of beauty! Some teachers are naturally communicative, but for others a perception of the communicative approach is skin deep. For the latter, it is a matter of tightening their corsets rather severely in order to pretend to have a narrow waist. But what you squeeze from one place shows in another.

10 Blind to our own faults ... very often

Observation

Some years ago a friend made a video of me working with children. To my horror I saw, on the video, a little boy, directly in front of me, with his hand up to say something and I simply did not see him. At last, his arm became tired so he held it up with his other hand but, finally, he lost heart and lowered his arm. Of course, watching the video, I was yelping with rage at myself, but it was too late.

Reflection

How many more things do I simply not perceive even though, retinally, they are there?

Andrew Wright is an author, illustrator, teacher trainer and storyteller and maker. He has published: Games for Language Learning (CUP), Storytelling with Children and Creating Stories with Children and Art and Crafts with Children (OUP) and 1000+ Pictures for Teachers to Copy (Longman). As a teacher trainer and as a story teller and maker with children he has worked in many countries. He is proud to have proposed the establishment of the IATEFL YL SIG.

*For further discussion with Andrew:
ili@mail.pipenet.hu*

Primary English Foreign Language Teaching in Germany – Learning by Doing

Leonora Fröhlich-Ward

In Memoriam

This article is dedicated to Renate Gruber, a wonderful German teacher of English, shot as a tourist in Namibia on September 2nd 2002.

1 Situation in the Federal Republic of Germany

The 16 States in the Federal Republic of Germany are autonomous in educational affairs. This has led to a great variety in the types of schools they run, the requirements they have for teacher training and even in the aims and achievements they expect their pupils to reach. Many teaching curricula are often not compatible with other Federal States. The Federal Conference of Ministries of Education (Kultus Minister Konferenz) tries to coordinate these discrepancies but is not always successful.

In 1994 this Federal Conference recommended that:

1a) A foreign language should be taught to all children from age 8 / Grade 3 in all Primary Schools.

1b) It should ideally be taught by the class teacher in short periods throughout the week, based mainly on play-oriented, communicative, oral/aural teaching to make the most of young children's superior abilities of listening, understanding and speaking.

1c) The use of reading and the written word should not be at the forefront of teaching but should be reserved until the pupils have gained a certain spoken competence in the Foreign language. The target language(s) was/were to be chosen by each State individually. It was also recommended and the feeling was that it should not always be 'just' English.

1d) Marks should not be given to the achievements in this subject.

In the German state system the level of marks achieved in certain subjects often determines whether a pupil can move up to the next grade, or has to repeat the class. This can happen as early as age 8 or 9. It was hoped that by avoiding the marking system all children – not only the academically gifted – would be encouraged to participate orally/aurally and so be enabled to reach a certain competence in understanding and speaking the target language.

All the Federal States have since taken steps to introduce Foreign languages at this early age – but due to their autonomy many of the models introduced do not correspond to the models of the neighbouring states.

2 My Teaching Situation

At the time these developments were taking place I was teaching at a kindergarten. I had already written a teaching course for kindergarten-aged children – *English for Mopsy and Me* - with Gisela Schmid-Schönbein in 1974 and was teaching this for many years. In the 1980s and early 1990s, I started receiving lots of visitors and was enlarging my teaching range by producing more teaching material for 6-8 year olds. Parents were becoming impatient since the official introduction of Foreign languages was taking so long to be implemented in Grade 3.

The greatest problem which slows down the implementation of this recommendation and, in my opinion, it is what killed the Burstall project, *French in the Primary School*, in England from 1970 – 74, is that

there are not enough Primary School teachers really fluent in the target FL wanting to pass on this fluency to their pupils, and who are convinced of the different way needed to teach a foreign language to this age group. The only other teachers able to carry out this teaching because of their competence in the foreign language are secondary school teachers, who are often not familiar or comfortable with the different type of approach needed to teach a FL to young learners.

Many years of teaching Young Learners aged 5 - 10 convinced me that successful teaching of FL to Young Learners can only be achieved if the teachers have the following qualifications:

2a) enjoyment and ability of *rappport* with young children = *love*

2b) native/near-native fluency in the spoken language = *language*

2c) training in the methodology of teaching Yls = *teaching ability*

This understanding of the most effective way of teaching foreign languages to young learners is nothing new, since it was already formulated in Freudenstein's book, *Teaching Foreign languages to the Very Young*, (Pergamon Press, Oxford 1979, p.74), where these characteristics are described as: *love + language + teaching ability/qualification*.

One day, in 1994, a local mother asked me whether I would be willing to do some courses for children at her son's primary school on a private basis. Since I did not have time for this but knew a teacher who had been visiting me for many months I arranged a parents' evening and explained how I thought English should be taught on the basis of 1 period per week in small groups. As a result, 60 children were registered – so with the help of my first teacher we found and trained two more teachers, and then started teaching in our little Association.

Thus our business began, without any idea of how it was going to work out financially or organisationally. The parents and head teacher of the first school helped us to devise guidelines which were gradually developed for all our schools. We decided to offer a set number of lessons per year (30 weeks with one 45-min period per week) for a set sum of money including all expenses like materials, rental and insurance. We limited the group size, to a minimum of 7 and a maximum of 12, and only started groups in which we had enough children in the same grade levels. We normally do not mix children of different ages and levels, since we have observed how much their interests vary.

From the start, we offered free places for children whose parents could not afford to pay and reductions for parents with other financial difficulties. The head teachers warned me to demand proof of the parents' financial situation before agreeing to give reductions since they knew that some people would try to cash in on our inexperience. Thus we gradually learnt all these organizational details by trial and error – *learning by doing* was forced upon us and became our motto.

3 Setting up Private Teaching in German Schools

Permission factor

In German schools lessons normally begin at 8.00 and finish at 13.00. Thus six teaching periods are scheduled. On certain days certain classes finish one or two periods earlier, which gave us the opportunity of adding an English lesson onto the end of formal teaching. Of course this could only happen if the head teacher permitted it and if the parents agreed that their child could stay on at school for an extra period. This permission factor was something we had to ascertain before even informing parents about possible courses.

Distance factor

The next vital factor was the distance factor, that is, whether we then had a teacher living close enough to the school who had time to give the lesson at the time required. This was also a result of experience: if a teacher was only asked to give one or two lessons a day it was not financially worthwhile to travel half an hour in each direction to teach these courses. So this teacher/distance factor became an integral part in our planning.

For busy parents, chauffeuring their children to various sports, singing, dancing and music lessons made afternoon classes very difficult to organize. For this reason we generally avoided afternoon teaching as far as possible, since the high number of additional extra-curricular activities followed by the children often prevented any group from being available on the same afternoon.

Recruiting teachers

When recruiting teachers my first interview was often on the phone where I could immediately decide whether their language was fluent enough for our purposes. This was their first language test. Pronunciation was, in most cases, more important than fluency since, after more than 30 years as an oral examiner for Cambridge University Certificates, I could judge fairly quickly whether candidates would be able to improve their fluency with practice. Poor pronunciation, on the other hand, was something which I knew could not normally be improved at an adult age, so that I usually had to turn such people down. This has proved to be a viable way of picking suitable candidates.

Teaching practice and support

The next step involved teaching practice. If they already had some teaching practice – even only with adults - this was a great advantage. Those with no formal teaching experience usually had some qualifications which I judged to be helpful in learning to teach - such as bringing up a child/children, running a business, working as a personal

secretary etc. etc. Their desire and willingness to learn the skill they were aware they did not yet possess was also a vital requirement.

But new teachers become experienced and with the growth of the organization I found that I needed help. So after some time I nominated some teachers to be my supervisors, experienced teachers to share teacher support and training.

Our first assignment for the potential teacher was to visit another teacher, usually one of my most experienced teachers and a supervisor, and watch lessons in progress. This turned out to be a decisive step for the teacher since a surprisingly large number regretfully admitted at this stage that they didn't really feel comfortable working with children of this young age (5-10 year olds) and many stated that they found the pace of teaching far too slow and trying on their patience. For those who finally ended up teaching for me, this visit to lessons was often an eye-opener to the difficulties to be faced when teaching such young children.

The ability of being able to communicate with young children was a further essential quality I required. In order to find this out they were given the opportunity of teaching a lesson under the guidance of the teacher they were visiting and the insights gained here enabled us and the potential teacher to judge whether they would be able to start teaching sooner or later.

4 Teacher training and input control

In my view, and I am a bit of a dictator (I hear my teachers yell: *A BIT of a dictator? You are a despot!*) the following precepts have to be agreed upon, if a private organization of this type is to function:

- 4a) There has/have to be (an) experienced teacher(s) who is/are professionally in a position to be guide(s) and leader(s) of the group. A business person, who only sees the marketing opportunities in the job and

whose main goal is to earn money, will not be able to give the right sort of support and motivation –although business experience can of course be very helpful to avoid the teething troubles I described.

4b) The methodology and the materials to be used have to be accepted in principle by all involved, since different teachers often take over groups from others in following years and parents also want to know what is actually being taught. This does not prevent teachers from putting a different weight on certain activities they prefer doing like singing, painting, dancing, etc. But it is too wasteful of time and energy if teachers are continually concentrating on developing new ideas which they try out on their group. e.g.: one teacher never used any of the *Activity Books* supplied but got her children to draw freely; another one spent a lot of time getting the children to make things in the English lessons etc.. This meant that these teachers failed to cover a large part of the curriculum agreed on and this in its turn caused problems for the teacher who took over the group the following year because the children hadn't covered what she expected.

4c) There must be agreement about the use of the children's first language – and here I require my teachers to use the target language, in this case, English, throughout their teaching. Even though some teachers have difficulty at first in believing that this is the most effective way of getting the children to start talking, most of them learn that it does work and keep to it on the whole: exceptions always prove the rule.

4d) Teachers need to be continually motivated to improve their own teaching skills and this can often be achieved by encouraging them to assist and support other newer teachers in their work. Team-teaching and team-training is one of the most important factors in my organization.

Many of my teachers had no formal/official teacher training and were only trained by me. As time went on, I found that several of my teachers were not only excellent teachers but also had a natural ability for training others. So I asked them first of all to take over supervisory duties and increasingly involved them in the training of new teachers. This means that we have a rich input of varied teaching skills which enables all the teachers involved to develop their personal teaching ideas while still remaining within the framework of our teaching goals.

4e) My requirement of using team-teaching and team-training as an integral part of our set-up has occasionally prevented teachers from joining our group because they feared this type of control would constrict them and preferred to work independently. Nevertheless, since many of these teachers still wanted to take part in our training courses, without being a part of our team, and without working for me, we keep loose contact to them and invite them to participate in our courses, paying a different rate than my own teachers, whenever they wish.

Over the past seven years about 60 teachers have worked with me in this field. The majority are mothers at home with younger children not wanting or not being able to work in their profession. They work for me on a free-lance basis and do as much or as little as they wish to do. Every school has one teacher mainly responsible for coordinating courses, keeping in contact with parents and school authorities and generally being 'mum'. Many teachers, unfortunately for me, leave when they find a more secure job or return to their original profession. Hardly any have abandoned the work with me because they were unsuccessful in it. Whenever the teaching of foreign

languages is officially introduced into their schools my teachers can no longer be employed since they usually do not have the state exams required.

5 What does the future hold?

At the moment I 'employ' about 45 teachers who teach between 2 and 6 lessons a week for me. Since the Primary School teachers are gradually being trained to teach a foreign language in their own classes our teachers are gradually becoming redundant for the 3rd and 4th grades.

But parents still ask us to teach their 1st and 2nd grade children and there is a growing demand from Kindergarten and pre-school institutions. So for the time being we are concentrating our energies on qualifying teachers to teach the very young (5-7-year-olds). We continue to offer courses for our teachers and for visitors whom we inform on our homepage:

www.mopsyclub.de at the start of the school year, since we do not start our teaching in the first weeks of school but wait until the school routines and new classes have settled down.

The future means that many of my teachers will be out of a job within a few years, as soon as all the state teachers have been trained and foreign language teaching has become an integral part for every 3rd and 4th grade pupil in Germany. A large number of my teachers will probably continue to teach kindergarten children and even grades 1 and 2 for much longer since there has, as yet, been no official decision to offer foreign language teaching in all Federal States to children at the lower grades. The time (and money for teacher training, curriculum planning etc.) needed to implement the 1994 decision which is still a long way from covering all schools shows how difficult it is to get new ideas working. So I expect we'll still be in business for a few more years.

My activities in connection with the Young Learners SIG, since it was initiated by Opal Dunn and Edie Garvie, with Bill Lee's help, gave me a lot of insight into the understanding of what really is 'young'. In those days most people considered 12 year-olds to be very young for foreign language teaching. The growth of wealth and the moving together of the European nations has encouraged and supported the advance of foreign language teaching for younger children.

We can only hope that understanding a foreign language will lead to increased understanding between foreign peoples and races and somehow help our world towards peaceful coexistence instead of the present aggressive hatred that prevails in many states.

After studying French at Exeter University, Leonora Fröhlich-Ward taught in France before settling in Munich. Her interest in early foreign-language teaching has involved her in teacher-training, course development and teaching children from pre-school to primary for almost thirty years. She is still an active teacher and author and hopes that early foreign-language teaching will spread widely so that peaceful communication among nations will improve. Leonora was the first editor of the YL SIG Newsletter, published for the first time in May 1987.

REALpictureBOOKS

Opal Dunn

REALpictureBOOKS, fiction or non-fiction, are part of native speaker children's culture. In any UK Nursery or lower Primary classroom children's picture books, displayed front cover forwards, are part of the accepted scene. Not only bookshops sell REALpictureBOOKS in the UK. Today they can also be found in large chain food and drug Supermarkets as well as in some Newsagents. Some children's books have become classics remaining in print long enough to span several generations of children, for example, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle.

So what are REALpictureBOOKS?

REALpictureBOOKS differ from course books or graded readers written for English Learners, as they are written for children's enjoyment and enrichment with no planned specific teaching aim, except in the case of some non-fiction information books. REALpictureBOOKS are classified as Trade Books and are produced by teams of professionals who work for Publishers, some of which also produce Books for education and ELT. It is not unknown that different publishing units may work parallel within a big publishing company without bridging the gap between the different genres of children's books they are producing.

REALpictureBooks are taken to the Book Trade Fairs in London and Bologna in the Spring, and Frankfurt in the Autumn. At Book Fairs, rights to publish are sold to other publishers, publishing in other English-speaking countries or foreign language countries. Most picture books are now published with co-editions in the US or the ex-Commonwealth as this enables the print run to be larger so reducing the cost price per book.

In previous years, between 9,000 to 10,000 picture books have been published including some in translation from French and Japanese. The UK does not buy many books from foreign publishers, as the UK Children's Book Publishing Industry is highly developed and includes some of the finest authors and writers world-wide. In some cases,

successful authors and illustrators of picture books have established their own companies, which may also market related merchandise, as well as their own books, for example, *Raymond Briggs, The Snowman* and *Roger Hargreaves, Mr Men Books*.

My early involvement

I realised, from early in my work with young children learning English as a foreign language in total immersion situations, the importance of REALpictureBOOKS. Later, in 1977, when I worked with bilingual and bicultural Japanese children in Japan, I set up *Bunko* (mini-libraries) in English, French and Japanese. This enabled me to have another type of ELT experience expanding REALBOOK experiences in ways that stimulated children, who already knew how to pick-up a foreign language naturally and work out their own systems of analysing how it worked.

It was not until my return to UK in 1985, when I became a consultant to the Council of Europe on early foreign language learning, did I realise that teachers as well as English bookshops in Europe needed information on how to select appropriate REALpictureBOOKS. The outcome in 1986 was the free publication REALBOOK NEWS.

REALBOOK NEWS

In the last 6 years, REALBOOK NEWS has developed to meet teachers and parents' needs. Published biannually, REALBOOK NEWS introduces about 50 newly published books a year from UK children's publishers – big or small. Each issue includes a Feature Article on how to use REALpictureBOOKS. These Articles are considered to be 'at the cutting edge of thinking' and are regularly used as seminar texts in University Courses for teachers of young foreign language learners. Articles include subjects like *Developing Visual Literacy, Emotional Literacy – reading about feelings, Do Boys need different learning opportunities? Novelty Books – a 3D communicative game*.

It seems natural for parents and young children to read and enjoy picture books at school or home in their home-language, if they are available, so why not in English? Children can and do transfer skills and knowledge across disciplines with ease.

'A man ought to read just as inclination leads him, for what he reads as a task will do him little good.' (Dr Samuel Johnson 1709-1784)

The value of REALpictureBOOKS

Oral story telling is important and rightly has its place in the YLs' classroom. Story is the natural vehicle through which a young child expresses thought and emotion. However, picture books offer something more to young learners just through their physical presence alone. Their permanence - their language and picture do not change - provides a child with opportunities to return to them over and over again and with each browsing developing deeper their understanding and personal connections. A book can be held and discussed with others. A book can be taken home and shared with the family. REALpictureBOOKS provide natural encounters with authentic language and superb artwork from some of the finest illustrators, men and women, in the UK today.

The use of REALBOOKS within the classroom is becoming more frequent as teachers recognise the enthusiasm they generate in children.

'Whenever we get a more boring grammar slot in the textbook the pupils ask, When are we going to read those beautiful books again?' Pecs REALBOOK Project, Hungary.

REALBOOK NEWS is written for teachers, carers and parents wanting to use REALBOOKS with real beginners. Books are introduced in three categories for Beginners, Post beginners and Early Readers so making it possible to use REALBOOKS from the first lessons. Website www.realbooks.co.uk Email opald@realbooks.co.uk

REALBOOK Projects and Research

REALBOOK NEWS also funds research including the Pecs REALBOOK Project in Hungary led by Professor Marianne Nikolov and The Nettlehouse REALBOOK Project in Portugal led by Sandie Jones Mourao.

REALBOOK NEWS is one of the new bridges being built between the native speaker and EFL classroom where for too long the wealth of

professional expertise has not been adequately shared.

Opal Dunn is the editor of REALBOOK NEWS. Trained initially as a teacher and trainer at the famous Froebel Institute (University of Surrey), Opal has always thought of teaching English as part of the child's holistic development. Opal specialises in very young and young beginners and is interested in the influence of 'children's local culture' on their early English learning. Having written in the EFL field, Opal now writes REALpictureBOOKS for young children published in the homelanguage trade market. Opal is one of the co-founders of the IATEFL YL SIG.

CREATING AND PERFORMING JAZZ CHANTS

Carolyn Graham

A successful jazz chant may be created out of the simplest pattern of spoken American English. Let me begin by saying what a jazz chant is *not*. A jazz chant is *not* a poem. It is *not* a song lyric. It does *not* have to rhyme. It does *not* have to tell a story. It could have all the qualities of a poem, or a song lyric and sometimes it also has a nice rhyme but none of these elements are essential.

A very useful jazz chant can be constructed out of any pattern of natural spoken English. For example **What's this? It's a book.** can be turned into a fine jazz chant by the simple addition of our secret ingredient, *rhythm*. By adding rhythm we can now create a chant.

What's this?
It's a book
What's this? clap clap

One of my favorite jazz chants is based simply on the language of liking something.

I like it
I like it a lot
I love it clap clap

or the opposite idea

I don't like it
I don't like it at all
I hate it
I can't stand it

I use Jazz Chants in my classroom with four goals in mind.

1. Structure reinforcement: I do not use the chants to *introduce* the grammar point but to *reinforce* and *practice* the pattern.

2. Sound, stress and intonation practice: The chants help the students produce a particular sound or combination of sounds that will greatly improve their listening and speaking skills.

3. Functions: Teaching appropriate language to accompany a daily activity.

4. Vocabulary development: The addition of rhythm is a great aid to memory and vocabulary. Chants are an easy and entertaining way to acquire a rich vocabulary.

Creating a chant

Let's examine chants in each of these four categories and I will give you a step-by-step recipe on how they can be created.

1. Structure Reinforcement, Grammar chants

Step one Select a grammar point that you are currently studying in class and wish to reinforce with a chant. For example you might want to work on the **Simple Present** tense with special attention to the difficult third person singular *s, es, ies* endings.

Step two Select a subject which relates to the daily life of your students. For example *learning English, getting dressed for school, having breakfast etc.*

Step three Write three sentences using Simple Present, third person on the subject of learning English. For example

He speaks English
He studies English every day.
He watches TV in English every night.

Step four Now change your statements into questions, creating a simple dialogue with a short positive response.

Does he speak English?
Yes, he does.
Does she study English?
Yes, she does.

Step five Add a simple positive statement to follow the short response, for example:

Does he speak English?

Yes, he does.
He speaks it very well

Step six Replace the subject pronoun with one of your student's names and the chant might look like this:

Does Mary speak English?
Yes, she does.
She speaks it very well.

Does Bobby speak English?
Yes, he does
He speaks it very well.

Performing the chant

The addition of rhythm will now transform our material from a simple pattern practice drill into a Jazz Chant. Practice chanting the material at home before you present it to your students. It is extremely important that the teacher feels very confident about the performance of the chant material.

Finding the beat

All Jazz Chants are based on a simple **one, two, three, four** beat which is the underlying rhythm of traditional American jazz. You may wish to use a clapping pattern and have the students clap the rhythm while you count **one, two, three, four**. Set a comfortable tempo.

Remember that beat One is not necessarily the first word of the chant. It is the first **STRESSED** word. In our example Does Mary speak English? Beat one will not be *does* but *Mary*:

* *
Does Mary speak English?

* *
Yes, she does
* * * *

She speaks it very well.

Our chant should reinforce the idea that the third person -s, -es, -ies, endings occur *only* in the third person singular, positive statement. Not in the question: Does he speak English? Not in the negative: He doesn't speak English. Not in the plural: They speak English. I created a Grammar

chant to help my students remember the rather difficult rule.

Third person s Yes! Yes!
Not in the question No! No!
Third person s Yes! Yes!
Not in the negative No! No!
Third person s Yes! Yes!
Not in the plural No! No!
Third person s Yes! Yes!
Third person s Yes!

(*Grammarchants*, OUP, 1993)

Adding music

The Jazz Chants do not require music to be a successful classroom tool. The teacher can establish a strong beat by clapping, stamping and counting but the addition of jazz recordings will bring a powerful new energy into the room. I like to use the traditional early American jazz including ragtime, dixieland and early rhythm and blues but you can work gvery well with the modern sounds of rap or hip hop. I suggest you choose an instrumental version as a lyric can interfere with the chanting. Some of my favorite bands are the New Orleans Preservation Hall Band and the Kid Ory New Orleans Blues Band.

Expansion activity

Our simple chant *Does Mary speak English?* can now be expanded to offer practice in both positive and negative short responses by creating a simple argument.

* *
Does Mary speak English?

* *
Yes, she does

* * * *
She speaks it very well.

* *
No, she doesn't.

* *
Yes, she does.

* *
No, she doesn't.

* *
Yes, she does.

* *
No, she doesn't.

* *
Yes, she does.

* *
No, she doesn't.

* *
(Mary) Yes I do

2. Sound, stress and intonation practice

Step one Select a sound or set of contrasting sounds that are presenting difficulties for your students. For example you might decide to present material illustrating the *sh/ch* contrast.

Step two Make a list of words ending in *sh/ch*

Example fish, wish, dish, fresh,
lunch, munch, bunch, catch

Step three Try combining these vocabulary items into a chant, adding appropriate language to create an image. For example *fresh fish* Here is my Fresh Fish chant:

Fresh fish
Fresh fish for breakfast
Fresh fish
Fresh fish for lunch
Fresh fish for breakfast
Fresh fish for lunch
Fresh fish for dinner
Munch, munch, munch, munch
Fresh fish, fresh fish
Fresh fish for breakfast
Fresh fish

We now have an illustration of the *sh/ch* sounds with *fresh /fish/lunch/munch*. You can now extend this chant by adding the verb *catch* and the important and difficult sounds of the **will** future as follows:

Who'll catch it?
She will.
Who'll cook it?

He will.
Who'll eat it?
We will.
Fresh fish!

3. Function chants

These are to do with teaching appropriate language to accompany a daily activity.

Step one Select a daily activity which would be appropriate to the age and lifestyle of your students, for example, simple greetings.

Step two Select the language items that would be appropriate for the activity of greeting someone. For example, *Hi, hello, how are you?*

Step three Create a simple dialogue:

* *
Hi, how are you?
* *
Fine, how are you?

Step four Set the tempo and practice clapping the rhythm (without words) of each line:

CLAP clap CLAP clap
CLAP clap clap CLAP

Step five Now repeat with the students *stamping* the rhythm.

Step six Repeat with the language

HI, how ARE you?
FINE, how are YOU?

4. Vocabulary development

Step one Select a topic which would relate to your students' daily activities, for example, classroom objects.

Step two Write a list of items which would relate to the classroom. Divide your list into words of one/two/three syllables.

Your chant will consist of **three words**. The first word should have **two** syllables. The second word **three** syllables. The third word should have only **one** syllable.

This simple formula of Two/Three/One is a fool-proof way to create a vocabulary chant on any subject.

For example:

Sports **Baseball / basketball / golf**
Fruit **Apple / banana / pear**
Animals **Tiger / elephant / cat**

Start your chant with a two-syllable word. For example: **ruler**

Follow this with a three syllable word: **eraser**

The third word should have only one syllable, for example, **chair**

Presenting the chant

Ruler, eraser, chair Clap
Ruler, eraser, chair Clap
Ruler, eraser
Ruler, eraser
Ruler, eraser chair Clap

Adding color

Add a color to each item. When you add the color, be very sensitive to the syllable count of the color word as that will have an important effect on the rhythm of each line. Note that there are really only two colors in English that have two syllables, yellow and purple. Most colors are one syllable.

This was my selection for the vocabulary chant I call the *Yellow Chair Chant*

Purple ruler, pink eraser,
Yellow chair yellow chair
Purple ruler, pink eraser
Yellow chair, yellow chair

Purple ruler, pink eraser
Purple ruler, pink eraser
Purple ruler, pink eraser
Yellow chair, yellow chair

I hope you will enjoy creating and performing your own chants. I would suggest that you always think of simplicity, brevity and natural, authentic, useful language. Short and sweet is really the answer and remember that the secret ingredient is **rhythm**. The rhythm holds the power and is there to help you create wonderful new chants for your students.

Carolyn Graham, the creator of Jazz Chants is now primarily a teacher-trainer offering workshops at New York University School of Education several times a year. She also teaches at Columbia TC, New York and Tokyo. She and her Turkish husband divide their time between New York, Paris and Istanbul.

An Assessment Fable

Melanie Williams

Once upon a time there was a little girl whose name was Test. Test lived alone in a little house deep in the forest with only the animals and birds for company.

One day, she was playing with her little cat outside the house. It was a sunny, spring day and all the birds were singing in the trees.

'Oh, little cat,' she said. 'Everyone is happy except me. You've all got your friends but I'm on my own. I wish I had parents and brothers and sisters like all of you do.'

'We're your friends,' said the little cat. 'We all love you very much.'

'I know you do,' said Test, hugging the little cat tightly. 'I know you do. But it's not the same as having a family of my own.'

A little green and red bird flew down to sit on the tree next to Test. It started to sing. The little cat looked up at it hungrily, but Test kept on hugging the cat tightly.

'Little bird, you're singing beautifully today,' said Test.

'Yes, I'm happy now that spring is here,' the bird said. 'You need to find your family, then you'll be happy too.'

'You're right little green and red bird, that's what I need to do,' said Test.

She went into the house and collected a few things in her favourite bag. She was careful to take the small piece of picture which was all she knew about her family. She packed some food, said goodbye to her dear animal friends and set off down the path.

She walked and walked and walked following the path straight ahead.

She came to a point where the path split into two. 'Which way now?' she asked herself. The sign in the road said:

'ZPD' to the right

'Much the same' to the left

'I wonder what ZPD is' Test thought. 'The only way I'll find out is by taking the path to ZPD!'

So, she turned right and continued walking. The path lead out of the forest into open country and she could see fields and hills ahead of her and a little town in the distance.

Morning turned to afternoon and afternoon to evening. She was tired and needed somewhere to lie down for the night. At last she came to the little town.

'Now what?' she said to herself. 'I don't know anyone here. Where can I stay?'

At the moment she saw a little girl watching her from a doorway.

'Hello' said Test. 'I'm looking for a place to sleep the night. Can you help me? I'll give you some food in return.'

'You can stay with me for the night if you want,' said the girl. 'My name's Informal but everyone calls me Observation, what's your name?'

'Test,' she replied. 'My real name's Formal but everyone calls me Test.'

Test and Observation shared the parcel of food that Test had brought with her. As they ate they talked and talked. It turned out that Observation was looking for her family too.

Test opened her bag and got out the piece of the picture. 'This is all I know about my family,' she said. 'I don't even know what the whole picture is!'

Observation didn't reply. Test looked up to see her new friend's face covered in amazement. 'Wait here!' she said. Observation jumped up and ran over to her bag in the corner of the room. She opened it, reached down to the bottom and pulled something out.

'Look,' she said sitting down next to Test. 'This is all I know about my family and it looks like another piece of the same picture. What can it mean?'

'I don't know,' said Test, looking thoughtful.

'I think we should continue our quest together,' said Observation. 'Maybe we'll find our families in the same place!'

In the morning they set off early, following the path out of the village. Soon they came to another split in the road. This time the sign said

'MI' to the right

'Much the same' to the left.

'What's MI?' Test said.

'No idea! But there's only one way to find out,' said Observation.

They turned right and set off down the path to MI. Soon they came to the small town. Everyone in the town was out in the street. People were dancing, singing, painting, talking, laughing and playing games.

'Wow,' said Test and Observation together. 'What a great place!'

People greeted them as they walked down the street, smiling and waving.

One little boy ran up to them.

'Hello', he said. 'Where have you come from? Where are you going?'

'We're on our way to find our families,' the two girls said.

'Oh, that's what I'm doing,' the little boy said. 'I came to this town a few days ago and everyone is so happy I stayed here. But it's really time to go. Can I come with you?'

The two girls looked at each other and then at the boy.

'OK', they said. 'What's your name?'

'Self,' the little boy replied.

So Test, Observation and Self set off down the path together.

They came to a split in the road. This time the sign said:

'Holistic' to the right

'Much the same' to the left

They looked at each other and without a word set off down the path to Holistic. The path twisted and turned, over hills and under bridges. At last the three friends came to the town.

'This must be Holistic,' Test said.

They wandered through the streets. It was a pretty place with lots of trees and parks. The houses had bright windows and doors and everything looked clean and sparkling. They walked through the gates to the park, found a perfect space under a tree and sat down to eat. As they spread their food on the grass, Observation noticed a boy hiding behind a tree watching them.

'Hey', she called out. 'Do you want to share our food with us?'

The boy came over shyly and sat down. 'My name's Portfolio,' he said. 'It's really kind of you. I'm very hungry and I can't pay you – but I can give you this.' He opened his bag and took out a piece of picture!

Test and Observation stared at him. Without saying a word they took out their pieces of picture and put them on the grass. The boy put his piece of picture next to theirs – and they matched! There were only two pieces missing! Self opened his bag, put his hand in, pulled something out and put it on the grass. It matched! The picture was nearly complete!

The four children looked at the picture and looked at each other. They smiled as they realized they had found what they were looking for – their brothers and sisters.

Suddenly there was a shout from behind them.

'Hey you, what are you doing?'

They turned and saw a man and a woman running towards them. The children were very frightened. They jumped up, grabbed their bags and ran, leaving the four pieces of the picture on the grass.

The man and the woman ran to where the children had been sitting. They knelt down on the grass and looked at the picture. Then the man took something out of his pocket and put it on the grass. Test, Observation, Self and Portfolio were watching from a distance. What were those people doing?

The man and the woman stood up and turned towards them.

'Children,' the woman called, 'don't be frightened. We're the people you've been looking for – come and see.' She was pointing to the picture on the grass.

The children walked over slowly to where the man and the woman were standing and looked down at the picture on the grass. It was complete!

'We're your parents, our name's Assessment' they said 'and you are our four wonderful children, Formal Assessment, Informal Assessment, Self Assessment and Portfolio Assessment. They opened their arms and the children ran to them. They cried tears of happiness and they hugged and hugged till they thought their arms were going to fall off.

'Now let's go home!'

The Assessment family walked off together hand in hand and they were never separated again.

The "Assessment Family"

Formal assessment: a fixed event, such as a test, with a beginning and an end, which is usually awarded a mark or a score.

Informal assessment: continuous monitoring, often with the use of checklists, of learner progress over time while learners are doing usual classroom tasks and activities.

Self-assessment: learners assessment of themselves.

Portfolio assessment: a collection of a learner's work over a period of time, which may include checklists from informal assessment, samples of classroom work and formal assessment and learner's self-assessment. The portfolio may be a collaborative venture between learner and teacher.

References

ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development. Ref: Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in Society*. Harvard University Press.

MI = Multiple Intelligences. Ref: Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of Mind: the theory of multiple intelligences*. New York: Basic Books

Melanie Williams is an experienced teacher trainer and materials writer for young learners. She is Series Editor of Penguin Young Readers and young learner specialist supervisor on two Masters Programmes. She is particularly interested in assessment, using readers in the classroom and the development of distance training materials.

email: melwilliams@wanadoo.fr

The Do's and Don'ts of Running a Conference

Wendy Superfine & Shelagh Rixon

For this birthday issue of the YL SIG newsletter, Shelagh Rixon and I have decided to write a short article about what we've learnt over the years about running EFL conferences .

There have been many very successful and notable conferences which the YL SIG has been involved in over the 18 years in which the SIG has existed. I cannot list them all but we have had events in many wonderful places such as Spain, Czech Republic, Austria, Turkey, Italy, Poland, Malta, Hungary, Portugal and Germany.

As I was involved with organising YL SIG events for 8 years, there have inevitably been a few moments when things were not going as well as expected and, with hindsight, we wished we had had a list of the following points to refer to at the time .

Shelagh has been closely involved in organising conferences for the British Council in Italy so, together, we decided we could offer some helpful and also cautionary advice for those who may ever get involved in planning an event in their country or in their organisation. We also look at some *do's* and *don'ts* for the participants.

This is not intended to be a list of the detailed notes on how to organise a conference for the YL SIG which is available through IATEFL, so I do not want to repeat all the points which have been set down in that document. However, we hope this will make interesting reading.

As each conference and event is organised and negotiated individually, it is sometimes difficult to generalise on all the aspects of how to arrange an event in a suitable venue for those interested in teaching EFL to Young Learners. Much of this is simple common sense but this often seems to

evaporate during the hectic period before the event.

General points for organisers

1 Do read the IATEFL information on organising a conference. Mistakes are often avoided by a little more thought & planning in the early stages.

2 Experience has shown that YL SIG events are best organised in places where there is a need for speakers to be invited from overseas rather than just using local speakers, as this does not necessarily require the support of IATEFL.

3 It is best to arrange a conference in a venue where there are sufficient numbers of interested participants who are available at the times requested eg Friday afternoon through to Sunday. Week day conferences are rarely successful unless it is a holiday. Check with the host organisation when the local holidays are, as this can affect transport and accommodation .

4 Do ensure that the venue has the right facilities and is easily accessible from the UK as well as for the local participants. It is sometimes possible to organise local transport for the participants to be taken to and from the conference. This will ensure a good attendance throughout the whole event. Don't assume that participants will be able to find information on local transport independently and easily. If the venue requires an hour's bus or train travel from the point of entry to the country, say so and include information on timetables and location of stations etc. We recall the time when a conference in Italy was stated in the handout as being near Rome but it took at least one and a half hours to reach the venue from the airport. It is therefore essential to liaise with the local tourist office for the directions on how to get to the event.

5 It is necessary to provide a flyer containing all registration forms and details and this should be circulated on the website. This should be prepared well in advance of the event and in time for

inclusion in the next newsletter. A suitable information sheet giving details of how to get there, map of the venue and hotels must also be sent to participants when they register.

Budget

6 If it is a SIG event, do liaise with IATEFL Head Office over the budget. In order for the SIG and the host organisation to run the event, the budget must be agreed by head office.

7 It is sometimes difficult to forecast the numbers of expected participants but the budget must be based on a realistic assessment of the possible number of participants. The aim of most events is to break even and the number of registered participants may be less than the actual capacity of the venue. Planning will go ahead according to the budget. If there is a possibility that minimum numbers may not be achieved it is essential to adjust the budget accordingly before the event.

To do this some important points must be considered:

- The cost to the participant must not change once it has been advertised.
- If the event is going to make a loss, it is essential to look for further funding or to extend the advertising to attract more participants.
- It may be necessary to cut out some of the extras such as after conference entertainment or meals in order to meet the budget.

8 IATEFL will not be able to advance any money to the partner organisation

9 It is essential to include the costs of the IATEFL and partner organisation co-ordinators. It is essential that these two people attend the conference. Sometimes one or the other can get sponsorship but it is sensible to include these costs.

10 Key note speakers need to be covered for their travel and expenses and may also receive a fee. It is worth approaching publishers or institutions / organisations who may be willing to sponsor their authors or staff to speak at conference events.

Accommodation

11 Accommodation is best arranged through a local travel office or a Tourist Information

Bureau. Alternatively, just send a list of accommodation and prices to the participants and ask them to contact the hotel directly by phone or by email.

Venue details

12 It is important to have a venue which includes a large room for plenary sessions, various size rooms /space for a large resources exhibition, space for seminars [usually at least 8], a suitable room for committee / speaker valuables and luggage, cloakroom facilities, facilities for refreshments and meals within the close vicinity. It is also important to be able to recruit or hire local helpers, technicians, cleaners, students etc..

13. Remember that publishers can give you very important and valuable support, and if you are arranging a book exhibition, try to place it somewhere where participants cannot miss it! It is understandable if publishers react negatively to being put in a place where few people come. If you do have to put the exhibition somewhere out of the way, invent ingenious lures to make sure that participants go there, for example, raffles and competitions with announcements of winners made in the book exhibition zone. This is a good idea even when the book exhibition is placed centrally.

Programming

14 For larger events, you will have to tread a narrow line between packing in as many sessions as possible - which means parallel sessions - and avoiding clashes of interest when speakers or topics of interest to many are appearing at the same time. If possible, allow some empty slots on your time table so that you can fit in repeat sessions if many people request them. If this is your plan, you should of course warn speakers in your invitation to them that they may be asked to repeat a session, and get their agreement beforehand.

15 Have a clear policy about what a 'workshop' is. In some cultures the expectation is that it can be just another input session but with smaller numbers, in others it is there for participants to exchange experiences on a theme co-ordinated by the workshop leader, especially if it is a follow up to a talk. Having, as a speaker, got this wrong [in both directions!] a couple of times, I think that it

is worthwhile making the expectations clear to both participants and presenters. Make sure also that a 'follow up' workshop actually comes after the talk to which it refers. This may seem obvious but in the heat of timetabling it hasn't always come out that way! Memories of talking to a completely different audience in a workshop following the day after a plenary session which was attended by teachers who could only come for 1 day, are clear in the minds of several speakers!

16 Sessions should not be too short or too long. 50 minutes seems to work well. 40 minutes often seems too short.

18 Do leave ample time for people to change rooms between sessions, especially if the event is spread out over a large site. 10 minutes between sessions and a half hour coffee break and a 'locally acceptably' lunch break should allow elasticity for things which have got out of kilter to get back into synchronisation. However, do not let speakers think that this gives them leeway to talk beyond their time limits! Memories of Italian teachers immediately spring to mind as they were trying to find their way around a large maze of an Italian school with only a few minutes to spare and all arriving late for the sessions.

19 If possible, try and arrange for a publication of the conference proceedings to be compiled. It is a useful collection of material and the cost of printing can be negotiated with IATEFL depending on the size and usefulness of the publication. We have several publications which are still available from the Head office and contain useful information and ideas on teaching Young Learners.

Do's and don'ts for participants

1 Do make sure you know the exact location of the venue. Note from Shelagh: and this means that the organisers should include its address on every communication. Twice in the past 10 years I have had to use extreme detective skills because the venue address was not on my joining notes and I had not yet received my copy of the programme [which did have the address on, but was of course sitting at the secret venue!] These were not IATEFL conferences I hasten to add!

2 Be realistic about the limitations that there are on being in two places at the same time or on the

organisers being able to timetable things so that you can go to absolutely everything you want. You naturally have the right to expect them to do a sensible job in timetabling, but remember that what you are attending is a conference, not a course!

3 Do try to be punctual, and not walk into sessions late, which is disruptive to all, or [worse] leave them early, which provokes paranoia in most speakers. You may have the most pressing engagement, but the poor speaker is always going to think that it is his or her fault. Note the remarks above about speakers often not being paid a fee and treat them kindly!

We wish you success for all the future YL events and hope to see you there!

Wendy Superfine is a freelance teacher trainer and author of primary EFL materials. She is a past Joint Coordinator of the YL SIG. She now runs the Primary Teacher Training Summer courses at the Lake School, Oxford.

Shelagh Rixon is a Lecturer in the Centre for English Language Teacher Education at the University of Warwick, where she co-ordinates the MA in the Teaching of English to Young Learners. Some of the experiences she refers to in the article come from her days as a British Council Officer when she organised several national ELT conferences in Italy.

The Five-minute Gap-fill

Andy Jackson

A gap-fill exercise is an excellent way of revising a topic you have just covered, and generating your own gives you the opportunity to select items you wish your pupils to focus on. The Internet now provides a huge resource of material, but adapting it may seem daunting and time-consuming, unless you are one of those lucky people who have had the time to learn all the little shortcuts in MS Word. Below is a quick method of creating a gap-fill text using Internet Explorer and Microsoft Word – one that students could even do for each other!

A. Getting your Text

1. Go to www.biography.com (or any other suitable site – the language here is fairly advanced)
2. Enter the name of the person whose biography you wish to read in the search box on the left and **click Go**
3. If the name is not unique, you may have to choose from a shortlist (with summary details) and click on the name you are looking for.
4. A biography of your person should now appear. Holding down the left mouse button, highlight the text you wish to copy – but don't include any graphics or pictures. (If it is a very long text, you may want to copy the whole thing and edit it down in Word before converting it to a gap-fill.)
5. Press **CTRL+C** to copy the text.
6. Open a new document in **Word** and paste the text in using **CTRL+V** or the **Paste** button.

B. Handling your text

1. If the text appears in a table, you may wish to get rid of the table. Highlight the table and use the **Table** menu to convert table to text. You may also wish to change the font and font size. (Use **CTL A** to select the whole text and then change the font name in the box in the toolbar, and the font size.)
2. Place your cursor on the first word you wish to replace with a gap, and **Double-left-click** to highlight the whole word.
3. Type (_____) to replace word (the word will disappear as soon as you start to type).
4. Highlight (_____) plus one space, and click **copy**.
5. **Double-click** on next word you want to blank out and click **paste**.
6. Repeat step 5 for every word you wish to replace. (I find it quicker to use the **F4** key (repeat action) rather than **paste** every time).
7. You may wish to go back over the gaps at the end and add a number at the beginning of each one for easy reference -e.g. (1 _____) (Leave this till the end otherwise **F4** will not repeat the right action!)
8. To make it easier for pupils to write in the words, highlight the whole text (**CTRL + A**) and type **CTRL+1.5** or **CTRL+2** to increase line spacing (**CTRL+1** will set the text back to single line spacing).

Andy Jackson is Manager of the Young Learner Department of the Bell Educational Trust, and has been involved in running intensive residential summer courses in the UK since 1984. Prior to that he spent 20 years teaching overseas in Europe, Africa and the Middle East in a wide range of institutions.

News from the Net 7

Chris Etchells

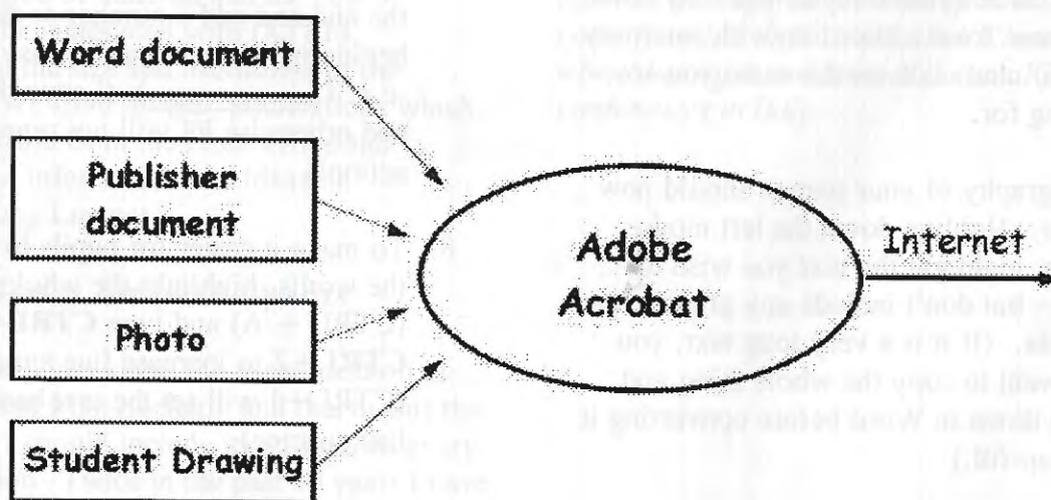
Welcome to another News from the Net. Actually, this article would be better titled News *on* the Net, because that's what it's about – publishing a student journal on the Internet.

I described in the (northern) Spring 2002 edition of this newsletter how to create a simple web page using Microsoft Word. That's OK for instant fun. But if you're serious about publishing an entire student journal on the Worldwide Web then we need to go a little further. This article will explain how to use Adobe Acrobat pdf (Portable Document File) to do this.

First though, why publish an electronic journal at all? Why not stick to good old-fashioned paper?

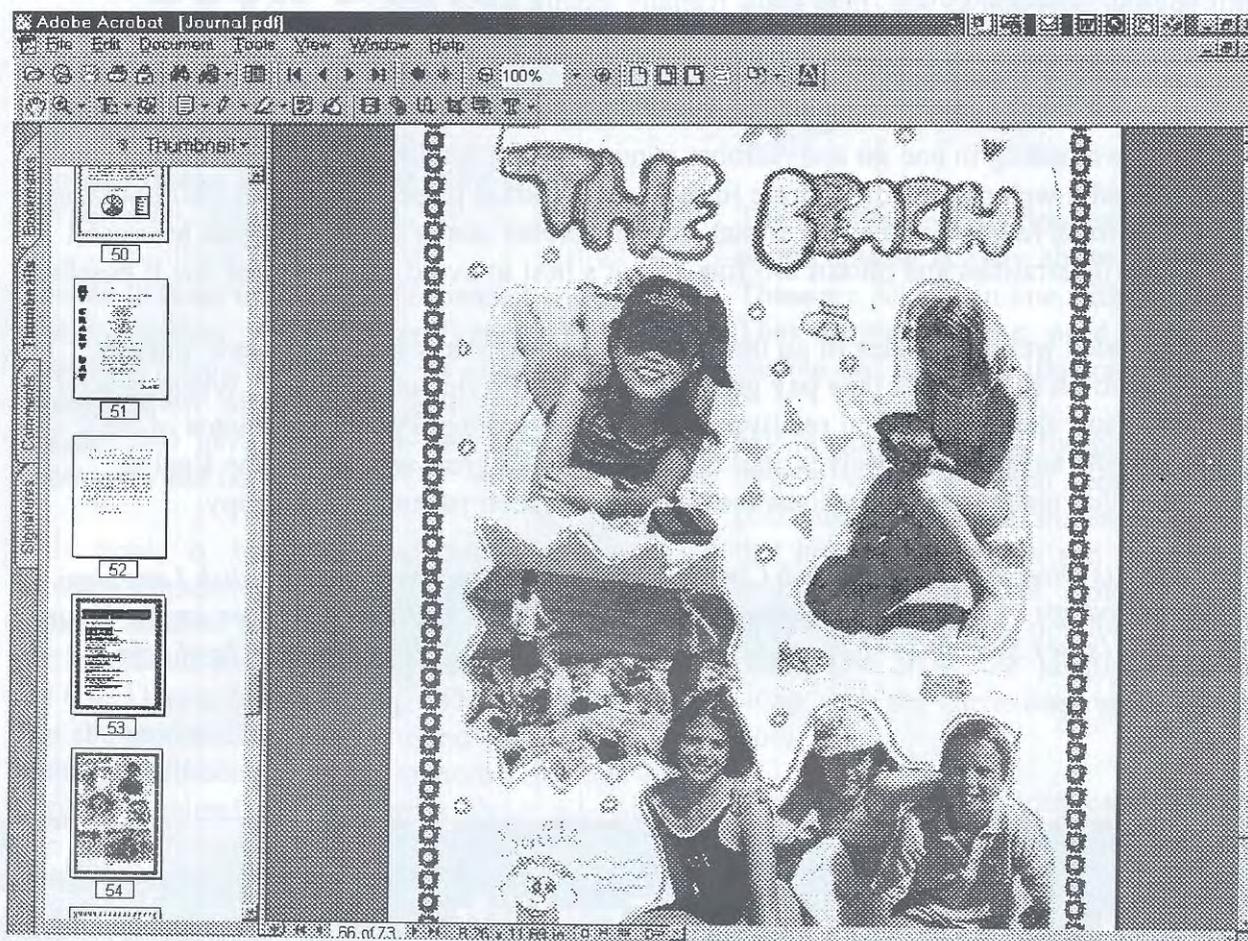
1. Paper journals use up a lot of paper: not just in publishing but also producing drafts. Costs quickly mount up and there's no point in wasting paper when there is a good alternative.
2. Publishing is expensive even if it's done in-house, for example using a photocopier. In addition the job of copying, collating pages, stapling or binding is time-consuming and the print-run is invariably more or less than needed.
3. A journal published on the Internet has no cost constraints: the only consideration is file size.
4. An electronic journal faithfully preserves the look of the original source documents and can include full-colour photos and illustrations at no extra cost. It can also include working links to other web pages and to email addresses.
5. A journal published on the Internet doesn't deteriorate with time (compare a paper journal stuffed into a student's bag!) and is available to friends, relatives, in fact anyone, anywhere, who we want to see it. It is therefore a more effective way of showcasing students' work.

Adobe Acrobat works like this:



Adobe takes any source – scanned photos, student drawings, Publisher files, Word files – and combines them into an Adobe pdf preserving the exact look of the original document. Your students can work in whatever format they feel comfortable with, while the end product can be viewed on the Internet and printed out by anyone using a standard 'Reader.' Many modern browsers come with Acrobat Reader already built in. If not, it is available as a free download from www.adobe.com

Here is an example of a student journal page viewed in Acrobat:



A lot is lost, I'm afraid, by reproducing the page here in black and white. It will give you some idea however and you can see the original- and the rest of the journal - in glorious colour at <http://www.countryschool.com/journal>

Notice the thumbnail photos on the left. These can be used to navigate between the different pages.

To get photos and student illustrations like this into a journal you first need to scan them. If you haven't done this before, I can assure you it's easy. I use and enthuse about Hewlett Packard's combined printer / scanner / copier, the PSC750. It costs about 150 EUR.

Once you've scanned your document into Word (or wherever) and added any text, headings etc. it's a simple matter to convert the document into an Adobe pdf. First you will need the latest version of Adobe Acrobat (the Reader only reads; you will need the full version to create Adobe pdf files.) This is available from www.adobe.com for about 230 EUR. I think this is good value for a product that can be used time after time and for many other institutional purposes where it's necessary to put documents, whatever their original format, on the Web.

Once installed, a 'convert to Adobe pdf' command appears in your word processing and publishing toolbars. Press this, and the program does the rest. Save all your converted files into a folder. Then open Adobe Acrobat and begin building your journal. To do this you open the first page of your journal then use the 'insert page' command (available when you right click on a thumbnail) to add extra pages. You can also add various functions such as internal bookmarks and external web links and email addresses.

You will then need to publish the complete journal, as a pdf document, to the Web. This is easy using ftp but, if this is gobbledygook to you, then ask a friendly technician to help.

One word of warning: our latest course journal, produced by English Country School students in Summer 2002, weighs in at a hefty 13 Megabytes. On a standard dial-up Internet connection that makes it impractical for downloading in one go and Acrobat is not good for reading large documents on the fly. I therefore created a web page with separate links to each journal page. This works well but takes a bit more effort. The main reason for the size is that Adobe Acrobat doesn't deal well with Microsoft Border Art (scanned illustrations and photos are fine.) So it's best to avoid using Border Art if possible.

Students have responded well to the idea of an on-line journal. When they know that their work is going to be showcased on the Internet they pay greater attention to style and accuracy. When they go home they proudly show their friends and relatives what they have done. People see photos of the school, of young people enjoying themselves, and their work. It's a great advert for The English Country School and that makes me, as much as the students and their parents, very happy.

Christopher Etchells is Director of The English Country School, running residential English Language and Activity summer camps in the UK for children and teenagers. He is Web Site Manager for the Young Learners and Global Issues SIGs of IATEFL and can be contacted at etchells@country.school.com

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Book Review

Tell it Again! The New Storytelling Handbook for Primary Teachers

Gail Ellis and Jean Brewster

Penguin Books 2002, ISBN 0 582 44774 7

Reviewed by Debbie Smith

This book is an updated and expanded version of *The Storytelling Handbook for Primary Teachers* originally published in 1991. It claims to be an amalgamation of the first edition along with insights that have come with new methodology, experience and confidence.

This book is based around twelve carefully selected authentic storybooks written for native speaker children and sourced mainly from British publishers. It is aimed at non-native speakers in the 8 to 11 year old age group. The authors claim that the stories come from around the world and include traditional stories, modern retellings of fairytales, animal stories, stories about everyday life, stories from other cultures and fantasy stories. These include: *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*; *Princess Smartypants* and *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?*

The book is easy to use and well set out. In my opinion it is a good cross between a methodology and an activity book. It is simple to follow and it is effortless to find what you are looking for as the contents are, in the main, set out in a very straight forward to follow way. It is divided into three parts: Methodology, Story Notes and Worksheets.

The first part of the book, 'Methodology', gives extensive practical guidance on using authentic story books in the primary classroom. It covers how to select stories, how to use them, how to manage your class while you are using them along with the skills you can expect to develop in the children and how you can develop these skills.

The 'Story Notes' section includes an average of 6 ready made lessons per featured book that pulls 6-10 hours of classroom activities and learning from each storybook. Some teachers will be skeptical about using a single storybook for this amount of class time but Ellis and Brewster skillfully show how this can be done in a motivating, challenging and fun way while developing positive attitudes to language learning. Many of the ideas will act as a

springboard for your own ideas and soon you will find that you are beginning to adapt them to other storybooks you have on the shelf. You can follow the sequence of stories in the book or you can dip into any of them as and when it fits your own needs.

The 'Worksheets' section includes a wide range of photocopiable activity sheets to support learning. These are A4 size in line with the rest of the book. They are well set out, need minimal cutting and pasting and are nicely illustrated.

My favourite areas of the book are the ideas for developing social and emotional Intelligence (citizenship) and the student observation sheets that help you to assess and map the progress of each student. However, along with this Ellis and Brewster also map a possible syllabus and give charts that show the language and topic areas along with the curriculum areas covered in each story.

There is an accompanying cassette which you can purchase separately. It contains some very jolly songs and rhymes as well as many of the stories ready recorded. It is good for the children to hear the story from another voice other than your own but is not essential in order to use the books properly.

The only drawback with this book is that it is a bit pricey, as you also have to buy most of the storybooks separately, each costing in the range of 5 to 10 Pounds Sterling each. I would recommend that you check that this book is what you are looking for by downloading the free sample activities from the website PenguinEnglish.com

However, this aside, I would say it is the best book I have seen that shows you how to integrate stories into the curriculum and how to extract the maximum learning from a single authentic text. Well worth the initial investment and an absolute must for any 'Real Book' fan.

Debbie Smith is a freelance teacher and teacher trainer based in the UK. Debbie is joint Events Co-ordinator for the YL SIG.

Report on IATEFL/BERLITZ KIDS YL Conference, Bonn, 31 May- 1 June, 2002

Gordon Lewis

On 31st May and 1st June, 2002, IATEFL and Berlitz Kids hosted the first International Conference on teaching English to Young Learners held in Germany. With English being introduced across the Federal Republic in primary school, such a conference was long overdue and met with great interest.

Under warm and sunny skies, the conference attracted over 250 registered participants from all across Germany and neighboring countries such as Austria, Poland, Switzerland, Belgium and the Netherlands. The atmosphere was relaxed and friendly, due in no small measure to the excellent facilities at the Stadthalle in Bonn with large bright conference rooms and a central outdoor café area all set in the middle of a beautiful park.

The conference schedule was anchored by four plenary talks. *Gail Ellis* opened the proceedings with a very warm and informative talk about learning English through Storytelling, which was a special focus of the conference. *Andrew Wright* expanded on the same topic with a very lively presentation of many practical activities from his books. *Dr. Werner Bleyhl* provided a much needed theoretical foundation for understanding the needs of beginning language learners. Finally, after some uncertainty if he could make it, *Dr. Hans Eberhard Piepho* arrived and held an eagerly awaited talk to a full auditorium on activating young learners.

Following the workshops, there were three concurrent workshops per session. The presenters came from the UK, the USA and, of course, Germany. Among the many highlights, the following were particularly well received by the

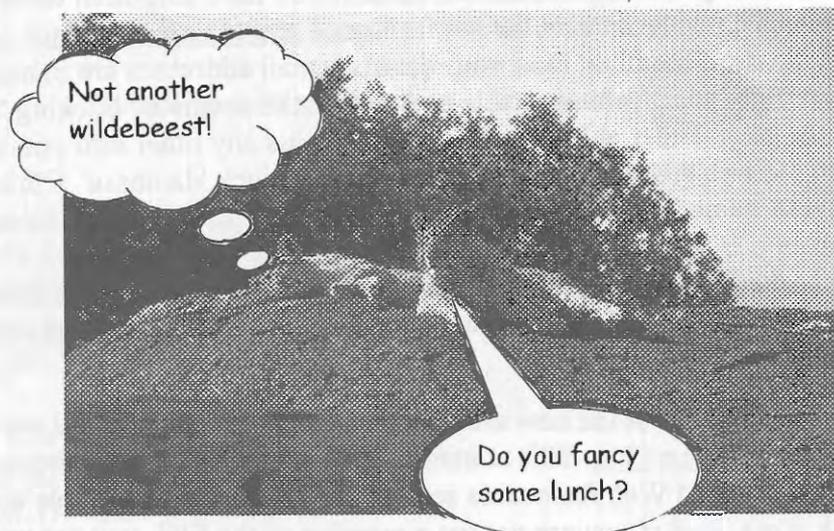
participants: *Debbie Smith* gave valuable insight into working with mixed ability classrooms. *Annette Holz* spoke on the important subject of bridging the gap between primary and secondary EFL, a quite contentious area in German curriculum design. *Wendy Superfine* gave valuable tips on how to design a topic-based syllabus. *Guenther Bedson* held a very practical and humorous workshop on games for young learners. *Renate Kreis* added more practical ideas for the classroom in her workshop on songs, chants and rhymes, while *Richard Martin*, *Gisela Schulz-Steinbach*, *Mira Wegen* and *Jutta Pflingsten-Kuechler* all contributed to the topic of storytelling. *Sandie Mourao* gave one of the few presentations aimed at the pre-primary learner, describing making mini-flashcards with her very young learners.

The Bonn Conference marked a very important first step towards closer cooperation between IATEFL and German educators. The interaction between international guests and German teachers both during the presentations and in the breaks was invaluable and many personal and professional connections were made. In addition, co-hosting the conference with Berlitz Kids demonstrated that cooperation between private enterprise and international organizations is possible and can yield very positive results.

Gordon Lewis is joint Events Coordinator of the YL SIG.

CATS BIRTHDAY CAPTION COMPETITION!

Making a fun worksheet or photoboard using MS Word and win a REALBOOK prize!



- 1 Click Insert on your toolbar and select Picture - *from Clipart* for pictures, cartoons etc. that are already available*, or *from File* for your own pictures (where did you save them?)
- 2 If you use your own picture, size it and crop it to fit the space you want.
- 3 Open the Drawing toolbar (if it isn't open, right click on the existing toolbars at the top and then left click on Drawing)
- 4 Click on Autoshapes
- 5 Place the cursor on Callouts and move it over to click on the shape you want from the selection that appears (there's a square speech bubble, a round speech bubble, a 'think' bubble and lots of other fun stuff.)
- 6 Move onto your page and holding the left mouse down, insert your speech bubble. You can adjust the place shape, size using the little handles (square boxes) and direction of the pointer by dragging the little yellow box.
- 7 Click on the return mark in the bubble to add text (you can change the font and the size as normal).

Send your picture and caption to Eleanor Watts, e.watts@blueyonder.co.uk to arrive by 31st May 2003.

The winner will receive a copy of

JET: REALBOOKS! IN THE PRIMARY CLASSROOM

By Sandie Mourão (Mary Glasgow Scholastic, 2003)

A book of "fun, exciting activities and worksheets based on a wonderful range of original and authentic titles, perfect for children, aged 3 to 12 years, learning English" (Scholastic catalogue).

The winning and runner-up contributions will be published in the Autumn 2003 issue of CATS.

(Ed's note: With big thanks to Andy Jackson for explaining the steps and inspiring the idea for this competition and to Mary Glasgow Scholastic Publishers for donating the prize.)

Message for Internet YL Discussion List Users

Recently a few messages have crept onto the discussion list that do not belong there. We are keen to ensure that members of the discussion list are *bona fide* Young Learner professionals. For this reason we are asking all members of the discussion list to identify themselves. This should be done as follows:

1. Browse to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/younglearners/>
2. Sign in with your Yahoo! Groups username and password. If you have forgotten these use the 'sign in' help to recover them or, as a last resort, contact the list facilitator arnoldhk@netvigator.com
3. From the menu on the left, click 'member' Find your details (email addresses are in alphabetical order, or use the search box), then click your Yahoo! profile and update the details by clicking 'edit profile information' at the top of the page. Enter at least your real name plus any other info you wish to share.
4. Return to the discussion list web site. From the menu on the left, click 'database'. Click 'Contacts List' then 'add record.' Provide your name, email, city, country and bio information. Click Save Record.

It is in your own interests to do this, raising your and your institution's professional profile and making it easier for everyone to network. Subscribers who do not identify themselves will, after a certain time, be removed from the list.

Finally there is just time to tell you about the new members' area at the main Young Learners web site at www.countryschool.com/younglearners.htm This contains excellent summaries of discussions that have taken place, together with an updated Web Resources section and, soon, downloadable copies of newsletters articles. Check it out. And if you are not yet a member of the SIG, you are welcome to join us. See http://www.countryschool.com/YL_join.htm for further info.

Christopher Etchells, Web Site Manager, IATEFL Young Learners, etchells@countryschool.com

YL SIG discussion list

Have you got questions to ask and ideas to share?

Recent topics have included personal experiences of learning a second language, a discussion about reading schemes and, more recently, the collaborative compilation of a reference list for those involved in teacher training for young learners.

The more people join in and participate, the more everybody gains!

We look forward to seeing you there!

APPI / IATEFL Conference Proceedings

Current practices: a look at teaching English to children in Portugal

Over 100 pages long, this collection from the APPI / IATEFL conference in Lisbon, November, 2001 contains all the plenary speeches and some 20 presentation write ups including contributions on:

Teacher training;
Vocabulary teaching;
Arts & crafts, drama and music;
Early Literacy;
Working with stories and using authentic materials;
Techniques;
Assessment.

IATEFL Members can buy this publication for £5.00, €7.50 or \$8.50, plus P & P*. Note that you can send cheques in **Pounds Sterling, Euros or US Dollars**. Calculate how much you need to send and make your cheque out to "Sandie Mourão (APPI / IATEFL)". Send your request with payment to:

APPI & IATEFL Conference Proceedings
C/o Sandie Mourão
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Processing requests is likely to take about three weeks, so be patient!

You will also be able to buy this publication at the SIG stand during the Brighton Conference, so look out for it!

*UK & Europe £1.50 / €2.30 / \$2.50

*Rest of world £2.50 / €3.70 / \$4.00

FUTURE YL SIG EVENTS

22nd April 2003

YL SIG with Teacher Trainers & Educators SIG

Joint Pre-Conference Event

Brighton Conference Centre UK

23rd – 26th April 2003

37th International IATEFL Conference

Brighton Conference Centre UK

19th – 21st September 2003

Starting now: English in Primary Schools

YL SIG & Volkshochschule der Stadt Bielefeld Germany

For more information, a speaker proposal form or registration form contact:
wolfgang.ridder@bielefeld.de or debbie.smith@mistral.co.uk

YOUNG LEARNERS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

The Young Learners Special Interest Group was initiated in 1985 and has now evolved into a flourishing world-wide network of teachers of children and teenagers up to 17 years.

Aims

- To provide information on recent developments in the education of young learners in the field of English as a foreign language,
- To help teachers and teacher trainers circulate ideas, news etc. and to meet the greater demand for communication in the fast expanding world of teaching EFL to young learners.

What do we offer?

The Newsletter This is a bi-annual publication concerned with teaching EFL/ESL to children and teenagers. It includes:

- practical ideas for teachers of young learners,
- articles on methodology and theory,
- details of future events such as conferences and seminars,
- reports of recent events
- book reviews.

Other publications Joint SIG publications are available from the IATEFL office. These are the proceedings of joint seminars and conferences which have been held recently. This year there will be a free publication for all members of IATEFL called **Storytelling in ELT** which will be of particular interest to teachers of young learners.

Conferences and seminars The SIG organises a Young Learner 'track' at the annual IATEFL conference and other UK and international events which are often organised in conjunction with other SIG groups. The SIG 'track' covers topics which include infant, primary and secondary practice as well as teacher training issues.

Internet discussion list A lively forum to exchange ideas, discuss key issues and keep fully up to date with everything that's happening in the world of YL English language teaching.

To find out more about the YL SIG and IATEFL please contact:

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YL SIG Website: <http://www.countryschool.com/younglearners.htm>

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Gordon Lewis, USA

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Eleanor Watts, UK

Discussion List Moderator

Wendy Arnold, Hong Kong

The newsletter is published twice a year. We welcome contributions or suggestions for future newsletters on any aspects of teaching English to Young Learners up to 17 years.

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