

IN THIS ISSUE

Letter from the YL SIG Coordinator1	Teaching Science through English18
Sandie Mourão	Sarah Phillips
Editorial3	Presenting Work that Moves23
Kay Bentley	Liz Jones
Childspeak4	Teaching Grammar to Teenagers26
Bettina Ribes-Gil	Mario Rinvolucri
YLS and Bilingual Education: Brunei7	Highlights from YL Discussion List30
Dr. Gary M. Jones	Wendy Arnold
Bilingual Education: The Netherlands11	News from the Net32
Stephen Smith	Chris Etchells
At the Chalkface13	Book Review34
Lisette Bentzvelen	Annabelle O'Toole
What do the pupils think?15	YLSIG Finances36
Rodenburg and Syam	Andy Jackson
In Praise of Bilingual Education: India16	About the YL SIG37
Arvind Gupta	Future Events38

Letter from the YL SIG Coordinator

Dear YL SIG Members,

Spring has sprung, the daffodils are in flower, lambs bleat in the fields and CATS has dropped through the door! Yet another year, and as you will read, an exciting project led by Kay Bentley to bring bilingual education as the theme for this year's Young Learner Sig. newsletter. Many thanks, Kay, for your work on this publication.

We have had an interesting six months, and our YLSIG discussion list has played a huge role in this excitement. Those of you who are members of our discussion list will have taken part in the excellent discussion led by Peter Westwood at Hong Kong university, in November, entitled "Meeting individual needs of young learners: how much differentiation in approach is really possible in the classroom?". As I write this we have just finished another discussion led by Annie Hughes on songs and one led by Mel Williams on assessment. In April there is a discussion with David Nunan. Wendy Arnold is to be thanked and applauded for her enthusiasm in fulfilling her optimistic objectives for this very valuable resource.

During autumn the discussion list was very active when the YL SIG committee announced that they would like the list to become YLSIG members only. The decision was made after more than a year of debate and we received much negative response in reply. The YLSIG discussion list is made up mostly of non IATEFL YLSIG members and it is this very reason that drew the committee to conclude that such a valuable resource should be one of the carrots: join IATEFL YLSIG and benefit from the discussion list. However, those subscribers who were non-YLSIG members and who benefited from the excellent input were aghast that they would find themselves without it! Of course, I would have been too!

After further debate, we decided that those who had worked with us on the discussion list to bring it to the standard of today should be given the benefit of remaining on it. However, as from January 1st 2004, new subscribers are given a trial period of 3 months to try out the discussion list and are invited to join the YLSIG. If, after three months, they have not joined the YLSIG, their subscription to the discussion list will be suspended. The decision has met no shouts of disapproval. On the contrary, a few subscribers, IATEFL YLSIG and non YLSIG members, have voiced their appreciation. We are glad we have managed to compromise!

Until early December there were just 45 YLSIG members on the discussion list and the voluntary work the committee was undertaking was benefiting over 200 non-YLSIG members. Since then the number of YLSIG members has risen to nearly 100. We have made a concerted effort to inform and encourage our YLSIG members via email messages to join. 100 YLSIG members together in etherland is fantastic, but I would like to see this number double. What a great networking tool we have. So if you are still not using our discussion list, please do make moves in that direction!

Once again I encourage all our YLSIG members to make sure their email contact is up to date at IATEFL head office. I am happy to do this if you send me a message with your name, membership number and email contact.

My coordinator's letter is full of discussion list comments, but I cannot leave without thanking my other colleagues on the YLSIG committee for their continued support and hard work over the last six months. Gordon Lewis and Debbie Candy are beavering away with contacts in Hong Kong and Latvia in preparation for YL conferences in 2005. Chris Etchells remains faithful to the web and has made huge improvements. Carol Read our joint newsletter editor, is supporting Kay and organising advertisements, and Andy Jackson has his finger on the pulse of membership and finance. As ever, I am proud to be part of such a team of hard working professionals. A big thanks for their time and patience!

We are looking for new volunteers to work on our YLSIG committee. I will have been coordinator for two years this summer and will be moving on. If you are interested in joining us, and later taking on a specific role within the committee, please consider sending in a proposal. We need volunteers who enjoy working as a team and who believe strongly in what they do. I will be happy to explain what is needed if you send me an email to nettlehouse@mail.telepac.pt

I hope you all enjoy this first issue of 2004 and I look forward to seeing some of you at IATEFL Liverpool.

Sandie Mourão
IATEFL YLSIG Coordinator

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Editorial

Kay Bentley

Welcome to the first of two issues of **CATS** on the theme of bilingual education.

Why bilingual education? Sandie Mourão in her opening letter began by celebrating the arrival of spring and I believe celebration is what is needed to accompany the remarkable achievement of young learners who communicate in two or more languages.

Defining bilingual education is complex. As Sarah Phillips writes on page 18, '*there are literally hundreds of definitions of bilingual education*'. However, what is perhaps more relevant is to emphasise the importance of bilingual education. To quote Stephen Krashen in a recent interview printed in *NALDIC NEWS 31 (December, 2003)*.

'I think bilingual education has two underlying principles. First, if you give people subject matter knowledge in the first language, the English they hear and read is more comprehensible. Secondly, literacy transfers across languages.

Educators acknowledge that the process young learners experience to attain biliteracy is an intricate and fascinating one. Through reading the articles in this issue, a picture of what is happening in bilingual programmes around the world emerges:

- From Switzerland, **Bettina Ribes-Gil** describes the initial process of language learning for a multilingual child.
- In Brunei, **Dr Gary M. Jones** discusses the development of bilingual education with reference to Jim Cummins' BICS/ CALP theory, then suggests a way forward.
- From The Netherlands, **Stephen Smith**, a trainer, **Lisette Bentzelsen**, a teacher, and **two teenage pupils** give the ups (mostly) and downs (a few) on bilingual education.
- From India, **Arvind Gupta** presents his perspective as a writer and teacher of bilingual pupils.
- In Spain, **Sarah Phillips** offers ideas for teaching science experiments to bilingual learners.

In addition to science experiments, there are further practical ideas for the classroom: **Mario Rinvoluceri** puts forward 'grammar' lesson plans to motivate teenagers and **Liz Jones** gives ideas for using ICT with bilingual pupils.

We also have **Annabelle O'Toole's** book review on assessment and there are features from committee members, **Chris Etchells**, **Wendy Arnold** and **Andy Jackson**.

To end my first editorial for **CATS**, I'd like to thank the Young Learner SIG committee for encouraging me to follow in **Eleanor Watts'** footsteps by accepting the role of joint editor. More particularly, thank you to **Carol Read** for guiding me through the ins and outs of compiling this issue. The next should be easier!

Childspeak!

(or infant multilingual acquisition)

Bettina Ribes-Gil

This article focuses on a personal naturalistic case study based on observations of the emerging multilingual speech of Eugenie

Introduction

A child is normally classified as an infant up to four or five years old, the period in which language is in its primary stage. At the time of this study Eugenie was two-and-a-half. Her mother speaks to her in Spanish (although her mother tongue is French), the carer speaks in Latin-American Spanish which includes lexical variations comparable to those found between American and British English. Her father speaks to her in French. One grandmother speaks English, the other French. One grandfather speaks Spanish, the other French. Her parents (multilingual themselves) usually speak French together and they live in the francophone region of Switzerland where identical situations to the above are the norm (see my previous article *Bringing up children in a multilingual environment* (Modern English Teacher Vol.8, No.1, January 1999)).

Infant linguistic development

Eugenie perceives language for what it is – a tool for communication – and experiences no mental block nor embarrassment. Each family environment is distinct but an overall significant factor is the extent of the child's parental involvement and other positive emotional bonds encountered in daily interaction which demonstrate to the child the link languages have with everyday life. Eugenie distinguishes various contexts for simultaneous acquisition of three languages (Spanish, French and English), such as mother/father, home/kindergarten

or grandparents/carer, and she tries to assimilate the language of her conversation partners. It is generally accepted that infants learn about one word every three days until about 15 to 18 months, when they accelerate to an average of ten new words daily.

Baby talk

Eugenie's initial step into her multilingual word was **cooing** an indistinct variety of sounds, which together with crying and burping was also helping to control her airflow thus preparing her for adult speech. All babies sound alike at the cooing stage in whichever language environment they live. This was followed by a second stage, at around six months old, when the coos took on the vowel sounds of the languages she heard spoken in her immediate environment, thus she progressed to **babbling** consonants and vowels using familiar intonation patterns, producing syllables such as:

Ma-ma, pa-pa (French/Spanish),
Agoo, da-da (English)

First steps in simultaneous acquisition

The **one-word** stage was reached around one year old when Eugenie often produced holophrases:

Pussy? (interrogative intonation) – interpreted as "Is that a cat?"

Later, having made the connection between sounds and objects, Eugenie produced **two-word** utterances, usually a noun-verb combination:

dolly sleep, garçon crie [Fr.]

Then she added adjectives and finally adverbs as she progressed to the **multi-word** stage, sometimes labelled the **telegraphic** stage because infants initially omit function words such as prepositions, auxiliary verbs and affixes:

Little sister cry loud.

Adults tend to address infants using the third person thinking it is easier for their comprehension. My study confirmed this:

Papa fait ceci [Fr.] = Daddy does this = (I do this)

Abuelito te voy a leer un libro [Sp.] = Grandpa is going to read you a book = (I'm going to read you a book)

Let *Granny brush your hair* = (Let me brush your hair)

Consequently Eugenie imitated what she heard and initially only conjugated verbs in the third person, engulfing everyone indiscriminately. Pronouns caused her confusion and it was some time before she generated the meanings of you/me, toi/moi, tu/yo, unless they were included in formulaic speech. She finally introduced *I* and *je* as well, a sequence which demonstrates how she progressively became aware of herself as a separate physical entity. As Eugenie acquired more complicated grammar forms there were problems with possessives and past tenses: *La maison de moi* [Fr.] instead of *Ma maison* = (My house)

I breaked glass

and in French some past participles were also used incorrectly:

prendu (instead of *pris* – verb *prendre*)

metté (instead of *mis* – verb *mettre*)

corté (using the Spanish verb *cortar* instead of the French *couper*) [p..part. = *coupé* ie. “code switching”]

Code switching

There is a perceived problem with code switching. Although it can prompt negative reactions, it is nevertheless a common feature of multilingual speech,

infants usually switching nouns and adjectives according to their psychosocial development level. In this study I noted that Eugenie's switching usually involved French, ie. French + English, or French + Spanish:

Granny: *That's O'Malley the alley cat, isn't it?*

Eugenie: *Pas alley cat!* = Not [Fr.] alley cat

or

Mother: *¿Quieres un poco de agua?*

Eugenie: *Pas agua veux sirop* = Not [Fr.] water [Sp.] want lemonade [Fr.]

and

con moi = with [Sp.] me [Fr.]

vamos à jouer = Let's [Sp.] go and play [Fr.]

Spanish verbs seem to predominate in many phrases which were otherwise in French:

Tu te pintas Maman? = Are you putting on make up Mummy?

(*pintar* [Sp.] instead of *maquiller* [Fr.])

Further development

Normally Eugenie uses the language of her communication partners and responds to questions in the language in which they are asked. She has also begun to correct herself, repeating her utterances changing to the appropriate word. She has even begun to “translate”:

Mummy: *Pide a Papa que te de una manzana* [Sp.] (Ask Daddy to give you an apple)

Eugenie: *Papa, donne-moi une pomme* [Fr.] (Daddy give me an apple)

or

Granny: *Do you want me to read to you in English?*

Eugenie: *Yes please. En français dit “en anglais”* (Yes please. In French [one] says “en anglais”)

Eugenie regularly enjoys having a “conversation” in English with Granny.

These gobbledygook utterances are, however, expressed with correct intonation and she imitates Granny's accent with invented words often beginning with "g" and "wh", probably because she hears: Granny, Great, Go on, Good Girl, Give me, as well as Where, When, Why and What.

External influences

Outside the home environment Eugenie attends a francophone kindergarten where children of several mother tongues are immersed in French and there she has acquired a number of social routines including what could be termed her French "survival vocabulary":

à moi = that's mine

touche pas! = don't touch!

stop! = stop it!

These utterances are put to good use in the playground although toddlers' speech interaction is often "unsocial" since they are as yet unaware of the constraints of conversation and what is culturally appropriate for greetings, politeness and strategies for protecting feelings, etc.

Television as a source of speech development

To allay any imbalance between the languages (French and Spanish predominating at home), Eugenie regularly watches children's DVDs in the English version and the English television channels. Nowadays audio-visual sources are an acceptable language teaching support and as a result of repetition in viewing favourite videos she has picked up phonologically complicated words and learnt phrases and songs by heart. In addition, watching the DVD of "Cinderella", for example, followed up by

having the story read to her in French or Spanish is aiding her simultaneous acquisition progress. Despite their reduced vocabulary, the Teletubbies are also a firm favourite, possibly, linguistically, a less taxing entertainment?!

Conclusion

Language acquisition, especially vocabulary, is a lifelong process and Eugenie will continue to develop her languages corresponding to the amount of exposure to each one and her cognitive development. She uses three languages concurrently, modifying pronunciation and there is little evidence of phonological interference. Some concepts were learnt almost simultaneously where linguistic forms are similar. She continues to show a marked preference for responding in the language used by her conversation partners

However, Eugenie, now three years old, has suddenly requested her mother to speak to her in English, not Spanish. At the same time, instead of wanting to watch DVDs in English as before, she now asks for the Spanish version. Why, in her ever-increasing francophone environment (kindergarten and friends), this should have occurred is an enigma and proves that language acquisition in infants raises more questions than answers!

Bettina Ribes-Gil is a retired international official and freelance EFL teacher. She has had many articles published including 'Bringing up children in a multilingual environment' and 'International Children', both of which appeared in The Modern English Teacher.

Young Learners and Bilingual Education: Some lessons from Brunei Darussalam

Dr Gary M. Jones

Background

My own interest in bilingual education stems from examining the language ability of university students. It is a common experience in countries in which English is not the first or home language to hear expressions of concern from both administrative and academic staff about the English language ability of university undergraduates. However, most problems are the result of difficulties that began in the schools, often back to primary school. Therefore, the problem of language ability among undergraduates must involve an analysis of their school experience and whether this might be improved.

Bilingual Education in Brunei

Prior to adopting its bilingual National System of Education in 1985, Brunei schools were designated as either Malay or English medium. It was hoped that the new system would help promote national unity - even the country's private Chinese medium schools would eventually adopt the system, although they would still include Mandarin in their curriculum. The new system would mean an end to any perceived bias and would ensure equal education opportunities for all. Heavily weighted in favour of the use of Malay at the lower primary level, by secondary the majority of subjects are taught in English. (For a full description of the system see Jones *et al.*, 1993)

Expectations v. Reality

One assumption made when the bilingual education system was adopted was that providing education in two languages would result in a bilingual population of equi or balanced bilinguals. Another was that it must be desirable to teach subjects that would eventually be examined in English through the medium of English as soon as possible. It soon became apparent, however, that providing classes in a particular language medium does not guarantee a pupil will learn either the subject, the language or both. Expectations had to be adjusted. The need for research and a better understanding of the factors involved in bilingual education also became apparent.

What has been learned?

Teachers

Some of the problems encountered in Brunei were foreseen, but still unavoidable. Facing the biggest hurdles were teachers who had to reorientate themselves quickly and adjust to the new system.

There was no time to retrain teachers or explain objectives. As a result many teachers found themselves teaching in a medium in which they were not particularly comfortable. An important criterion for any bilingual education programme is that teachers should be proficient in the target language. This was not the case for all teachers in Brunei in 1985. Since then the local

teacher training institute within the University of Brunei Darussalam has been graduating as many teachers as it can. All must be proficient in English, although the accepted level of proficiency means that some graduates still fall short of being good role models for their pupils.

Another problem teachers are aware of is that they very often lack an appreciation of the problems faced by pupils in a bi as opposed to a monolingual education system. This is particularly true of teachers who are themselves monolingual and who come from monolingual countries and whose previous teaching experience has only been with monolingual children.

Languages

A further problem was with the school languages. Malay is the national language of Brunei, but in teaching and all formal contexts the Malay used is Standard Malay, based on the Malay of the Malaysian Peninsula. The first language of Bruneians, however, is Brunei Malay, a dialect that is very different from its standard brother. Thus Bruneian school children are not studying through the home language, Brunei Malay, when they enter school, but through a medium that is new to them, Standard Malay. In addition, a second new language, English, is quickly added to the mixture. To further complicate matters, for many children in the country Brunei Malay may already be a second, third or even fourth language, depending on which part of the country they come from and with whom they grew up. (Brunei has seven indigenous languages: two Malay dialects, Brunei and Kedayan, plus five languages that are distinct from Malay: Tutong, Dusun, Bisaya, Belait and Murut. For further discussion of these languages see

Martin & Poedjosoedarmo, 1996. In addition to these languages, for other children the first language of the home might be a Chinese language or Iban, a language indigenous to neighbouring Sarawak.)

Attitude

In 1993 a survey was conducted across the country to determine attitudes towards bilingual education and bilingualism in general. Prior to conducting the survey, there was an assumption that the Brunei population might actually be opposed to bilingual education and to the use of English in the school system. This concern reflected the many statements that were being made at the time about nationalism and the use of the Malay language. As it turned out, however, it was revealed that while many individuals were saying one thing, their actions were very different. Overwhelmingly the population showed itself to be in favour of neither Malay nor English education systems, but rather a bilingual education system using both Malay and English.

Curriculum

In a report to the Bruneian Ministry of Education in 1993, Professor Baetens Beardsmore highlighted the relation of Jim Cummins's BICS/CALP division of language and its relation to Brunei. Cummins (1981) has distinguished between basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). The basic assumption of the division is that BICS-type skills must be acquired before a learner is ready for CALP-type skills.

Some subjects are definitely more language friendly than others. Physical education classes, for instance, are less theoretically demanding, but they are

activity and language rich; they provide an excellent platform for teaching language in an unthreatening environment. Similarly, primary level art classes provide further opportunities to exploit language while developing BICS. Unfortunately for the language planners and school children in Brunei, neither of these subjects is taught in English thus the opportunity to present the new school language in an unthreatening environment is lost. Instead, after only three years at school and only ever having studied English as a subject, Bruneian pupils are then expected to study mathematics, science and geography in English. No matter how well intentioned or innovative the teacher, it is clear that these subjects do not provide the sort of opportunities to exploit language acquisition that are offered by physical education and art. These subjects require CALP and many pupils are not ready for the transition from BICS to CALP after only three years at school.

Suggestions

What insights for young learners can be gathered from these experiences? It might be assumed that with proper and adequate planning, with an analysis of education and second language acquisition theory and with a sufficient budget that all eventualities can be foreseen and that no problems should arise. However, despite the best intentions of everyone involved, education planning is rarely planned and implemented to schedule. External factors, particularly political and economic change, cannot always be predicted with the result that action has to be taken without sufficient analysis being given to the implications. This was certainly the case in Brunei. Educational planners are still learning as they go, with the result that things

are evolving in situ rather than as a result of having been planned.

Regardless of other factors, however, consideration can be given to the following:

- Ensure a supply of properly trained primary school teachers who are proficient in the language medium through which they will teach (and preferably bilingual themselves). Such teachers will need training or retraining in the special needs of bilingual education and second language acquisition.
- Provide interesting and relevant teacher support. This needs to be done by a teaching materials centre and will take the form of class handouts, posters, videos and worksheets.
- Relate the primary school curriculum to the language ability and needs of the pupils. In other words, introduce the second or any new languages through subjects, such as physical education and art, that allow for real, rich and unthreatening classroom interaction.
- All teachers will teach to the examination. Good examination results are a measure of the teacher's success and reflect well on the school. This being the case, examinations, especially for young learners, need to be designed with the learners' best interests in mind. In a bilingual education system it is crucial that examinations reflect the needs of language and language acquisition, especially at the primary level. Thought needs to be given to the type of questions asked, how they are asked and how

this will contribute to classroom teaching.

- Given properly trained teachers and given a language and examination-friendly curriculum, classroom practice should take care of itself. Such practice should create language rich activities, not just in the language classroom but through other subjects as well. Language across the curriculum is never more important than at the primary level, but unfortunately it is still the practice in many places for teaching to be compartmentalised, with subject teachers giving little consideration to the problems of language. Clearly, all teachers in a bilingual system, regardless of their subject specialisation, should assist in language teaching.

Conclusion

Many factors that determine the success or failure of an education system are beyond the control of education planners. Nevertheless, while there may be little that can be done about these there are school-based factors that can be considered. Although based on the experience of a small nation in Southeast Asia, these factors are really universal and applicable wherever a school system is using more than one language for teaching.

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Dr. Gary Jones is a Senior Lecturer and head of the Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics at Universiti Brunei Darussalam. He has written extensively about bilingualism and bilingual education. His current research interests include the role of bilingual education in small states. He has also worked in Sri Lanka, Germany the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

Bilingual Education: a view from The Netherlands – the Training

Stephen Smith

Why Bilingual Education?

Almost 20 years ago the Dutch Minister of Education, Mr Deetman, stated that it was the ambition of the then Government to be able to claim that within 10 years 25% of Dutch tertiary level education would be offered through the medium of English. Although there was understandable opposition to this concept at that time - many Dutch people fearing the demise of their language - the idea that Dutch students could study their subjects in English, and therefore become immediately competitive in an international market, was irresistible. University programmes started to switch into English, and consequently started to attract international students who wanted to study full-time in English in the Netherlands. There are now over 650 tertiary level programmes offered in English. Obviously, the inevitable knock-on effect of this tertiary level development was that secondary level education also started to consider offering some subjects in English. The attraction of this policy is that parents respond well to the idea that their children can have a competitive edge in their education. There are now over 60 schools in the Netherlands which offer bilingual programmes (TTO).

How does the programme work?

A school which embarks on a TTO programme goes through a number of phases. One of these is a Classroom English Teacher-Training course. A school has a budget for this course, and using the budget effectively means selecting which Dutch native-speakers teachers can and need to be used in the future TTO

programme. Some subjects require a stronger use of English than others, e.g. teaching Sports in English may be easier than teaching History. Inevitably, parts of the classroom English programme are time-consuming for teachers - they will need to do a certain number of hours homework, they will be required to read extensively to improve and broaden their use of vocabulary

(paraphrasing is a key skill in the classroom) and most of them will be required to sit one of the Cambridge University ESOL exams, e.g. CPE. To assess whether a teacher can manage all of this, there is an initial test. A year's course entails between twenty and thirty 2-hour lessons and a relatively high level of English language competence is required from the start of the course.

What are the components of the training course?

Over the year, the classroom English course falls into 2-3 natural blocks:

1. fluency and classroom language
2. more specialised work on the language and vocabulary of the teachers' classroom subjects
3. preparation for the Cambridge University CPE exam. Teachers understand this progression, although when they know there is an exam at the end of the programme, they tend to want to start preparing for it at once. The practical aspects of language learning, therefore, need to be re-emphasized: the exam is a means to an end - the end in itself is the teachers' ability to function accurately and effectively in the classroom. Many teachers need to relearn 'how to learn' in

order for them to improve their own competencies. Fortunately, the teachers view their trainer as a model of how to teach. The teachers also quickly realise that when they are teaching their own pupils, they will be teaching the English language as much as teaching their own specialised subjects. The notion that "I get my message across" is soon abandoned when the teachers realise the weight of their role in teaching in English to a group of non-native teenagers. The teacher's role in a bilingual lesson is multiple - it is not simply a matter of doing everything in the same way but in English. The pupils, too, may be struggling for concepts and words - both of which may be entirely new to them. Consequently, a classroom English course must address all aspects of teaching and learning in the classroom, teaching and learning in a 'strange' language and continually monitoring progress.

What happens after the training course and exam?

A further essential part of the TTO programme is that the trainer observes the teachers when they are teaching their pupils in the classroom. The trainer can then give feedback on the teacher's language use and the effectiveness of the lesson. Teachers appreciate this aspect of being observed by their trainer because it is a form of peer observation related to shared experience from the classroom English course.

Several schools in the Netherlands are now 4-5 years into their TTO programmes. Whilst the classroom English course is recognised as being an effective start, some schools have also found it necessary to provide a maintenance course for teachers who have been teaching in TTO for some time. The danger for some

teachers is that they become fossilised in their use of English. While the pupils grow in their use of English, and as young people become more proficient all-round, the teachers continue to use the same structures and vocabulary because they teach the same points and ideas. Furthermore, the school schedule may well mean that some teachers teach in English for only 4 hours a week, while their pupils work for 2-3 days exclusively in English: a disparity will grow between the English language competence of the teacher and that of their students. The teachers may need some regular support in both their practical as well as 'emotional' solution to this problem.

The future

TTO is an ambitious programme. For the most part, TTO has been successful; everyone sees TTO as an inspiring challenge, and an increasing number of schools are, therefore, following the TTO trend. The key to its future success depends on the openness and willingness of everyone involved in sharing questions and experiences about the whole process of teaching and learning in English.

Stephen Smith is Director of the British Language Training Centre in Amsterdam. He is team leader for UCLES examinations in The Netherlands and has a master's degree in second language acquisition. He has been involved in the development of the 'Teaching through the medium of English' programme since 1985.

At the Chalkface - The Teachers

Lisette Bentvelzen

Our School

Alfrink College is a school for HAVO and VWO, the two highest forms of education in the Netherlands. Here, the more able pupils can take Latin in their second year. We noticed, however, that these pupils could do with an even bigger challenge; they were easily bored and because of that some of them performed less well than expected. Six years ago, we decided that it might be a challenge for these pupils to study some of their subjects in English i.e. to experience bilingual education (TVWO). Not only would it be stimulating for the children, but it would also benefit the teachers and the school as a whole.

Starting bilingual education

In 2000 the first pupils arrived. We started with two classes of 26 pupils in each. The children needed a high score at their final primary school exams to start the programme and we had more applicants than we anticipated. We therefore had to implement an intake procedure which consisted of a motivation test, and an essay for the students who had the lowest scores.

Before the pupils arrived, we had trained some of our staff in teaching their subjects in English. We asked the British Council for help and a trainer has been with us since the beginning of the programme to support the teachers gain the UCLES Advanced or Proficiency exam. We aimed at having two teachers per subject. In class one, Maths, History, Geography, Art, and PE are taught in English. In class two,

Science and Biology are added. In class three, Economics. In addition to these

subjects, the classes have five hours of English in the first two years, compared to three in non-bilingual classes, and four hours in all the other years, compared to two in non-bilingual classes. Some of the English classes are given by a native speaker.

What is the present situation?

Now we are in the fourth year of the programme so bilingual education has reached upper school. After year three, it was decided that some subjects (Geography, Maths, Science and Art) would resume being taught in Dutch to give the students a better chance to adjust to the Dutch terms which they would need for their final external exams in year six. Other subjects (History, Biology and Economics) would continue to be taught in English because these subjects have internal school exams. In upper school new subjects, which are also examined internally, could be added: General Science, Religious Education and General Art and Culture. Physical Education and English also continue till year six.

We now have about 30 teachers who teach in English and new teachers continue to be asked to join the programme. As well as the initial training, we have added refresher courses in fluency, and observation lessons with tutorials or on-line feedback. It is also possible for staff to participate in a weeklong programme for bilingual teachers in Carlisle.

All this has certainly helped to make teachers enthusiastic about teaching in English.

What were the problems?

There were some problems at first.

As teachers were told that they would be working with the most talented pupils in the school, expectations were high. The pupils were certainly able enough to understand the English, but some were also a handful. When they were given a task, they understood it so quickly that unless there was an even bigger challenge presented immediately, they became bored and behaved accordingly. Many of these children had been the odd ones out at their primary schools and had not learned how to socialize. The teachers had to know their subject in English well because the children came up with the most elaborate and searching questions. Moreover, they were critical of the English used by some teachers.

The result of this was that during the first two years, teachers were exhausted. Another problem that continues to bother teachers, is that the bilingual course was set up as a challenge for bright students, but many of the students did not seem to want to take up that challenge.

- Had their parents pushed them?
- Had the children expected something completely different?
- Were the teachers too demanding?

Many questions were asked but the answers weren't always helpful. After three years we distributed a questionnaire among the first group of students about their feelings towards bilingual education. As this was the group that had caused most problems and complained most, the outcome was somewhat surprising; all of them, but one, were very happy with the bilingual programme.

A further problem is that not all of the bilingual pupils perform as well as might be expected and mostly that is because of their workload. They have to do a lot of work, especially for English. In addition to their VWO (Dutch exams), these students will do the IB exam, and a further

language exam in their final year. They read far more than other students and they write more essays. In short, the programme is demanding and for some students, too demanding.

...and the benefits?

As the majority of pupils enjoy the course immensely and work extremely hard, and for the teachers they are a joy to teach, we are certain that it was beneficial that the school chose to include bilingual education in the school curriculum. Motivation was increased when we extended the programme to include English excursions as part of the curriculum and we are still hopeful that we can find an English school to participate in an exchange programme.

To be a teacher involved in bilingual education is definitely challenging but also very rewarding. The pupils' level of questioning is high so teachers must be willing and prepared to provide the children with in-depth information in a second language. Tiring? Yes, but fascinating.

Lisette Bentzelven is coordinator of the bilingual department at Alfrink College in Zoetermeer, The Netherlands. She teaches English to pupils between the ages of 11 and 18 and she believes that enthusiasm is of the utmost importance. In the near future she hopes to foster more links with fellow-teachers and their pupils outside The Netherlands

What do the Pupils Think?

Leon Rodenburg

Why did I choose bilingual education? I think, most of all, because it was a challenge. At primary school, I had already read a lot of English books. Other children in my class found it strange that I understood the books, but I didn't have too much difficulty reading them. The teacher also encouraged me to read. After that, I wanted something where you have to do more for good results. I first heard of bilingual education from another school which had started the first year with some subjects in English. A neighbour of mine said that his brother was in the bilingual programme at Alfrink College. After I went to see the College, I knew I would rather go there than to the other school.

Another reason for studying subjects in a second language is that you learn good English, which could come in handy if you go to a foreign country, or study there. I think bilingual education is not that difficult, but you have to have high marks at the end of Primary school and you have to be good at English. In the first lessons it was really strange that the Dutch teachers spoke English, but the strangest part was that you had to speak English yourself. I have no regrets that I started bilingual education; it's not that difficult and I have a lot of fun with my friends, in English, of course!

Leon is 14. His interests include table-tennis, computers and music. He wants to continue studying in English because if he goes to a country where the people don't understand Dutch, he can be understood when he speaks English. He also thinks that reading and speaking English helps him understand computer games.

Sindhuja Syam

The bilingual education system is a good opportunity for children to enhance their skills. By mixing Dutch with the English language, students get a chance to improve their knowledge of English. The English that we are taught is much more advanced than the English the non-bilingual classes are taught. We not only learn the skills to survive in a foreign country, but are also taught advanced grammar. This really helps you in making your English sentences grammatically correct.

I don't really see many downsides to bilingual education. Of course, it can be rather difficult for students whose English isn't really good, but this way they can only improve it! However, the bilingual classes may lag behind in a few subjects, like mathematics. I think the main reason for this is because the English terms are new to us, and we still have to learn them. I also think the mathematics books could be improved a bit.

On the whole, I would certainly recommend bilingual education to pupils who can handle the challenge. I think it is certainly rewarding.

Sindhuja Shyam is 13 and she enjoys swimming, music, television, computers, web design and photography. She wants to go abroad for her future career so she thinks English will be useful for travelling as a tourist. English will also be useful for her work because it is an international language.

In Praise of Bilingual Education - a note from India

Arvind Gupta

The past

First, some history. India has a population of over a billion. The British ruled India for over 200 years. They wanted Indians to do menial, clerical jobs. For this they set up English medium schools. Many Indian nationalists didn't like it. They cried foul. They called it colonialism. They said that the British imperialists wanted to impose their own alien language on an ancient civilization. But there were also a group of nationalists, including the noted social reformer Raja Ram Mohan Rai, who were unhappy with the native languages. They opposed the opening of native Sanskrit schools because they felt modern science could only be learnt in English

The present

Today India has one of the largest English speaking populations anywhere in the world. Several Indian writers in the English language have won International Awards for their novels (Arundhati Roy won the Booker Prize for her novel *The God of Small Things*). India has also made a global reputation as software giant. A very large, educated English-speaking middle class has helped India capture a sizeable chunk of the World Software Market. This has brought in the much-needed foreign exchange. So, politicians who earlier decried the British for imposing a foreign language are "licking their own spit". They are thanking the imperialists for

introducing English. The colonists of yesteryears are being praised as saviours of today.

What happens in schools?

India could be a conglomerate of 20 European countries. It has immense diversity and numerous languages. Some of the Indian Districts are bigger than small European countries! After Independence in 1947, most Indian states started the primary curriculum with the mother tongue, and banished English until later. But now, most of the Indian states are introducing bilingual (English along with the mother tongue) education with a vengeance. My own state, Maharashtra – one of the most progressive states in India, has been a pioneer in this. It has made English compulsory in the primary schools.

I have seen several friends in Mumbai whose children speak 5 or 6 languages with great flair. Sometimes the wife is a Tamilian, so the kids know Tamil. The husband is from Andhra. So the children have picked up a sprinkling of Telegu. They live in Maharashtra where they have to learn Marathi, Hindi and English. Some of them have learnt Sanskrit from their grandparents. So ordinary children can pick up six languages with ease. This is a celebration of linguistic diversity. It has also been observed that people who learn a few languages as children find it much easier to learn other

languages as adults. There are certain patterns which are established in the brain when learning several languages, and these make it easier to acquire other languages.

Dual texts

I make toys and design science experiments for children using junk and throwaway material. I also write books on science activities. My first book on science experiments was written in my mother tongue - Hindi. The book was then translated into 13 Indian languages and sold more than half a million copies. There was also valuable feedback from my readers. Friends from various parts of India wrote that it would be easier for them to translate my book had it been in English (rather than Hindi). Because of our history, English is the link language in India. This gave me an idea; I then wrote some books on science activities and all of them have been bilingual – Hindi and English. On the left page are sequential line drawings of the activities while on the right page is the dual text – both in Hindi and in English. My readers have welcomed this format and I have stuck to it ever since

Today English is an acknowledged international language and much of the science is written in English. There is a need to strengthen our own native languages but at the same time we must also learn English to have access to a much larger body of knowledge.

Example of a dual text:

पाँच वर्ग

एक वर्ग के चार टुकड़े करना कोई कठिन काम नहीं है। पर क्या तुम एक चौकोर को पाँच बराबर वर्गों में बाँट सकते हो ? यह एक टेढ़ी खीर है। इस समस्या का हल खोजने के लिए तुम्हें ब्रह्म अपना सिर खुजलाना पड़ेगा। दरअसल यह काफी आसान है। एक चौकोर कागज़ लो और उसमें घन का चिन्ह मोड़ो। इसमें चारों भुजाओं के मध्य-बिन्दु निशित हो जायेंगे। इस तरह चार आयत बनेंगे। इनकी एक-एक कर्ण बनाओ। अब काली रेखाओं को कैंची से काट कर सारे टुकड़े अलग करो चित्र (१)। इन सभी टुकड़ों को जोड़ कर तुम चित्र (२) में दिखाए तयके से पाँच वर्ग बना सकते हो।

FIVE SQUARES

Dividing a square piece into four equal squares is no problem at all. But dividing a square into five equal squares is no easy task. It will keep most people scratching their heads. But it is quite easy. First cut a square and fold a plus sign along the dotted lines. This will fix the mid - points of the four sides. Now mark one diagonal each, of the four rectangles so formed. Cut along the dark lines Fig(1). Now arrange the nine pieces into five squares as shown in Fig(2).

Arvind Gupta is a science writer and toy maker. He has translated over a hundred books on science, maths, the environment and peace into Hindi. Presently he is a visiting scientist at the Inter University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics in Pune, India.

Teaching Science through English, learning English through Science

Sarah Phillips

My involvement with language and children is at various levels: I teach, I work with teachers, I write materials for EFL classes and I am bringing up my son in a trilingual environment. All this means I experience bi/multilingualism, language education and the two together from a variety of view points: sometimes conflicting, usually interesting. While my training and background meant I started out by considering language as a system which could be analysed, taught and learnt, time and experience have shown me that this is perhaps not as simple as it seems.

Language is for using

A teacher on a course once said to me "If language is a vehicle, we can use it to get where we want to". Observing my son effortlessly switching languages according to context and need, highlighted for me the ascendancy of use over system, especially where children are concerned. Language is for using, not for learning. Listening to his classmates struggling over "the verb to be" and teachers lamenting the inability of their pupils to grasp simple grammar rules highlights the ineffectiveness of teaching system over communication. Acquisition comes through use, not rules. Although we can never reproduce the conditions in which children learn their first language, we can try and re-create parts of that experience. Children learn language as they discover the world they live in, and this is

something we can also do in the second language classroom

Which takes us to bilingual education. An article by John Nixon comments that there are literally hundreds of definitions of bilingual education, and he goes on to add his own definition as "content and language integrated learning" which fits with what I propose in this article. In some Secondary schools in Spain, there are pilot projects where students are taught a subject through a second or third language, in Primary the English class is the place where English is used. Textbooks do try and find topics and texts that interest the children, perhaps going furthest down the integrated learning road with art and craft activities, but material from other subject areas is rarely touched on in any depth.

Why science?

When I started to consider trying to integrate contents from other subjects in the language classroom, science seemed to be a good choice. Children are interested in finding out how the world around them works, and are often surprised by what they discover and learn, making the experience enjoyable and memorable, both factors that contribute to long term learning. Simple experiments are visual, kinaesthetic and allow the children hands on experience, all factors which form part of good practice in education generally and language teaching specifically.

The language used in science tends to be repetitive and simple: this appeals to the language teacher in us and there is no doubt that language repeated in context is helpful to language learners trying to make sense of it all. Children who are beginning English are exposed to English in clear context from which they can deduce meaning, and children who have more language at their disposal are given the opportunity to communicate about something real. Scientific method involves observation, making a hypothesis, testing it, drawing conclusions and recording the whole process: all useful skills in everyday life and neatly paralleling the process of first language acquisition. Last but not least there is plenty of material available on the internet and in books of science for children: an important factor for busy teachers.

Practical examples

In the next section there are two practical examples of teaching Science through English. Science is a loose term, covering Physics, Chemistry, Biology, and even the discipline of Geology, Meteorology and so on. As well as the content, you need to consider certain practical points. These points help narrow down the choice.

1. Talk to the children's science teacher. Find out what topics they are covering in regular Science classes. It may be that the subject teacher does not do experiments in class, so you can add the practical component to the theory.
2. Find an activity that complements what they know, but don't repeat experiments they have already done in their L1.
3. Be practical. Choose an experiment using readily available materials, and that can be done in the time

you have. Consider asking the children to bring in material from home: a torch, coloured pens, batteries and so on.

4. Think about the mess factor. Avoid spending more time clearing up than doing the experiment.
5. Consider your classroom: is there enough space to do what you want?
6. Plan classroom management: how are you going to group the children, and what responsibilities will each child have within the groups.

Investigating air

(adapted from Brenda Walpole: *Fun with Science* Kingfisher 1987)

The first three experiments investigate some of the properties of air and the last activity shows how you can exploit these properties to do a magic trick. Children can do the experiments from the age of 7. Depending on the age, level and context, the children will need more or less support in the form of pre-teaching of vocabulary and structures, worksheets with pictures and phrases, model texts to follow and so on. There are many books for home use which support the Science taught in British primary schools: it is worth doing a search in an online book company to find the titles which are best for you.

Where is air?

The children submerge objects in water and observe how much air comes out.

Materials

deep bowls, half full of water
small empty bottles
small clay flowerpot
a small block of wood
soil

Before the experiment

Ask the children:

- Can you see the air? (*'No, but we can see bubbles if we blow under water'*)
- Can you smell it? (*'No, but it carries smells'*)
- Can you feel it? (*'No, but you can feel its temperature change'*)
- Can you taste it? (*'No'*)
- How do you know air exists? (*'We can see what it does. Wind moves trees, rubbish in the street, the clouds. We can blow out a candle, or blow a paper windmill'*)
- Where is air? (*'Around us, in lots of places'*)
- How can we check if there is air in something? (accept all suggestions then tell them if you put something in water, the air bubbles escape into the water and we can see them)

Make a hypothesis

- 1 Put the children into groups of four and hand out the objects.
- 2 If necessary teach them the words bottle, flowerpot, soil and wood.
- 3 Ask the children if the objects have air in them: *Is there air in the bottle?*
- 4 Tell the children to order the objects from the one with most air to the one with least. Tell them to draw the objects and write their names in order from most to least air. You can ask them to write or tell you their suppositions: *I don't think there is air in soil. I think there is air in the bottle.*
- 5 Ask them how they can test their ideas. Confirm that they can put each in water and observe how much air they see.

Do the experiment

- 1 Number the children in their groups and give each child a task. For example, 'ones' do the experiment with the bottle, 'twos' with the flowerpot, 'threes' with the soil and 'fours' with the block of wood.
- 2 Give out the bowls of water. Tell the children to do the experiment.

Draw conclusions

- 1 When most of the children have finished, get feedback from them. Ask them what they observed. *Did air bubbles come out of the bottle? A lot or a few?*
- 2 Ask the children if they need to modify their ideas and give them time to re-draw the objects if necessary.
- 3 You may like to give older children a model text so they can record the experiment they have done.

Does air occupy space?

The children suck the air out of a plastic bottle and observe what happens.

Materials

Empty plastic bottles
Plasticine
Drinking straws

Before the experiment

Ask the children:

- Does air occupy space? (*accept their answers without comment*)
- How can we check our ideas? (*accept answers*)

Make a hypothesis

- 1 Ask the children how they can take the air out of the bottle. Accept their suggestions and then show them how they are going to block up the top with the plasticine, then put a straw through the plasticine and suck the air out.
- 2 Ask them to tell you what they think will happen. Ask them to draw a picture of the bottle before and after the experiment.

Do the experiment

- 1 Put the children in pairs. Give out the materials.
- 2 Tell them to do the experiment.
- 3 Tell them to compare what they see with the pictures they have drawn.

Draw conclusions

- 1 Ask the children if they guessed correctly.
- 2 Ask them why the plastic bottle collapses. If necessary explain that when they take the air out there is nothing left in the bottle, so the air on the outside pushes the sides of the bottle in. So, yes air does occupy space.
- 3 You may like to give older children a model text so they can record their experiment.

A candle race

Three lit candles are placed under different sized jars. The children observe which goes out first and why. For safety reasons, the teacher should do this experiment. You can involve the children by asking them to be your assistants.

Materials

three plates
three different sized jars
three candles the same size
optional: stop watches

Before the experiment

- 1 Invite children to help you set up the experiment and explain what you are going to do.
- 2 Ask the children which candle they think will burn the longest. (*'I think candle A will go out first.'*)
- 3 Ask the children to estimate how long the candles will burn. (*'I think candle A will burn for 30 seconds.'*) You may like them to write down their guesses.

Making a hypothesis

Ask the children to justify their guesses: accept their answers without comment.

Do the experiment

- 1 Invite three children to be the time keepers. If you have stopwatches, show them how they work. If not get them to count, or use the second hands on their watches.
- 2 Invite three children to come and light the candles and then cover them with the jars. Make sure they do this at the same time, so the candles start the race together. Tell the timekeepers to start timing.
- 3 When the last candle has gone out, tell the timekeepers to write the times on the board.

Drawing conclusions

- 1 Ask the children if they guessed correctly.

- 2 Ask them if their observations can help explain why the candles go out in that order. If necessary, explain that candles need the oxygen in the air to burn, and when they have used it all they go out. There is less air in the smallest jar, so the candle in this jar goes out first.

The Egg and Bottle Trick

This is more of a trick than an experiment: it draws together the concepts from the first three experiments. A twist of paper is lit in a wide necked bottle and a shelled hard-boiled egg is placed on the neck: as the oxygen is used up a vacuum is created which sucks the egg into the bottle.

For safety reasons, the teacher should demonstrate this trick to the class as it involves matches.

Materials

a shelled hard-boiled egg
a wide necked bottle or jar, with the neck a bit smaller than the egg
a small piece of paper
matches

Before the trick

- 1 Put the egg in the neck of the bottle.
- 2 Ask the children if they think you can put the whole egg inside the bottle.
- 3 If they say no, ask them why not. (The egg is too big. The bottle is too small.)
- 4 If they say yes, ask them how.

Doing the trick

1. Take the egg from the neck of the bottle.
2. Crumple the piece of paper and light it: drop it into the bottle.
3. Quickly put the egg back on the neck of the bottle.
4. Wait for the gasps of surprise as the egg is sucked into the bottle.

After the trick

Ask the children if they can explain why the egg is sucked into the bottle.

(The flame uses the oxygen in the bottle, the egg blocks the neck of the bottle so no more air can go into the bottle, the air outside the bottle pushes the egg in.)

References

Walpole, Brenda *Fun with Science* Kingfisher 1987

Nixon, John *The Pains and Pleasures of Bilingual Education* downloadable from

<http://www.euroclit.net/english/bulletin/download.htm>

*Sarah Phillips is a teacher, teacher trainer and author with a special interest in young learners and their teachers. She has given talks and workshops throughout Spain and Europe. She wrote both *Young Learners and Drama with Children* (Oxford University Press).*

*At the moment she is working with Burlington Books: she is co-author of *Kids*, and of the higher levels of *Charlie's World*.*

Presenting Work that Moves

Liz Jones

Why use Power Point?

In order to find a different medium for presenting work for 10 and 11 year olds, we have utilised MS PowerPoint to create some really interesting projects. This project builds on the skills they already have with Word processing and using Encyclopaedias and the Web to source useful relevant information.

As part of our Year 6 curriculum, the pupils create a PowerPoint presentation using hyperlinks to connect the pages. The presentation, in this case, is used to give information about the Ancient Egyptians.

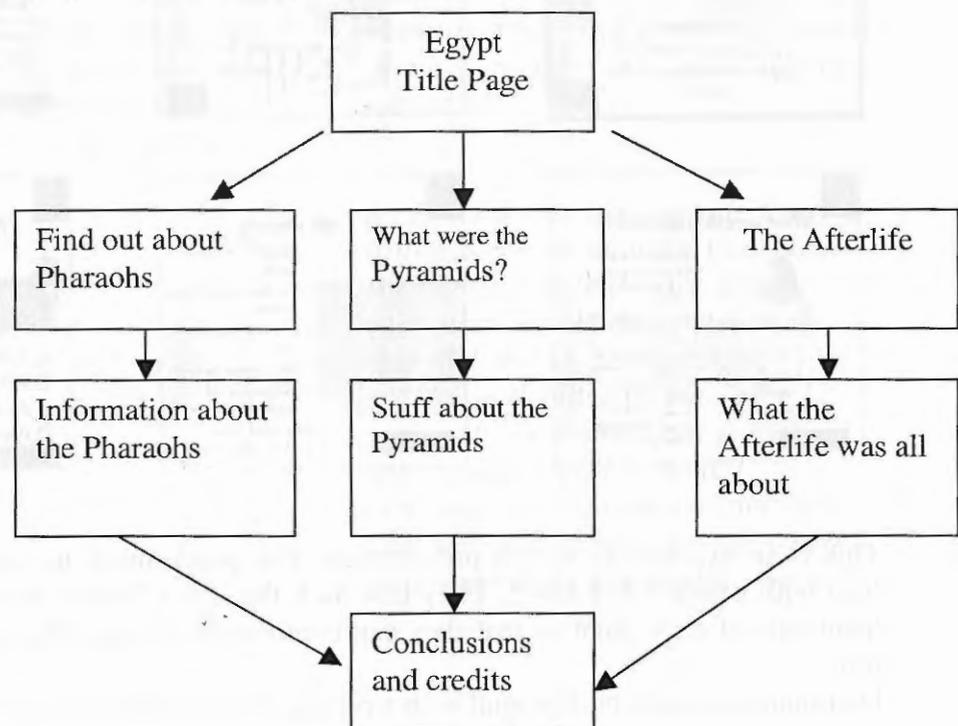
important aspect of the presentation and the children need a good concept of how it links together. The second stage is finding the content and it can be anything that appears in the curriculum and can be divided into suitable chunks for separation onto different pages of slides. If a child has a specific need that requires differentiated content, this is easy to modify.

The children also need to spend time deciding on the information they wish to include and finding enough detail to make it interesting.

What is the ICT process?

There are planning aspects in the first stage and it is necessary to explain to the pupils how the program works. The structure is an

The basic structure might look something like this:



Because the presentation doesn't have a linear progression from start to finish, the children need to plan and make connections or hyperlinks back to the original page or menu. The plan should start to resemble the structure of a web site, a CD Rom or other computer information base. The hyperlinks we use are in the form of buttons that can be clicked so the parallels between web page structures are similar.

Once the process of adding and editing the information is complete, the links can be made. After this pupils can tweak the appearance of their presentation to include suitable pictures from a variety of sources.

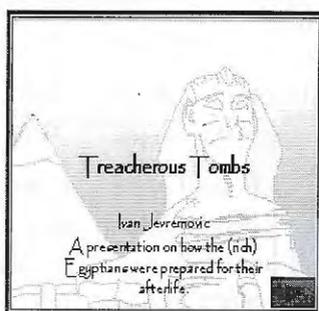
Pupils also make choices about colours and styles of background available, suitable fonts and arrangements of the

information on the page. Finishing touches can include animation of the elements so that they appear, if necessary with sound affects.

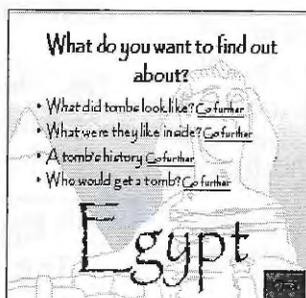
Differentiation

More able pupils can extend the project to include more information or more sophisticated structures and links. Less able children often show greater enthusiasm for this piece of work as their own work can stand up to comparison with others and some find that they are more technically competent compared to others that might dominate in other types of project work.

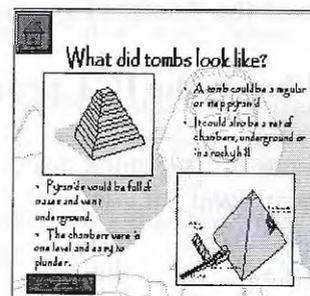
The finished results are usually of a high standard for the child compared to other forms of written work.



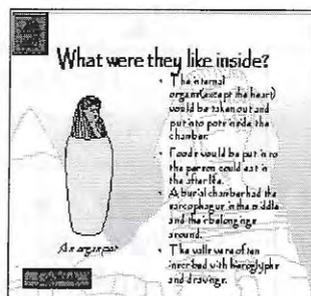
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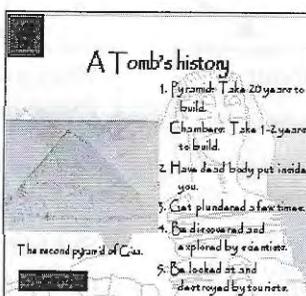
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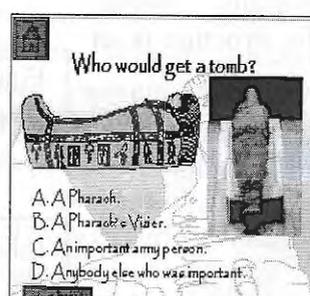
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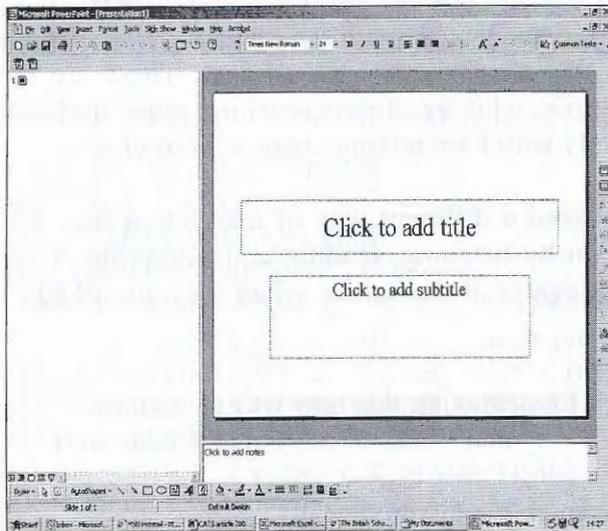
6

This is an example of such a presentation. The pupil linked the second page shown here with pages 2,3, 4 and 5. They link back through a 'home' button on the top left hand side of each page so that they can continue to navigate through each aspect in turn.

He found a suitable background with a picture of the sphinx and selected an appropriate font and writing style. He then added pictures to each of the slides.

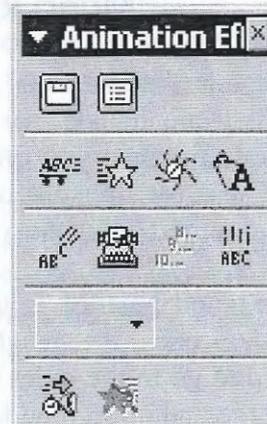
The presentation can then be saved on a shared folder where it will launch automatically and be clickable when opened. This way other children can share each other's work and learn more about the topic. The format can also be used to make games with all types of content or topic interest.

PowerPoint is very straightforward at first use. Then additional tools can be utilised as a user gains experience.



There are also options to "animate" the elements of each page using the animation tool bar. This tool bar allows choices of movement of the elements and the addition of sound affects as appropriate.

The presentation can also be altered to allow an automatic flow of the information.



When the work is finished each pupil presents their work to a peer group audience; demonstrating each link. The presentation also helps teach an introduction to the concepts of web page construction.

This package has many good uses. It is powerful enough to contain many elements while simple enough to allow young children to use it very successful

Liz Jones is Coordinator of ICT at The British School (Junior) in The Hague. She has developed the ICT school curriculum for children between the ages of 4 and 11. She has been working with bilingual pupils for 12 years with an emphasis on giving appropriate access to the ICT curriculum. She previously taught in East and West London schools where there were many bilingual learners.

A Major Strategy for Teaching Grammar to Teenagers

Mario Rinvoluceri, Pilgrims, UK

There are some teenage students who understand and take on board your grammar explanations. They are helped, for example, to understand the relationship between the tenses by a sensible timeline you draw on the board. They are able to generalise from the rules you give. These are the students who hand in neat homework and who highlight the things they need to remember in a text.

Lucky them!

But all the above good practice is water off a duck's back with a large minority of your students, the restless ones, the naughty ones, the ones who are all a-fidget. These are the students who need to go to the toilet twice a lesson, who are always touching other students, who tend to be large and male. You know exactly who I am talking about in your classes.

These 'difficult' students simply need to be offered a different way of learning, a way that puts them into an active role. They do not learn by listening, reading and observing. They learn by DOING. They learn when they are the centre of the action, when they are asked to protagonise.

The rest of this article offers you a clear strategy for achieving this new way of getting grammar thinking into the students' heads. It is a way that works through their bodies and fully involves them.

For the sake of clarity I have organised the strategy into a lesson plan, as follows.

1. Go round your class and 'give' each student a word or a punctuation mark to become

You're a full stop
You're ON
You're PLEASE
BE
TIME
DO
NOT
a comma
an exclamation mark
a question mark
LATE
OR
EARLY
WELL
YOU
HAD
HAVE
BETTER
ACTUALLY
YES

(20 students will be involved in the sentence making- the rest of the class are spectators.)

2. Explain that you are going to say a sentence loudly and clearly and that the words and punctuation marks in the sentence should come to the front of the room and stand in a line so that the audience can read them from left to right.

Call out: PLEASE BE ON TIME.

When the five students, including the full stop, have lined up, ask them to say their bit of the sentence. The full stop says nothing but does something she feels to be full stoppish.

3. Call out DON'T BE LATE, PLEASE BE ON TIME.

When the DO student comes out, tell her she changes sound when she links up with a NOT, and tell the NOT person that he become N'T. Tell these two to stand really close and link arms. When it comes to the students saying the sentence, each part of the contraction only says their own bit, but they need to make it sound like one word.

4. Now get the students to dramatise these sentences:

WELL, BE ON TIME PLEASE.

PLEASE BE EARLY!

YOU'D BETTER BE ON TIME.

YOU'D BETTER NOT BE LATE.

LATE? ON TIME? EARLY? PLEASE BE ON TIME

(the single question mark has to move pretty fast in this sentence!)

YOU HAVE TIME? WELL, PLEASE DON'T BE LATE!

TIME? WELL, YES, TIME. YOU'D ACTUALLY BETTER BE EARLY.

DO YOU HAVE TIME? BE EARLY!

D'YOU, ACTUALLY, DO YOU HAVE TIME?

WELL DON'T BE LATE, DON'T BE EARLY, BE ON TIME.

5. The students return to their seats and you dictate the sentences to them. Get one student to do his dictation on the board. When the dictation is over get the whole class to help the board student to correct his work, and hence their own.

Note: the message of the 12 sentences above is useful in a class where time is an unimportant feature of the students' home culture.

Cultural note: in some cultures, parts of a grammatical contraction that need to touch each other, should be people of the same sex

Variation: you can use this 'becoming a sentence' technique with any structure your coursebook wants your students to practise.

Acknowledgement:

We first learnt this exercise from Sheelagh Deller, author of **Using the Mother Tongue**, 2002, and we have also seen it in Michael Grinder's **Righting the Educational Conveyor Belt**.

Further blocks of sentences for students to dramatise

1. Question Tags simple past and simple present

Tell the students they are:

TO	MUMBAI (Bombay)
SHE	IN
DO	LIVE
'S (third person present ending)	ONCE
NOW	YES
Comma	USED
Full stop	DID
Question mark	NEVER
NOT	'D (past tense final consonant)
BUT	RIGHT

(for 20 students)

SHE LIVES IN MUMBAI.
SHE LIVED IN MUMBAI.
SHE LIVES IN MUMBAI, DOESN'T SHE?
SHE DOES LIVE IN MUMBAI, DOES SHE? (showing great surprise)
SHE ONCE LIVED IN MUMBAI, RIGHT?
SHE DOESN'T LIVE IN MUMBAI, DOESN'T SHE? (in a threatening voice)
SHE NEVER LIVED IN MUMBAI, DID SHE?
SHE DOES LIVE IN MUMBAI, DOESN'T SHE?
SHE USED TO LIVE IN MUMBAI, DIDN'T SHE?
YES, SHE DID ONCE LIVE IN MUMBAI, BUT SHE DOESN'T NOW, DOES SHE?
BUT DIDN'T SHE ONCE LIVE IN MUMBAI?

2. Simple Past and Present, positive and negative

Tell the students they are:

WANT	BAD
GET	BECAUSE
IT	DID
I	'D (past tense morpheme)
AM	WHAT
THEREFORE	MUST
GOOD	CARE
DO	TAKE
NOT	AND

(for 18 students)

I want it

I get it.

Therefore I am good

I want it

I don't get it

Therefore I am bad

I am bad

because I don't get it

I must take care

To get what I want

And want what I get

And not get what I don't want

(Knots, page 38, R.D. Laing)

3. Find several sentences of different lengths from the same set of words

Give the students these words, one to each, and ask them to find as many meaningful different orders for them as they can. Get them working in groups of 9.

MET

IT

THAT

IS

HERE

AND

NOT

WE

THERE

Bring the group together to be and say the phrases and sentences they have found.

(Here are a few sentences that students have found from this set of words):

Not here!

There there!

And we met

Here and there

Here it is

We and that met

That here is not here

We met there

We met it

We met it here and not there

It is here and not there that we met

That we met is that we met.

An appeal

Other readers of the Newsletter may want to find out how you have used this movement strategy in your grammar teaching. You will find all sorts of ways of modifying, creatively misunderstanding, and innovating away from the above lesson plan.

This article will have served a useful purpose if you write in with your practical, post-classroom-use of the ideas proposed here. Please send them in to our editor, Kay Bentley.

*Marion Rinvoluceri has worked for Pilgrims for 30 years and edits **Humanising Language Teaching**, www.hltmag.co.uk*

*He regularly contributes to **The Teacher Trainer**, our print journal for gate keepers, www.tttj.co.uk*

*Mario's first CD Rom for students, **Mindgame**, was written with Fletcher de Tellez, (Clarity: Hong Kong, 2000).*

*Mario's books include; **Vocabulary**, with Morgan (OUP) **Humanising Your Coursebook**, (Delta) **Using the Mother Tongue**, with Deller (Delta) and **Ways of Doing** (CUP)*

Mario cooks and gardens with more joy than skill.

Highlights from the YL Internet Discussion List

October 2003 - January 2004

Wendy Arnold

We started the new academic year with a discussion on learning strategies, high order thinking skills and the use of mind mapping. Details can be found in the yahoo resource site (msg#1031-1052) and a detailed round up in our resource site:-

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/younglearners> (discussions)

www.countryschool.com/younglearners.htm (resource site)

Briefly, we identified that:-

- verb stems DO need to be identified, so young learners are not confused with the endings
- using picture cues needs to be encouraged to identify unknown vocabulary, so 'intelligent' guessing is a MUST
- authentic materials seem to work much better if the learners choose
- learner autonomy needs to be encouraged.

Our first 'fielded discussion' of the year was headed by Peter Westwood. It was on **'Meeting individual needs of young learners: how much differentiation in approach is really possible in the classroom differentiation'**. A synopsis of the summary follows these highlights.

In short the following discussions have been debated to date: -

Teaching prepositions with useful advice from Jennifer Dobson on using a chant and team games. The latter was trialled with great success;

Using drama in the classroom, a request by Lucy Mellersh, ably answered by William Percy and Livia Farago with suggestions for resources, defining what it actually meant and giving some concrete examples of 'drama' activities.

Before Christmas we had an unusual request by Andrew Wright for tracking down a **story about why the rabbit has long ears**. This unlikely request produced a MASS of replies from 15 members around the world! I'd be spoiling the fun if I told you too much, go to Msg# 1217 - 1277 and be astounded.

There followed a request by Wendy on research about **vocabulary acquisition** as I want to do some reading for a small-scale classroom research project. Many thanks to Lisa and Jennifer Gaudette who offered some interesting links.

Our second 'fielded discussion' was ably led by Annie Hughes on **'Songs are a valuable teaching resource for the young learner classroom.... or are they just time fillers?'**

Melanie Williams fielded the discussion on **'Assessment in the classroom'** in March just as **CATS** went to print.

Do join in (if you haven't already done so). The joining links are prominently given at the beginning of this article! As I've said before, nothing stands still in teaching, we are constantly modifying our own understanding and so we do with our own YLsig resource site.

Wendy Arnold has lived in Hong Kong for the past 13 years. She has worked in a local Cantonese medium-of-instruction primary school in the New Territories for 11 years, as an EFL teacher. After completing her MA in TEYL at York, she did a PGCE at the University of Hong Kong in order to have a greater understanding of the history and cultural expectations of her learners, parents and colleagues. She has an interest in using projects and stories. Wendy is the YL SIG's discussion group moderator.

IATEFL Young Learners SIG

DISCUSSION FIELDERS 2003 - 2004

16 - 23rd April 2004 Topic No. 4 for discussion:
Task-based language teaching



David Nunan holds concurrent positions as Chair Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Hong Kong and Dean of the Graduate School of Education at Newport Asia Pacific University. He is also Senior Academic Advisor to Global English Inc. and is a former member of the Board of Trustees of the TESOL International Research Foundation. From 1993-96 and from 1998-2002 he was on the TESOL Board of Directors, serving as President (1999 – 2000). In 2003 he received the Thomson/Heinle TESOL Lifetime Achievement Award.

In a career spanning 30 years, he has worked as a teacher, researcher and consultant in Australia, Thailand, Britain, Singapore, Hong Kong, the United States, Japan, and Oman. David Nunan has written over 100 books and articles in the areas of second language curriculum development, communicative language teaching, classroom research and teacher education. His latest books include *Second Language Teaching and Learning*, *Practical English Language Teaching* with Ron Carter, *The Cambridge Guide to TESOL* (with Colin Barron and Nigel Bruce) and *Knowledge and Discourse*.

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News from the Net

The members' section of IATEFL Young Learners SIG web site can be accessed at <http://www.countryschool.com/yldoor.htm> It contains a large and expanding selection of downloadable newsletter articles and discussion list summaries. Examples of the latter are:

- Assessing Young Learners: Annabelle O'Toole, July 2002*
- Is it worth going for authenticity at the expense of lexis overload? Jane Myles, Oct. 2001*
- Classroom Discipline Strategies, Wendy Arnold, April 2003*
- English for Young Learners Collaborative Bibliography, Wendy Arnold, March 2003*
- Non-linguistic Competencies, Rebecca Jones, 2002*
- Designing Appropriate Curricula for Young Learners, Rebecca Tompsett, 2002*
- Foreign Languages and Deaf Children, Sandie Jones Mourão, April 2002*
- The Place of Story-Telling in Language Teaching, Peter Falvey and P. Kennedy*
- English Through Arts and Cultures: a Cross-Curricular English Course for Young Learners (6 - 12), Livia Farago, 2003*
- Using ICT with Young Learners, moderated and summarised by Wendy Arnold, 2003*
- The Role of the Mother Tongue, Gordon Lewis, May 2002*
- Phonics in Teaching Young Learners, moderated and summarised by Wendy Arnold, 2003*
- Designing a primary EFL/ESL course, moderated and summarised by Wendy Arnold, 2003*
- Using Readers in the English Language Classroom with Young Learners, Melanie Williams, 2003*
- Reading and Writing Skills, moderated and summarised by Wendy Superfine, Feb. 2002*
- A snake snake story from France, Donatienne Binard, 2003*
- Using Course Books and Stories as a 'vehicle', Moderated and summarised by Wendy Arnold, June 2003*
- Using Real Books in the Primary EFL Classroom, Wendy Superfine, 2003*
- English Language Teaching Organisations Worldwide, summarised, Wendy Arnold, 2003*
- Teenagers and Project Work, Diane Phillips, November 2001*
- The challenges and rewards of trainee YL teachers, Rosemary Scott, December 2001*

As I am sure you will realise, this is a hugely useful resource reflecting the cutting-edge concerns of YL professionals around the world. Thanks go to the indefatigable Wendy Arnold for her moderatorship of the discussion list and the resulting summaries.

As you can probably guess, maintaining a site like this is not simple. We are trialling a new piece of software called Macromedia Contribute that should make it easier for different committee members to collaborate on the web site and keep it up to date.

We have recently changed the means by which members of Young Learners SIG log in to the members' web site. All members should by now have received a unique username and password. If not, or if you have forgotten or wish to change your password please visit <http://www.countryschool.com/ylsig/admin.cgi?action=F&targetdir=ylsig/members>. The new system is more secure and easier to administer than the one it replaces. If you have problems, please contact me via the feedback form at <http://www.countryschool.com/yldoor.htm>

Finally, did you know that there is a search facility at the web site's Web Resources page at www.countryschool.com/ylsig? This generates weekly reports and I thought you might like to see who has been searching for what recently:

February, 2004

25 total searches, 21 phrases (1 to 20)

Graph	Count	Phrase	Results Count
█	2	<u>blank query*</u>	0
█	2	<u>animals</u>	4
	2	<u>communicative activities</u>	19
█	2	<u>valentines day</u>	10
	1	<u>body</u>	7
█	1	<u>carnival</u>	0
	1	<u>festivals</u>	0
█	1	<u>flashcards</u>	1
	1	<u>letterland</u>	1
█	1	<u>listening</u>	9
	1	<u>marking schemes</u>	7
█	1	<u>paw prints</u>	5
	1	<u>play house</u>	15
█	1	<u>possesive</u>	0
	1	<u>second language acquisition</u>	24
█	1	<u>songs</u>	10
█	1	<u>stories very young learners</u>	28
█	1	<u>swimming vocab</u>	3
█	1	<u>swimming vocab lesson</u>	10
█	1	<u>worksheets about animals for young children</u>	28

* A blank query is a search submitted with no text entered in the search form.

These reports give an indication of what people are interested in: a remarkable variety. The 'result count' shows the number of separate web site references that contain the search term. Search terms containing more than one word have a much higher result count. This is because the software returns every reference to every word in the search term. So in the case of >valentines day< a large number of results are returned that just happen to contain the word >day< Not very useful. To overcome this, enclose your search term in inverted commas: "valentines day" Also, check your spelling (>possessive< not >possesive<) unless you want to find other misspellers!

My thanks to Lucy Mellersh for her assistance in updating the Web Resources page. Any other techno-savvy people who'd also like to assist, please contact me.

Best wishes,
Chris Etchells, etchells@countrieschools.co.uk
Website Manager, IATEFL Young Learners SIG

Book Review

Assessing Young Learners

Sophie Ionnou-Georgiou & Pavlos Pavlou Oxford 2003

ISBN 0-19-437281-2

Reviewed by **Annabelle O'Toole**

Who is this book for?

The authors claim this 'Primary Resource Book' is designed for both experienced and new teachers. The variety of information, ideas and material endorses this claim and the book should appeal to a range of teachers working in a number of different teaching contexts.

What age group is the book aimed at?

The activities are designed to suit children between 6 and 12 years i.e. primary and early secondary school pupils who are learning English as a second or foreign language.

Purpose

The book aims to help teachers assess children's progress in English as well as providing tasks that the pupils can use themselves for self and peer assessment.

Format

The book is easy to access and there is a clear table of contents at the front and index at the back. The fifteen-page introduction provides useful guidance and pedagogic advice on assessment. It clarifies the meaning of the terminology used e.g. evaluation, assessment and testing.

Each worksheet comes with detailed lesson notes. A standardised format common to this style of book is used. This enables users to check quickly the level/ time/ follow up etc. of each activity. An

interesting additional feature is the incorporation of 'Assessment of Outcome' i.e. how the children or teacher can assess the outcome of the activity. Depending on your learners and your teaching context it could be an effective way of encouraging your students to reflect on their own learning.

Tasks

The task designs encourage children to adopt an objective but critical stance to the assessment of the performance of themselves and others. This approach is likely to appeal to independent learners and those who have been encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning where appropriate. For pupils familiar with a more traditional approach towards assessment, the tasks and activities will need to be introduced slowly with time and encouragement for them to appreciate their role and the value of this kind of activity.

There are many useful listening and reading activities to be done in class. A range of activity types common to 'Teachers Resource Books' will be recognised by teachers. The real difference with this book is that the lesson/ activity is specifically used for assessment purposes rather than for language practice or skills development. This perhaps will encourage teachers to look more critically at how and why they use different activities in class.

My personal feeling is that too often classroom activities are focussed on

summative or proficiency testing rather than developing students' competence or using activities for diagnostic or formative testing. This book clearly puts the focus on formal assessment.

The timesaving availability of photocopiable worksheets will undoubtedly appeal to teachers because they provide professional, formal and valid documents for assessment.

Marking

There is a principled approach to marking and the book offers a number of schemes and approaches, which should reassure teachers. There are forty pages of photocopiable worksheets and guidance on record keeping and reports. A range of common-sense approaches is offered and there are useful reminders, tips and points for consideration. Although the book provides a 'toolkit' of templates there is scope for the reader to devise their own method of physical storage of records and integration into the individual school system/context.

Conclusion

It is refreshing to see that the approach adopted towards assessment is compatible with the teaching approach espoused by the authors. For this reason it should appeal to teachers who (sometimes) feel compromised by their assessment system.

In my experience, teachers on Young Learner Teacher Training Courses are

often inspired by more learner-centred activities but often complain that their syllabus and assessment systems do not allow for a task-based approach to learning. Although teachers feel their classroom practice is sound and developing in line with more recent language learning research, they often feel compromised by their assessment procedures or the systems laid down by the school or educational authority. This book offers some concrete ways of providing valid assessment of pupils, consistent with classroom practice, without relying totally on (written) tests.

At the same time the authors demonstrate an awareness of the need to provide numeric and systematised grades/ bands/ marks/ reports often demanded or expected by parents and school management. From this point of view, the book offers some tried and tested methods of assessment that meet the requirements of parents and management. A variety of strategies are offered to meet the varying needs of different teaching contexts.

Overall the book offers a range of assessment tools including some information on Language Portfolios, which enables the reader to mix and match strategies according to their pupils' needs and the local requirements.

Annabelle O'Toole is Programme Manager Bell Young Learners
Annabelle.o'toole@bell-centres.com
www.bell-centres.com

**Contributing Author (IATEFL Anthology – Stories in ELT),
James “Mr Schools of the World Storyteller” Robinson
is touring the South East Asia region
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**To book a show for your class, please email:
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£ YLSIG Finances £

Andy Jackson

We hope to have a regular report on the YLSIG finances so that all members can see where their money goes. This report is an introduction to the topic, and is a general summary.

Where do we get the money from?

The YLSIG Account is held by IATEFL as part of central accounts. All members are entitled to one free SIG then they can opt for membership of additional SIGs at £12 each. Our income consists of £7 per member who opts for the 'free' membership of our SIG, plus £7. Of the £12 paid to join additional SIGs, IATEFL retains some of this fee to cover administrative expenses.

In addition to this, when we run an event, such as a local conference or the pre-conference event, we are given the surplus, if any. This is not usually a large amount (and indeed may even be a loss if the event is poorly attended for some reason); as such events are intended to support the activities of our worldwide membership rather than to generate a profit. We may also receive some money from the sale of newsletters and other publications, although these are normally sent free to members.

What do we spend the money on?

Our greatest expense is of course the Newsletters - editing, printing and postage. We are proud of the quality and size of our Newsletters and see them as an important service to members. We also have our own SIG running expenses - meetings, travel costs, as well as a proportion of the central SIG support costs.

Our present balance is a very healthy £6,330, but expenses for the Autumn 2003 Newsletter have not been paid yet, and this one is due out before the Conference in April. These will probably absorb about half of the balance, reducing it to the level to operate efficiently.

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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.

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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Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NY, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 1227 824430
Email: generalenquiries@iatefl.org
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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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