



YOUNG LEARNERS AND TEENAGERS

CATS: Children And Teenagers

THE PUBLICATION OF THE YOUNG LEARNER AND TEENAGER SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP



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Issue 1/10

Music and Songs in the ELT Classroom

Charles Goodger – Music and Mime, Rhythm and Rhyme: Achieving PMA through “Presentative” Action Songs

Chris Minton – Teenagers and Songs: Maximising Learning Opportunities

Kitri Kapur – The English Language Classroom: Some Methods

Gregory J Manin and Alicia Artusi – Bridging the Gap with a Tech-Savy Generation

Muhammed Iqbal – Discussing the Norms of Rulinglish

Nayr – Bilingualism: A Child’s Perspective

Harry Kuchah – “All We Clap Dancers”: The Dancing English Lesson

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Harrogate



2010

YLT SIG Pre-Conference Event JOIN US! REGISTER! BE INVOLVED!

Challenging changes or changing challenges? *A YLT reality check.*

To be a teacher of young learners, ranging from age 3 to 17, means dealing with challenges of a changing world in which we learn. But learners themselves, and trainers as well as materials developers have to deal with these changes, too. How do they do this? And are they successful at adapting to the opportunities and constraints offered by new technologies ranging from blogs to communities and networks, to CLIL and task-based learning and even phonics teaching. And are we adapting to the changing child? In this PCE we will have a broad and closer look at examples from these perspectives. By the end of the day you will leave with a clearer idea as to how well we are doing as a YLT community. Once again YLT SIG is bringing you a day that cannot be missed!

The day will be filled with talks and workshops from the following experts. By the end of the day, you will be clearer about how the YLT community is addressing these issues.



Brian Tomlinson - materials writer, Leeds university * **Jamie Keddie** - freelance teacher & teacher trainer * **Ken Wilson** - Drama trainer & author of ELT materials * **Nik Peachey** - specialist in web based technologies for language learning * **Paul Braddock** - senior teacher at the British Council Young Learners Centre, Barcelona * Prof Emeritus **Richard Johnstone** - researcher into ELL * **Rama Mathew** - Professor of Education in Delhi University

**YLT SIG Pre-Conference Event 7 April * IATEFL
Conference 8-11 April * register at www.iatefl.org**



Young Learners & Teenagers
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

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A special thanks to Charles Goodger for allowing us to use his picture for the front cover of this issue.

From the Editor

Welcome to the first 2010 issue of C&TS, and my last as co-editor. I write as the weather in UK still alternates between mid winter and spring – should I take today's warm sunshine to be an encouraging sign?!

This issue takes music and song as its main focus along with a variety of other related articles. The theme of music in the YLT classroom, I feel, is an important one, as it appears to be a most enjoyable and effective way of learning so much about a language and its cultural context. And it is also a theme that has recently been revisited on the YLT SIG Discussion Groups list, where many more excellent ideas for using song and music in the classroom have been posted. If you haven't done so already -check it out!

Finally, I would just like to say how much I have enjoyed being a member of the YLT SIG team as co-editor of the newsletter – and that it has been a privilege and a fabulous experience. Thank you.

Enjoy!

Kerry
Co-Editor

Disclaimer

Views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Editor, of YLT SIG or of IATEFL

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YLT SIG retains the right to make any of the contributions in this issue available in electronic form for the benefit of its members.

The theme for C&TS Autumn 2010 will be:

THE FUTURE OF EFL PUBLISHING

(For the next issue, please send all letters and article proposals to Janet)

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- Vacancy

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

www.yltsig.org (YLT SIG website)
www.iatefl.org (IATEFL website)



Young Learners & Teenagers SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

IATEFL Young Learners and Teenagers Special Interest Group (YLT SIG) has evolved into a flourishing worldwide network, supporting and informing some 400 ELT members worldwide. Our members are individual teachers and trainers, as well as institutions (institutional members) such as colleges and universities where teacher education takes place. We also cater for approximately 500 online members and reach thousands of teachers worldwide through our events.

YLT SIG aims to support its members by providing information on recent developments in English Language education for children and teenagers, aged from 3 to 17, and by organising networking opportunities for its members. The YLT SIG is led by a committee of volunteers who arrange discussions, organise conferences, produce publications and maintain the YLT SIG web site.

What membership offers

- A bi-annual publication, C&TS (Children & Teenagers) to keep you informed and up to date, packed with practical ideas for teaching young learners together with the latest theories and book reviews.
- *IATEFL Voices*, IATEFL's own newsletter, published six times a year, to keep you informed about the wider picture.
- Occasional other publications.
- Preferential rates for IATEFL-organised conferences and seminars and the opportunity to meet face-to-face with experts in the field.
- A comprehensive web site with a regularly updated web resources section and downloadable newsletter articles and discussion list summaries for members.
- An active e-mail discussion list to help keep you networked and informed and offering an opportunity to enhance your institutions and your own professional profile.



Co-ordinator's Report

Dear all

Happy New Year wherever you are!

Last year had YLT Sig zipping around the globe organising or supporting events. We have been putting into practice IATEFL's mission 'linking, developing and supporting English language teaching professionals worldwide'.

Various prominent speakers, such as David Graddol and Prof. Richard Johnstone, travelled with us to Korea and China (Beijing, Anhui, Guangzhou) spreading their wisdom on the HOWs and WHYs of EFL, and we have done our best to develop the WHATs widely. We also supported a successful event in Brasil and did work for the Ministry of Education in Malaysia. What became very clear from all these events is that successful ELT for YLT needs:

- explicit literacy instruction
 - the WHAT
- to see the wider picture of ELT (Graddol 2006)
 - the WHY
- for the right conditions to be present e.g. teacher training and appropriate materials (Johnstone 2009)
 - the HOW

Congratulations to Janice Bland (one of our C&TS editors), who co-ordinated the very successful 'Children's Literature in Language Education' conference at Hildesheim in February 2010.

Many exciting events and activities are planned for the New Year in cooperation with partners such as the British Council, ministries of education and teacher training institutions. Look out for us in the Middle East (Palestine, Qatar, UAE, Yemen, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman), the UK and Cameroon in 2010!

But aside from events which we are always hatching, we have:

- ✓ an extremely successful **discussion forum** ably led by Dennis Newson and Helen Davies with state of the art Eluminate meetings
- ✓ a magnificent **website** kept up to date by all the committee members and managed by Chris Etchells
- ✓ an annual cutting edge **PCE** developed by Niki Joseph

- ✓ an informative **C&TS journal** edited by one of our trio of Editors, Kerry Powell, Janice Bland and Janet Crossley
- ✓ practical **events** developed by Caroline Linse, Harry Kuchah and the Sig co-ordinators, Hans Mol and Wendy Arnold

This is the last time Wendy will contribute to C&TS as joint YLT Sig co-ordinator as she completes her tenure at Harrogate.

Wendy says: 'I've thoroughly enjoyed my 7 years on the committee, first as discussion moderator and then joint Sig co-ordinator. But all good things must come to an end and committees need fresh blood to keep them fresh and forward looking. Thank you to all YLT Sig committee members past and present and enjoy' to all committees in the future.'

We would also like to thank Kerry (C&TS Editor) for her valuable contributions to the journal during her tenure and for offering to continue to shadow Janet as incoming Editor.

Please look for the ads advertising the roles of joint coordinator, advertising & sponsorship officer and membership officer elsewhere in this issue.

Wendy Arnold and Hans Mol
YLT SIG Joint Co-ordinators

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Graddol (2006) *English Next* (2006) accessed on 13th January 2010:
<http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-research-englishnext.htm>

Johnstone, R (2009) An early start: What are the key conditions for generalized success?' in J. Enever, J. Moon and U. Raman (eds) *Young Learner English Language Policy and Implementation: International Perspectives*. UK: Garnet Publishing Ltd

**Don't forget to
check online for
reports about
YLT SIG events at
the 44th Annual
IATEFL Conference
in Harrogate
April 2010!**

**More details at:
www.iatefl.org**

Events Report

YLT SIG has once again been really busy with events around the world. Many of you may have attended them: it is always wonderful to meet up with members and teachers in other countries.

1. In October 2009 a successful event took place in China which was organized by NAFLE and supported by the British Council and YLT SIG. As this goes to print the much-awaited Children's Literature in Language Education is taking place at Hildesheim University, Germany (February 2010).
2. In March, a multi country event organised by British Council and supported by IATEFL YLT SIG 20th March-4th April, 2010.
4. The end of April sees YLT SIG supporting a British Council/ Macmillan event in Palestine, 25th April, 2010.
5. IATEFL YLT SIG and GI SIG are planning a UK event under the topic of The Global Dimensions in ELT.

The event begins in Qatar and ends in UAE with the following countries in the middle:

- Yemen
- Oman
- Bahrain
- Kuwait.

The topic is *Teaching Young Learners and Teenagers: Best Practice*.

3. At the IATEFL annual conference in April three events are taking place:
 - **YLT SIG pre-conference event** (7 April 2010)
 - **YLT SIG day** (10 April 2010)
 - **YLT SIG Symposium** (11 April 2010).

6. IATEFL YLT SIG is supporting CAMELTA (Cameroon English Language Teachers Association – IATEFL Associates) in an event in Yaounde, Cameroon 16- 20th August, 2010.

For more up to date details of these events, check the website regularly. If you would like an event in your area, do get in touch!

From the Event Organisers:

Janice Bland (Germany)
Niki Joseph (Portugal)
Harry Kuchah (Cameroon)
Caroline Linse (UK)

Achieving PMA through “Presentative” Action Songs

Charles Goodger

All kids enjoy singing and dancing. So when catchy new tunes and rhythms come together in specially worded songs that are fun to dance, mime and perform, teachers have a powerful tool – a tool that used correctly can effectively accelerate the language learning process. This is the FunSongs Method, now officially approved and recommended by a growing number of education ministries within the European Union.

Action songs to present new language

Provided it possesses certain key properties, an action song is a great way of jump-starting a new teaching module. Unlike many course books in which often banal and cheesy songs are little more than fill-ins to end the unit or lesson, I propose using the collective act of combining melody, expressive movement and language as a dynamic presenter of new vocabulary and language chunks. The action song’s contents can then be broken up, recycled, practised and acquired through a graded set of games, tasks and activities.

Natural chronology of language skills

One of the key tenets of the FunSongs Method is that your class should not see the words of the action song until it has been learnt by heart. In this way the learning process follows the natural physiology of linguistic intelligence: each child’s innate skills of understanding and speaking (or in this case singing) precede the formally taught skills of reading and writing. This approach also favours correct pronunciation without the interference of written

English – notorious for the irregular and phonetically-unfriendly way in which its commonest words are spelt. FunSongs action songs should never be learnt from the page.

Melody and meaning in music and language

The benefits of using music as a vehicle in first and second language learning are well known and well documented and there is probably no need to reiterate them again here. However one aspect the academic literature seldom mentions is the nexus that exists between a catchy tune and a meaningful utterance. So what do music and language share in common? In physical terms both are sound waves our ears hear and our brains process. A note in a tune corresponds to a phoneme in a word, a musical phrase to a language chunk and so on. In other words, the mathematically specific order and length of notes in a melody give it its sense in the same way as the orders of phonemes in an utterance give the latter its meaning. The difference between them of course, lies in the aesthetic power of a good tune (or song when wedded with verse) to move the listener emotionally, to incite feelings; this aesthetic dimension is restricted to language in the form of poetry.

Extract from The Ladybird Song by Charles Goodger



www.funsongs.co.uk

Almost everyone reading this can probably recognise a famous melody such as “Yesterday” from its first three notes. And it this ability of instant recognition that surely has interesting repercussions for language learning. If learners are exposed to the sound and meanings of new language chunks and words through a memorable tune, they will remember them. With the FunSongs Method every teaching module starts with a presentative action song.

PMA, TPR and TAs

Combine the emotive and mnemonic power of melody and rhythm with TPR (Total Physical Response) in presentative language-learning action songs and you can be sure your learners will experience what is called PMA (Permanent Memory Acquisition). And what could be more worthwhile and reassuring to the committed English teacher than knowing her class has already learnt the target language of the current module before starting to recycle it?

Again this is perhaps not the place to get into a detailed description of Total Physical Response, the exciting right-brain techniques first used by Dr. James J. Asher in the 1970s. Suffice to say, they work and the FunSongs Method has, I believe, successfully incorporated them with its learning approach based on TAs (teaching actions).

So how does this FunSongs Method work?

Using an action song package in class

Say you want to teach your class of six or seven year-olds ***The Ladybird Song*** - an action song about human identity built around creatures in their natural habitats and elements:

- birds, eagles, insects and ladybirds in the sky
- fish, dolphins, whales and mermaids in the water
- children and snails on the earth

As well as its cross-curricular themes, you know ***The Ladybird Song*** is a valid vehicle for practising and presenting simple prepositions and the modals *can* and *can't*. Since the action song complements your syllabus so well you decide to replace and skip the rather laborious teaching unit in the class's glossy and costly course book (the one dealing with farmyard animals that ends with Old McDonald's Farm) with ***The Ladybird Song***. You've already downloaded ***The Ladybird Song*** package (mp3s and pdfs), familiarised yourself with the song and its TAs and have mapped out your module in line with the Teacher Notes pdf.

Follow this five-step approach:

1. Pre-teaching: brainstorm and focus

Tell your kids they are going to learn a song about animals and what some can do that we can't. In L1 (or L2 depending on level) brainstorm the vocabulary and themes of the song. You can make a game out of this by asking pairs or small groups to compete to see who comes up with the longest list of animals and where they live.

2. Present the song

Now play the guide voice mp3. Sing along (or mouth-sync) the song - anticipating and accompanying each language chunk with its teaching action as shown on the illustrated sheet or captioned youtube video.

3. Teach the song through its TAs



Charles Goodger using the FunSongs Method to teach the action song ***Time to Play***.

Work through the song on a two-steps-forward one-step-back basis using mime and repetition. Say (don't sing!) The first two chunks - each choreographed by its TA like this:

Teacher: On the earth - *Pointing down to the ground four times in time with the 4/4 tempo*

Class: On the earth - *Mimicking the teacher both with their voices and bodies*

Teacher: In the sky - *Pointing up four times in time with the tempo*

Class: In the sky - *Mimicking the teacher both with their voices and bodies*

During the action song teaching and learning phase try to limit the use of L1 as much as possible. Even if learners don't pick up on the complete meaning of each word right away, it doesn't matter. The important thing at this stage is that they get the gist of the meaning as they start to form meaningful associations between the actions and the sound of the language chunks. Neurologically, the combination of music, rhythm, rhyme, language and movement (in a dynamic, collective activity with a clearly defined goal) is bringing several intelligences –online” at the same time and your learners will be using both sides of their brains. James J. Asher calls this –brainswitching”.

Next go back to the first line and repeat the operation but this time you sing the chunks followed by your kids. Then move forward to the next section and so on:

*Like an eagle through the air
Like an insect
Everywhere*

4. Perform the action song

As soon as your class has learnt the song using the guide voice, get them to stand and perform the song with the kids' version mp3. In this way the adult voice is removed and your class acquires the song for itself - it becomes their song. Look out for opportunities for your class

to perform the song – ideally to their parents or to another class to which you intend to teach the song. Performing an action song well will give your kids an important psychological boost - reinforcing confidence in themselves and in their ability to handle the foreign language.

5. Work the action song

Many teachers and parents are surprised at how fast a class of primary school - or even kindergarten children - can learn an English song in this way. However remember you have only completed the first stage of the action song teaching module. Yet you have a precious resource – the words and themes of the action song - have been committed to the long-term memories of your learners. You now need to break down the song and encourage the children to recycle and work its vocabulary and language in a variety of different contexts. This is why you should have a set of photocopyable activities and worksheets available as you move ahead to complete the module.



Charles Goodger is a language expert at Bologna University. Text book author and teacher trainer he is also a musician and founded his own Windsor-based ELT company FunSongs Ltd in 2001. The FunSongs Method of teaching English is officially approved and recommended by the Italian, Latvian and Lithuanian Ministries of Education.

Free downloads are available at www.funsongs.co.uk. Charles Goodger will be holding a FunSongs workshop at the IATEFL Harrogate Conference on 8 April.

charles.goodger@unibo.it

References

Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind, Multiple Intelligences*, Basic Books.

James J. Asher, *Learning another language through actions*, Sky Oak Productions.

The Ladybird Song by Charles Goodeger

Teaching Actions - Verse 1

<p>On the earth Point down in time with the music</p> <p>in the sky Point up in time with the music</p> <p>Why, oh why Shake hands up and down</p> <p>can't we fly? Mime wings</p> <p>Like an eagle Arms outstretched like a diving eagle</p> <p>through the air Sweep arms outwards</p>	     
<p>Like an insect Move pointed index fingers around fast like a buzzing insect</p> <p>Everywhere Open both arms</p>	 

A FunSongs action song download
www.funsongs.co.uk © FunSongs



YLT Membership Figures

Spring 2010

Dennis Newson

Membership all over

YLT SIG Membership is always on the move. We've done a membership analysis in January and the following graphs show you where we are all from. Needless to say, through events, our magazine, online discussions and all the other activities we do, we are always trying to increase membership in areas where we feel there is more potential for us. These graphs do not reflect membership of the discussion list. As it stands at the time of writing, the numbers are as follows, making us the 2nd biggest SIG in IATEFL.

As per 2 February 2010
IATEFL YLTSIG members: 383
YAHOO LIST: 692

Figure 1: General breakdown of membership over global areas

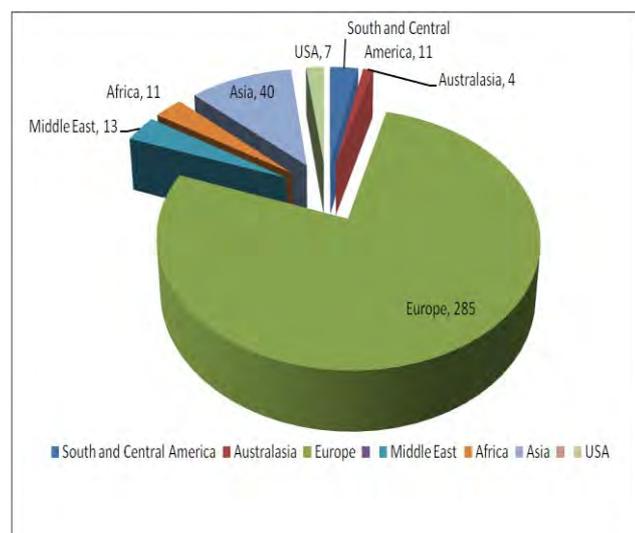


Figure 2: Membership breakdown in Europe

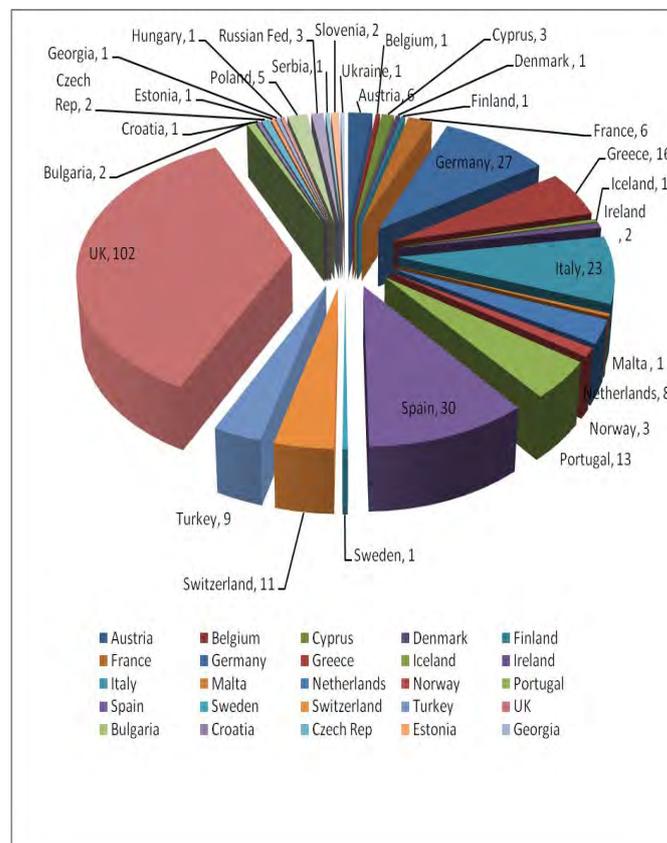
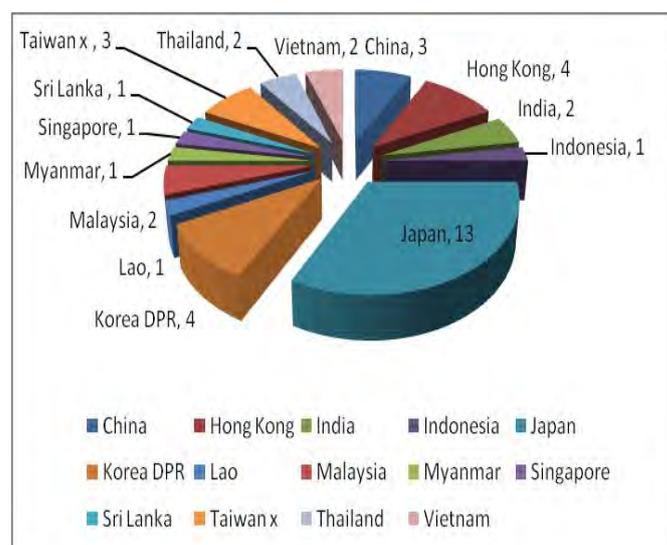


Figure 3: Membership breakdown in Asia



Teenagers and Songs: Maximizing Learning Opportunities

Chris Minton

From Ancient Greek times through to Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, music seems to be a powerful tool both in educating and in how we learn. Songs are an ideal way to include music in EFL teaching programmes, because they combine music with language. This article is concerned with maximizing the learning opportunities that music can provide teenage young learners. I have supported each point with an example of a song that has worked in my context. However, I believe almost any song has potential for classroom use.

Selecting classroom activities

'Gap-fills' (texts with missing words) seem to be the choice activity for songs in course books. Although students willingly do such tasks, the potential for failure is quite high because listening for specific words in songs is not easy. I recall a boy merrily singing *Every time you go away*, you take a piece of *meat* with you' – (much more practical than a *piece of me*!) In my opinion, circling a word from a pair of similar words or opposites is a preferable task and one that young learners are likely to complete successfully. Failing in foreign language classroom tasks can be very de-motivating for teenagers.

Rather than just playing a song if you have five minutes spare at the end of a lesson, I recommend utilising the potential songs possess as a stimulus for other language learning activities. Stories are one such activity that leads into songs naturally. Many songs are narratives so it is easy to create stories that complement song lyrics. For example, the song *Water of Tyne* lends itself nicely to a broken-hearted girl waiting in vain by the riverside for

her soldier husband to return from battle. This creates interest before the song is played, and can 'pre-teach' some key phrases in the song lyrics in an interesting way. Alternatively, songs such as *Bad Day* or *Somewhere Only We Know* can stimulate creative writing such as a story entitled "My Terrible Day" or "The Secret Hideaway".

Another classroom activity requiring minimal preparation is a dictation. Davis and Rinvoluceri (1988:7) state 'decoding the sounds of English and recoding them in writing is a major learning task'. Note: a dictation is a very different task from the gap-fill. Songs with repeated choruses such as *Last Christmas* are ideal for dictation. An additional benefit is that writing out the words seems to give the students some kind of ownership of the song. It requires processing longer phrases blended together rather than isolated words. Students can try dictations themselves in their free time then check their accuracy with a print of the words. Many teenagers love learning song lyrics.

While listening to songs in class, students can do different tasks then share the information they found. This has positive implications for differentiating tasks in mixed ability classes. For example in the Queen song *Bicycle Race*, one group can listen for movie titles, another can count the number of times the word 'bicycle' is sung (29 I think!) while other students can attempt a dictation task.

Utilize the quintessential nature of songs

Some believe that songs can be used to support or practice particular language points, for example *Penny Lane* for the articles *a* and *the*. With such wonderful pictures painted by the lyrics in that song, such a narrow language focus seems a wasted learning opportunity. Another example cited is Suzanne Vega's *Tom's Diner*. Yes, it does contain a lot of ~ing verbs, but what a dull way to exploit a fantastic song.

In my opinion, it is better to let students notice the grammar, but focus on what is interesting for them. A task I regularly use is playing songs with students following the lyrics then each choosing one or two words or phrases that are arouse their curiosity. They can then find out the meaning and teach each other. An example

one of my students wanted to learn was the phrase *It's been no bed of roses / no pleasure cruise* from the song *We are the Champions*. This is a great way to learn and remember new vocabulary.

Unlike other sources of language input such as newspaper articles or graded readers, it is perfectly natural to listen to songs many times, so new vocabulary is reinforced and recycled every time they it is played. We can exploit this in the classroom by regularly replaying songs that have been the focus of classroom activities, for example, as background music while students are reading or doing a puzzle or as they are gathering before a lesson.

Listening is the most frequently used language skill

Research gathered by Oxford (1993) found that listening is the most frequently used language skill, and one that can be improved with practice. Oxford also states *simplified input is not useful as a long-term L2 instructional strategy* (Oxford 1993:208). Songs present authentic language while having face validity (or *cred'*) for the students. They are short and *repetitive* so provide manageable input, which can become intake.

If we think of a song such as *Candle in the Wind* it is not long before our minds are leaping with associated emotions. Songs often have emotional meaning for teenagers. Allowing students to play music of their choice for the other class members, and say why they have selected that song is one good way to make the most of this. Students can even design a worksheet, which in itself will give some indication into the type of task they think is appropriate.

Listen Naturally, Sing Naturally

In my experience, many younger learners love singing songs. Popular authentic children's songs are in books, CDs and on sites such as <http://www.youtube.com/user/BritishCouncilLEKIds>. These, though, are rather childish for teenage learners. YL courses such as Open Doors and More! contain specially written language learning songs. These may have specific target structures and vocabulary and

often simplified YL friendly lyrics. Look through course materials for YL and you will often see the activity *Listen and sing*. The task of *Listen and sing* is rather optimistic for many reasons. Firstly, for most learners, the song words and melody are unknown and, of course, in a foreign language. It is better, in my opinion, to let singing happen (or not happen) naturally, after five or six plays. This also reduces the likelihood of learner or teacher embarrassment. My students also enjoy choreographing crazy dances to accompany songs. Why not? It's fun!

Humanize the learning experience

Tomlinson (2006) believes in humanizing language teaching, by making it personal and relevant to students. Songs encourage this because teenage YL can often relate to the words or situations. If you work in a school, some of your students are sure to be in a band, and may well have made recordings of their music (much easier to make these days). Even if the songs are in their mother tongue, there is huge potential for asking and answering questions about their experiences in the band. They may even like to perform for the others live. Use your own connections, too. Recently, a class of mine were thrilled when the emails they sent to a musician I happen to know personally were answered.

Finally, do not forget to ask the students what they like or dislike about the song. One popular activity I have tried is making *trading cards*. Over time, I have asked groups of students to give a score out of 15 for different categories such as the vocals for different songs they hear. Agreeing on a score stimulates a lot of language, while the game itself is an enjoyable way of spending five minutes before class. (See over)

Extensive listening

Krashen (2004) is persuasive in his arguments that extensive reading has a beneficial affect on language learning. He also supports the pleasure hypothesis, which states *what is good for language development...is perceived to be pleasant by the acquirer and teacher* (Krashen 2006:1). It would seem that listening to songs for pleasure would provide the perfect platform for *extensive listening*. It can be done

anywhere with material selected by the students. After all, what students can learn in the classroom is a drop in the ocean compared to what they can learn out of it. The main aim for classroom activities is that tasks are interesting, enjoyable and achievable for our students. If this happens, they can feel comfortable listening to songs sung in English autonomously, and their opportunities for learning English are therefore maximised.

Don't forget to check online for reports about the Annual IATEFL Conference in Harrogate 2010!

More details at: www.iatefl.org

Examples of student Trading Cards:

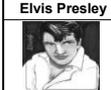
Legends

				
vocals 0	vocals 5	vocals 2	vocals 5	vocals 5
songs 2	songs 5	songs 0	songs 9	songs 1
attractive 3	attractive 0	attractive 1	attractive 6	attractive 0
X-factor 7	X-factor 0	X-factor 6	X-factor 5	X-factor 2

				
vocals 1	vocals 5	singing 0	singing 5	singing 0
songs 2	songs 2	songs 0	songs 7	songs 7
attractive 1	attractive 0	attractive 7	attractive 6	attractive 6
X-factor 2	X-factor 9	X-factor 7	X-factor 0	X-factor 5

Legends

				
vocals 0	vocals 5	vocals 2	vocals 5	vocals 5
songs 2	songs 5	songs 0	songs 9	songs 1
attractive 3	attractive 0	attractive 1	attractive 6	attractive 0
X-factor 7	X-factor 0	X-factor 6	X-factor 5	X-factor 2

				
vocals 1	vocals 5	singing 0	singing 5	singing 0
songs 2	songs 2	songs 0	songs 7	songs 7
attractive 1	attractive 0	attractive 7	attractive 6	attractive 6
X-factor 2	X-factor 9	X-factor 7	X-factor 0	X-factor 5

Other Singers

				
vocals 1	vocals 0	vocals 1	vocals 1	vocals 8
songs 4	songs 5	songs 2	songs 7	songs 0
attractive 1	attractive 9	attractive 8	attractive 1	attractive 5
X-factor 2	X-factor 7	X-factor 9	X-factor 0	X-factor 9

				
vocals 3	vocals 4	vocals 5	vocals 9	vocals 2
songs 3	songs 6	songs 6	songs 7	songs 6
attractive 0	attractive 3	attractive 4	attractive 1	attractive 8
X-factor 5	X-factor 3	X-factor 7	X-factor 2	X-factor 1

Other Singers

				
vocals 1	vocals 0	vocals 1	vocals 1	vocals 8
songs 4	songs 5	songs 2	songs 7	songs 0
attractive 1	attractive 9	attractive 8	attractive 1	attractive 5
X-factor 2	X-factor 7	X-factor 9	X-factor 0	X-factor 9

				
vocals 3	vocals 4	vocals 5	vocals 9	vocals 2
songs 3	songs 6	songs 6	songs 7	songs 6
attractive 0	attractive 3	attractive 4	attractive 1	attractive 8
X-factor 5	X-factor 3	X-factor 7	X-factor 2	X-factor 1

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The Editorial Team

The English Language Classroom: Some Methods

Kitri Kapur

Teaching English has become an important and significant field of study today. In order to achieve success as an English Teaching Professional one needs to understand the various approaches to English Language Teaching and Learning and apply those which are most appropriate according to our teaching *context*. The contexts may vary from rural to urban, from a private to public (government) school and formal to non-formal settings.

As a teacher in India, one has to grapple with immense diversity and disparity. One cannot adopt a one size-fits-all principle. Besides this, one may have to use different methods even for a uniform class profile for conducting different activities. Till date, the English language classroom in India has largely been dominated by behaviourism and didacticism. The English language classroom must avoid precisely this. The need of the hour is to develop suitable methods and materials for our specific student profiles. There is a need for a paradigm shift from rote learning to constructivism. Noddings (1992) suggests that students should not be made to cram and fill their heads with specific information. For example, making students repeat letters of the alphabet or structures of grammar without the appropriate context and examples of usage will not help in language learning.

Learning is not a receptive act, but a creative act wherein the learners need to be actively involved, more so in an English language classroom where effective communication is a pre-requisite for learning a second language. The ‘Teacher lecture, student swallow’ mode of classroom instruction is passé. Learning should be a two way process.

Prior to opting for a particular method or approach one needs to revisit the objectives of teaching English as a second language. The broad objectives are to:

- familiarize learners with the oral and aural forms of language
- enable learners to listen and understand in a non-linear fashion
- enable learners to read with comprehension
- enable learners to express themselves in a coherent and logical manner
- familiarize learners with the basic process of writing
- give learners ample space to develop their creativity
- sensitize learners to their immediate environment (social and physical)
- involve learners in group activities, role-play etc

In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives the content needs to be rich. Therefore, an input rich communicational environment is a pre-requisite for language learning and spontaneous language growth. A number of researches have shown that languages are best acquired when the focus is on meaning and not on the form of the language. (Prabhu 1987, Krashen 1985)

To begin with, the gap between the home language and second language is to be bridged. Here, repetition can be a useful strategy for teaching the second language Total physical response (TPR) where children listen, repeat and physically respond to a song or a rhyme or a set of instructions sustains the interest of the learners thereby increasing the amount of language learning (Joan Shin, 2006). Repetition coupled with gestures taps into children’s physical energy. This is also referred to as ‘pseudo-production’. Yet, it has been given a legitimate place in language learning because the repetition of meaningful, authentic activities can lead to the true production that one is

aiming at. Also, when children repeat, they get used to saying English sounds, practice the intonation pattern and gain confidence (Slattery and Willis, 2001).

For example, the following poem from the NCERT Textbook *Marigold-I* can easily be used for the specific student profile discussed above-

A Happy Child

My house is red-a little house;
A happy child am I:
I laugh and play the whole day long,
I hardly every cry.

I have a tree, a green, green tree,
To shade me from the sun;
And under it I often sit,
When all my play is done.

The poem can also be modified along the following lines to incorporate more colours and objects.

I live in a house,
a red, red, red house.

There is a tree,
a green, green, green tree.

Under the sky,
the blue, blue, blue sky.

Repeating such poems helps students identify colours and speak about the colour of their house, trees, plants and the sky i.e. self and environment. In this way, pseudo-production leads to true-production.

Repetition is particularly useful for young learners because it makes them feel comfortable with the new language. It gives them a sense of achievement when they are able to speak English. It also builds their confidence and removes their hesitation viz. a viz. the new language and speaking in front of others — individually and in groups. This also helps the learners learn new vocabulary and absorb pronunciation, intonation and word stress when they repeat what they hear.

As children acquire more English, songs and rhymes form a real part of the learning process (Slattery and Willis, 2001). Learning becomes a joyful experience and it has been my personal experience that when learners go home they sing songs and recite rhymes to their parents. As a result of this, parents also feel involved in their wards' learning and feel proud of it. This form of repetition is extremely valuable for teaching speaking skills as it enables the learner to repeat and therefore improve their grasp over the new words and phrases learnt. Also, the positive response from the parents and other adults boosts their morale and motivates them to speak with greater confidence and frequency.

Children are receptive, inquisitive, imaginative and creative by nature. Different materials and methods attract them and then they are motivated to learn. Children are born with an innate language faculty (Chomsky, 1986) and they learn languages with ease if they get adequate exposure. In the English Language Classroom, themes and examples should be taken from the immediate environment of the learner thus following the pedagogical principal of moving from the known to the unknown, familiar to unfamiliar.

The aim is to facilitate active participation of the students so that language learning can take place in an effective manner. For example, citing examples/instances from a Western cultural milieu, which is alien to our students, will not serve the purpose as the learners will not be able to identify with such examples and will therefore not respond as openly as desired. A simple example is, while talking about fruits and their colours, a fruit like strawberry is not likely to strike a chord with the students in a rural setting in India, whereas talking about mangoes, bananas and oranges might. Care should also be taken to choose texts which refer to objects and contexts from the immediate environment of the learners.

Using story-telling as a classroom methodology

Keeping the whole language perspective in view, story-telling can be developed in to an effective classroom methodology. Reading stories aloud, choral reading, repeated reading, re-telling the same story, can help build on the

existing language proficiency of the learners. The meaningful contexts of the stories can help build all four language skills. For the listeners

- The story is engaging
- The listener can also participate in the story

To achieve this one must choose the right story according to the age, interest and the cognitive level of the learners. Let us take the example of the story *Three Little Pigs*. First narrate the story. On the next day repeat the story with gestures and actions. Then read slowly and clearly. Explain with the help of illustrations. Encourage the learners to take part in the storytelling.

When the story is introduced in print with illustrations it will help the students to visualize the story and connect words and phrases with images through activity questions like – What kind of houses did the three pigs live in? A Straw house', Bamboo house' or Brick house'? In case, there is some construction activity being undertaken near the school premises, the learners can also be taken to the site to show them how a house of bricks is constructed. The same story can be used to develop writing skills as well. The learners can be asked to write sentences about their own houses. Short sentences like: My house is made of bricks; It is a big house; I live there with my family' are examples of likely responses from the students. Here, writing is to be taken as a process of learning and not as a product and one has to be very clear that grammatical, pronunciation and spelling errors are bound to happen and that these errors are pointers towards areas where the learners need help and guidance.

When a child listens to a story, reads a poem or listens to an instruction, s/he tries to understand the text and makes meaning out of the sounds (while listening), letters sentences or paragraph (while reading). However, s/he understands / comprehends them as a whole. A whole language approach provides opportunities for using language creatively. This encourages analytical and critical thinking and leads to both constructive and creative comprehension by the learners. Storytelling as a methodology ensures TPR and also provides scope for role-play, which is another important method.

Role-play

Dramatizing is part of children's lives from an early age: children act out scenes and stories from the age of about three or four. They like to imitate adults in various situations like buying vegetables, conducting a class etc. Make-believe encourages their creativity and develops their imagination, and at the same time gives them the opportunity to use language in different contexts. English language teachers can use this natural desire to act out situations to teach the language. However, we need to remember that role-play/drama activities are not the end product, but are part of the process of language learning

The value of drama as an educational tool comprises fostering the social, intellectual and linguistic development of the child. Heathcote (1984) has listed the following characteristics as being particularly significant:

- drama demands the co-operation of the participants
- it draws on previous experience
- it creates situations in which there is a need for precious communication
- it is experiential, thereby affecting students in other than a purely intellectual way
- it challenges students to discover new truths or insights by confronting them with previously unknown predicaments

Drama activities can be used in education to enhance the language skills of the learners. Teachers need to develop and devise activities as per the age, interest and cognitive development of the learners. Approaches and methods should not be exclusive and the teacher should use input rich methodologies such as the Whole language, the task-based and the comprehensible input and balanced approaches as per the needs of the learners.

The role of the teacher

Despite adopting a learner-centered approach, teachers must regard their role as the captain of a ship. Their positive response, healthy attitude and motivation will go a long way. The central focus of the teacher should be on regarding language-proficiency as a process and not a fixed product. The following checklist can be kept in mind by teachers while designing activities for their specific student profiles in order to keep their teaching effective:

- √ Supplement activities with visuals, realia, and movement.
- √ Involve students in making visuals and realia.
- √ Move from activity to activity.
- √ Teach in themes.
- √ Use stories and contexts for holistic language learning
- √ Use home language when necessary.

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Book Reviews

Reflective Language Teaching: From Research to Practice

Young Learner English Language Policy Implementation: International Perspectives Janet Enver, Jayne Moon and Uma Raman Garnet Education 2009 248 pages Paperback: ISBN 978-1-90109-523-4

A first of its kind, this book is a collection of selected conference papers from proceedings of the 2008 Bangalore Conference on Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL). Primary school English language policy is its focus; drawing from global perspectives of policy decisions that influence classroom practice, the challenges of policy implementation and the

interplay between global and local language issues which impact on policy and its implementation in different world contexts. The reader who wants a broader perspective of global trends in TEYL policy implementation will find this book both useful and informative because it is derived from a team of policy makers, teacher trainers and education consultants and a few teachers who have different world views; from 26 countries in 5 different continents. This diversity urges the reader to take a second look.

With illustrations drawn from several countries, the book tries to capture current policy and implementation strategies in ESL and EFL contexts, albeit with more papers from EFL contexts. The book has a rich content of experience, innovations, projects and collaborations. Diverse themes seem to run through the book, and one is surprised to find that although we teach and make policy in different contexts, we have the same issues: for example, finding the appropriate age for starting EFL among young learners, finding the 'right' balance between policy and politics, experimenting, aspirations versus reality in classrooms, the effect of innovation in TEYL, challenges of teacher development, challenges of policy implementation and the often visible mismatch between imported teaching methods/techniques and the local teachers who are expected to practise them. Innovation in classroom practice and curriculum issues appear to be common concerns.

The book has some case studies; however, the reader might wish that more papers described more studies which have been carried out in these contexts. As I read, I wonder if many of the projects and innovations described in this book still exist as EFL and ESL contexts are generally known to be quite dynamic and catalytic. What we gain though is invaluable insight into what was (what is?) and what could be. We are privileged to see different impressions of teaching and learning through the perspectives of teacher trainers and policy makers; explanations made by policy makers and more importantly, how policy makers think.

The editors however categorize the book with three broad themes:

- –Consider the impact of specifically global factors on policy decisions and classroom practices;
- Explore the challenges of policy and its implementation, including the need to ensure that age-appropriate and adequate provision is made for inclusive policies at national level;
- Explore broader and more local language issues and their impact on policy”.

They include an index and a draft set of recommendations which they hope will benefit policy makers. In my opinion, the book could be viewed as a resource material containing a diversified collection of shared experience of TEYL issues, policy, implementation and challenges. It might be interesting to include some of these papers in teacher development courses all over the world for analysis about the assumptions of policy makers and their implications for teaching and learning. ELT and ESL contexts sometimes have high professional mobility; my knowledge of two of these writers shows that they have since moved on to other positions and responsibilities and I am left to wonder if their perspectives are any different.

Regardless of the dynamic nature of ELT and EFL policy all over the world, the book does provide an interesting insight into places which some of us only read about or see on television. However, perspectives expressed in the book do not necessarily carry the views of teachers in the classrooms where they have been tested; where English is often taught under difficult circumstances. Including poor salaries, large classrooms and inadequate training or support. I would love to have read of clear outcomes of some of the policies and innovations described in the book; in terms of young learners' performance over a period of time. Nevertheless, the book is a handy source of resource and reference materials, and a welcome tool for broadening our perspectives about global trends in TEYL.

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Uncovering CLIL

Content and Language Integrated Learning in Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Peeter Mehisto, David Marsh & María Jesús Frigols
Macmillan Education 2008 238pp
Paperback ISBN 978-0-230-02719-0

I recently attended a workshop on CLIL and a troubling question was posed: if CLIL is intended for students speaking in a non-native environment (i.e. abroad), in a way, isn't it artificial? Isn't it just teaching them content they could learn in their own language? In *Uncovering CLIL*, Mehisto, Marsh and Frigols attempt to wrestle with such pertinent questions about CLIL and its uses. While some of us may be suspicious of integrating traditionalist subjects such as history, maths, biology and literature into a language teaching environment - not least, because it summons the fear that we have to juggle (possibly unfamiliar) subjects while following a singular "CLIL-type" route - the authors present the idea that a "dual-focused education approach", like all convergences, is not that rigid.

Instead, the authors present that CLIL has its foundations in the rich, multi-faceted world we and our students operate in. The experience of it they present, in this book, is that of a globalised world. And that classroom learning can extend beyond the perceived walls of our imagining. Instead of fearing CLIL as unfamiliar and faddy, you may end the book by thinking it essential!

The book starts with some easy-to-grasp approaches to CLIL and works up to preparing your ideas and materials for a CLIL lesson. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 then guide you through how the process unfolds in the classroom. Chapters 6 to 8 will give you further advancement in your practice of CLIL as you get more confident.

The first chapters springboard you into a plethora of activities, including a week-long learning task for primary school. The table of summaries, diagrams of important features and boxed tasks do not overwhelm, but break down the information into digestible chunks.

You can dip in and out of theories like "multiple focus", "safe and enriching environment" and "authenticity" because they are reinforced with practical ideas such as "active learning", "scaffolding" and "co-operation". Another feature is the rich interdisciplinary tasks for secondary level students.

My particularly favourite secondary level activity was in Chapter 3. It included a science theme on volcanoes. It was clearly structured and fun to complete, with a cross-sectional diagram and concept questions throughout. It built up to a grammar task on the advantages and disadvantages of living in Pompeii in AD 97(!) and then finished with a reading on the history of the eruption as seen by Pliny the Elder. Inspiring stuff, and makes you itch for Chapter 8 which tells you how to 'uncover' authentic texts for your own CLIL materials.

Overall, this book is a well organised cohesion of the three experts' practices and suggested teachings. From the outset, this book proclaims to 'uncover' what may be buried in the unexplored world of CLIL. If the purpose of Content Language Integrated Learning is to integrate rather than fragment, I would say this book achieves its aims in 'uncovering' that innovation. It is excellent reading for modern teachers of English as a Foreign Language and primary/secondary level.



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Drama and Improvisation

Ken Wilson

Oxford University Press 2008 125pp

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Despite all innovations in the field of language teaching many English classes are still mainly teacher centered and concentrate on grammar rather than focusing on the main aspect of language: using it freely in natural conversations. Ken Wilson aims at showing teachers how easily that could be changed by including pieces of drama and improvisation in their everyday English lessons. Therefore his book offers a well structured collection of 56 different activities which are designed to give students an opportunity to “engage creatively with the new language in a context of support and cooperative effort”.

In a short introduction Wilson describes the benefits and main aspects of using drama activities in class and gives some helpful advice for teachers who haven't had any experience with drama so far. Still he also addresses those who are more advanced in using drama methods by increasing the demand of activities from categories like “fun and games” to running an extra curricular “drama club”.

At the top of each activity there is important information such as the learner level, the time needed to complete the activity and its aims. These hints are also given in the table of contents which makes it easy to find suitable activities very quickly. The main instructions like “preparation” and “procedure” are always followed by possible “follow-ups” and helpful “comments” based on Wilson's far reaching experience with drama teaching methods. Another positive aspect is that most activities are very easy to set up and fit into every lesson because they don't take more than 15-30 minutes. But even though most of them are levelled “Elementary+” they are not aimed at absolute beginners. Students need to have some basic vocabulary to express themselves otherwise they won't be able to participate in activities where they have to interview each other or write notes about their favourite pop stars.

Nonetheless the book is a well structured collection of motivating and interesting activities which is easy and fun to read. From the first page on you can feel Wilson's passion for drama and become motivated by his encouraging message: You can do it! His book is a must-have guideline for all teachers who have always wanted to enliven their English classes but never had enough time or ideas to get started.

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Bridging the Gap with a Tech-Savvy Generation

Gregory J Manin and Alicia Artusi

Today's kids are tech-savvy to a degree that many of us "older" teachers will never be. They grow up with computers, cell phones, Wii and video games all around them. Keyboarding is more natural to them than writing with a pen or pencil. Many of them seem to think in short sound-bites, and a 40-character message is as good as an essay in their minds. They text, tweet, Myspace and Facebook like there's no tomorrow.

The question for us as language teachers is: how can we take advantage of their hi-tech abilities and sensibilities without sacrificing their sense of language as thought-process, an exploration tool and slow-moving, all-encompassing vehicle of thought and feeling? It's a very big question, and one that may finally become unanswerable as the younger generations become more and more entrenched in the tools and techniques of hi-tech communication.

In the mean time, though, we can at least help our students see the connection between “slow-motion” language and the sound-bite world of wired communication.

Link new vocabulary with specific websites

For example, say you're dealing with house-related vocabulary in class. Once they've covered the basics, set them loose on Craigslist.com or a site specific to real estate, preferably a US or British one. Tell them to search for a house they'd really like to live in, gather all the information about it they can (by searching for maps, bird's eye view photos, neighbourhood information, etc.) and keep notes about it. Once they have all the information, ask them to imagine they are either buying or already live in the house. They will need to write an essay describing the house, its environs and their feelings about it. (Length and complexity will depend on the level of the class.) You can set this up as a "Best Essay" contest or in another context that will make it more motivating for the students. Emphasize the "feelings" part of the assignment since this is where the use of language takes them beyond the simple sound-bite into the place where language functions on a much deeper level.

Since the amount of information on real websites may be overwhelming - as compared to the controlled and guided information included in course books - you may need to teach some reading strategies like scanning for the information they need, or have a special class on searching information on the web. On the other hand, some other students will love this exposure to new words and include new, relevant vocabulary in their writing.

Teach me to Facebook

Another idea is to get your students to write about their hi-tech dealings for your - and of course their - benefit. Explain to them that you have used Twitter, Facebook or some other online service, but that you really don't understand the appeal or how to get the most out of it. Ask them to write a short article explaining not just the technical aspects of the chosen site, but the advantages of using it, the ways they use it themselves and the role it has come to play in their lives. This kind of "cross-over" activity - using technology as a basis for exploring their life choices and preferences - will help to show students what a more full use of language can allow them to communicate. This

exchange of expertise' will bring your two different worlds together, and show the importance of integrating English into their everyday life. Some students will also feel proud of being able to enlighten the teacher on an issue they really know about for once in their lives!

Text message Shakespeare?

One fun idea that both gets students to read and might make them laugh is to take a page or two of "real" literature (again, age-and level-appropriate) and "translate" it into text-message language. You can distribute the different roles in a play or story and ask student to exchange messages as those characters for a week. Ask them to use every abbreviation and short-cut they can think of, and even to do it on their phones or mobile devices as long as there is a way to save and share it. Once the text versions are done, ask the class to compare them to original. What has been lost in translation? What are the (dis)advantages of each form? This can be an eye-opener for the students, and a learning experience for the non-texting teacher as well - a way to see into their world and understand more of what it's all about, not to mention understanding what your students are texting about you and your classes!



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Discovering the Norms of Ruringlish

Muhammad Iqbal

“If I exist I do move and if I move I do change or be changed that is equivalent of global harmony.” (Iqbal, HLT Mag Dec 08)

A few years ago, I took the opportunity to dip into a training session where a vehement debate got off the ground regarding meter in English poetry. One of my colleagues said to me, “Iqbal sahib, when I write English rhymes and poems, English metre bothers me. How you make a dent in this problem while creating poems and songs?” I returned, “I can’t speak for everyone but certainly I don’t get behind the idea of hunting for original meaning. Why don’t you believe that English is just like our own languages—Urdu and Punjabi? Adopt the style of local languages when you produce something in English. See how convenient it is!” Her face flushed with new understanding.

English is not „LaBelle Dame Sans Merci“

Studies show that researcher seem to be disputing the explanation that English is not merely the language of BANA countries and their populace because NNS are even greater in number. On the other hand, rural communities are reluctant to accept this critically acclaimed reality. They are on firmer ground to argue that they don’t exploit the opportunities for learning English to be an active part of ‘speedy globalized world.’ Consequently, their community-based voices are throttled and breached. Observations show that they are very enthusiastic to know how the modern word functions but English, an international language, is still daunting and intimidating subject for them due to cruel nativeness.

Evidently, English desperately needs linguistic and cultural hybridity. We rural teachers are required to create the impression that English is not ‘La Belle Dame Sans Merci’. Particularly rural poor communities need to be involved in

flexible and pleasurable learning activities compatible to their own contexts.

In this regard, I would like to explore how I create indigenized poems and songs to make English language a hope and pleasure for poor communities. I share local patterns of poems and songs in English and create awareness of global harmonious values. A large body of evidence indicates that the holy marriage of L1 and L2 is a hope for rural communities. When we teachers create material following local style and patterns, the children and teenagers grasp them faster because it brings the impression that English is their own language created by their own teachers. The cultural resistance decreases in the classroom and English is gulped and digested.

POEMS

War is Wrong

Ding Ding Dong
I sing song
Peace is right
War is wrong

I would like to name this poem English Robai which has four lines usually telling us a truth or reality with the form as A, A, B, A or A, A, A, A in L1. The words in the first line do have some meaning in English, but in this poem I have used these words without any meaning. To begin with, these kind of words are commonplace in children’s Punjabi poetry. Also, note the use of meaningless words at the start of the poem given below.

Peace

Huble Buble Bow
I want to sow
The seed of peace
That will grow
All over the land
Earth, sea an’ sand
They ll sing song
War is wrong

Song: Land Mine

Oh, land mine
 What you dine?
 Souls and hearts
 Limbs and parts
 Mine and thine*
 Oh, land mine
 What you dine?
 Who made thee?
 To kill little Lee
 Left no sign
 Oh, land mine
 What you dine?

Under the ground
 Made all bound
 Limit and line
 Oh, land mine
 What you dine?
 In thy den
 Killing so men
 Dog and hen
 It's not fine
 Oh, land mine
 What you dine?
 When you blast
 Kill so fast
 Life with tine
 Oh, land mine
 What you dine?

*Punjabi phrase meaning all and sundry

I wrote the above song after attending a workshop at the SPELT conference in 2006 conducted by Kip Kates regarding the issue of land mining. I sang it in Vietnam and it was much appreciated. The song has a stanza form that is very popular in Urdu and Punjabi.

Backbiting

Wall has ear
 It can hear
 So my sweet
 Keep talk neat
 Talk should reap
 Think very deep
 When you speak
 Be merry, meek
 Don't backbite
 It cause fight

I Went to the Zoo

I went to the zoo
 I saw what? Lo!
 I saw there bear
 A child of a deer
 Some naughty monkeys
 Deechoon Deechoon donkeys*
 Some flying bats
 Cats and rats
 Some white parrots
 Eating red carrots
 I saw a snake
 Blowing on a cake
 Sparrow in a cage
 At earliest age
 Nothing was boring
 A lion was roaring
 Gulping its food
 Crocodile nude
 A camel in chain
 Cackling crane
 In front o' fox
 Chewing wez en ox^
 Elephant id walk~
 Danced peacock
 Friends were seagulls
 Doves and eagles
 There was a dog
 Playing with frog
 I saw there duck
 Doing Buck Buck~
 Bat ga-ee muck
 Killa giya Tuck (Punjabi mothers usually say these word at the end of stories that they share with their children at night)

*Punjabi words and sounds
 ~Punjabi Idiom: to make idle talk
 ^was an ox
 ~did walk

Farewell to Arms

My students are very pleased and they experience pleasure on learning English with these poems and songs but you might be surprised to hear *how* English has been their daily practice in the class. They have banished S or ES in present indefinite tense (see *Backbiting*). We have bidden a farewell to these arms. Some of my students add ED with all verbs to coin 2nd and 3rd form of all verbs. Similarly, they make second and third degrees just with moe and most' for every adjective, for instance: more big and most big, not bigger and the biggest. They use prepositions as they are in L1; for example, the birds are sitting on the trees, not in the trees. As I have indicated some Punjabi idioms in my poems, they also use lot of idioms from L1; for example, the building is talking to the sky means it is very tall. Sometimes they also use nouns as verbs and adverbs in place of adjectives.

One might well ask why I have been doing so. My line of argument is as World Bank has recently reported that rural communities are lagging twelve hundred times behind the urbane sophisticated communities in learning English. I feel I should know how to turn a seaming crisis into an opportunity. So my goal is to give the impression that English is not La Belle Dame Sans Merci' for rural communities. They can learn and speak it conveniently to become an active part of the speedy globalized world.

Last but not least, I think a new kind of subject Hopolinguistics' should be introduced in ELT if we are serious for proliferating English to the remote and backward vicinities.

Muhammad Iqbal grew up in a small village of Punjab. He has been writing poetry since his school days in different languages. His children poems and songs have been published in different international teaching newsletters. He teaches English in a vocational institute working for poverty alleviation and rehabilitation of the poor in Narowal, Pakistan.

He is the member of a number of national and international associations and Membership Officer and Discussion List Moderator for Global Issues SIG, IATEFL. He is the founder of Rural English Learners and Teachers group in the Punjab, Pakistan.

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Web Watcher



Editor's choice:

www.teachnet-uk.org.uk/...L2Lwebquest/.../teacher_page.htm

...although aimed at the UK National Curriculum, this website has lots of really great ideas and advice for those wishing to start using webquests in their classes.

See also...

www.linkingforlearning.com/webquests/index.html

www.teachersfirst.com/webquest.htm

<http://webquest.org/>

For further great website links don't hesitate to visit the YL SIG website at:

www.yltsig.org

Bilingualism: A Child's Perspective

Nayr

Observing a young child switch languages in the middle of a sentence, select the appropriate language to accommodate his/her interlocutor or translate for grown-ups, has left many an adult perplexed and awestruck. Yet, are these children aware of this innate ability or do they simply accept their bilingual identity as a *fait accompli*? What does a child understand by the label, 'You're bilingual'?

The Bilingual Survey 2009 conducted at the British Council Bilingual Section in Paris attempted to answer some of these questions. The objective was twofold: to capture children's perception of their bilingualism; to increase teachers' understanding of their pupils' unique situation.

As bilingualism is a complex, multifaceted and context-specific phenomenon it is important to understand the circumstances in which these children have become bilingual. On a political level, these children benefit from European language policies, which encourage plurilingualism and nurture the development of bilingual educational initiatives. They reside in France, an established monolingual nation with an unofficial bilingual population of 20% (Harding-Esch and Riley. 2003:29). They live in and around Paris, an international city with a multilingual population. On a personal level, they come from mainly three linguistic family situations: one parent or both parents are English-speaking; both parents are francophone and the child developed his/her bilingualism in an English-speaking country or via an international school education in a non-Anglophone country; children already have a bilingual background, for example, the Sri-Lankan community often speak Sinhala or Tamil and English. Depending on their linguistic background, they are considered simultaneous or successive bilinguals* and have acquired a bilingual profile by the age of 5. These children, aged 5 to 15, come to the Bilingual Section to develop their literacy skills in English.

The survey consisted of two open-ended sentence stems which encouraged children to reflect on and articulate their understanding of bilingualism:

1. *I'm bilingual means that ...*
2. *I come to the British Council Bilingual Section to ...*

Children's insightful responses were grouped into five main categories, which are illustrated below with children's quotations.

Communication Across Worlds

For these children being bilingual is first and foremost a matter of communication, both oral and written, in more than one language:

*I can speak / read / understand / write / spell / learn;
2-4 languages / several / different languages / both languages / English and French;
well / fluently / easily / without difficulty / perfectly / correctly.*

Their choice of adverbs indicates an awareness of degree in their language proficiency and exceptionally high expectations of themselves as bilinguals:

It means I have the general level of a normal English student. (9)

It's like having 2 mother tongues. (13)

Children are overwhelmingly positive about their ability to communicate in two languages:

I feel good about speaking 2 languages (5)

It's good to be bilingual ... (6)

Means you don't speak English because you have to but because you want to (14)

This confidence in their bilingualism is counterbalanced by an awareness of the challenge facing them. Bilingualism isn't a comfortable, acquired state but a shifting* phenomenon that requires an intense personal investment:

I speak 2 languages which is difficult because I get all muddled up when I speak (9)

Sometimes it is very difficult to be bilingual because you have to practise to write and talk. (8)

It is difficult to write because I am learning French at the same time (8)
I confuse the two languages (8)

Implicit in the quotations above is the very complex yet common occurrence of cross linguistic influence, language transfer* and code-switching* in bilinguals.

Being bilingual is the ability to converse between worlds, where boundaries, linguistic, physical and cultural, disintegrate:

I can go to two countries and understand the language and the people (8)

I can see movies in their real language and enjoy (11)

I can go to English shops without language problems (13)

I have the chance to discover a different culture because I lived in England and I found it interesting. (11)

Communication is natural and unhindered by the limitations of a foreign language:

I can have a real and interesting conversation with an English person (13)

It establishes and maintains relationships and multiplies friendships:

I can make friend of other languages (8)

Most importantly, it ensures family links across time and space are sustained and nurtured:

I can speak to my grandmother (6)

I can speak to different people like my cousins in London (8)

Furthermore, being bilingual gives these children a special status in that they possess the magic key to access private conversations:

You can listen to conversations in the bus because most people in the world speak English (11)

I can listen to my parent's conversation without them knowing (10)

Identity

The question of identity is closely associated with the mosaic of languages in these children's bilingual existence and inevitably raises issues of biculturalism:

I can speak two languages, French and English, „cause my dad is French and my mum is English. (8)

There is a strong sense of belonging,

I can travel to countries that speak either language and not necessarily seem to be a foreigner (14)

I am connect to the different cultures, for example, eating the same food, reading the same papers and even watching the same shows than the inhabitants in the US. (14)

Yet, these children are conscious that belonging to two cultures means you belong to each one differently from that of a monolingual:

You can live in England easily (maybe not completely because their lives and way of living are different from ours) (14)

Furthermore, they can choose to be more of one than the other, depending on their sense of identity, their present comfort zone or language preference:

I'm better in one language: French than English – I prefer French for all things (10)

The Bilingual Section offers these children an extension to and a strengthening of this identity:
I come to make friends who are bilingual like me (8)

To keep in contact with English and English culture every week (14)

Cognitive Processes

Children as young as six went beyond mere performance to mentioning inner processes: thinking, dreaming, counting, and even feeling, when describing their bilingualism:

I can feel...; I can think, dream, count equally well in two languages (14)

I am able to think, speak and write in another language (not translate in your mind) (10)

Being bilingual is a springboard that allows for further language study by facilitating cross linguistic associations:

I think it is very practical because in class it helps me for my German exercises (11)

It's easier after to learn another language (12)
Can learn a third language without any problem (13)

A Bright Future

Children are quite optimistic about their future prospects and believe that being bilingual will open the doors of further educational institutions and lead to professional and personal success:

I can do different educational systems (11)

I can go to a school or university in a foreign place: Stanford, Yale, Harvard (12)

I would like to work in London (8)

It's a great advantage and you can get a great job. (13)

Not to mention the economic advantage it represents:

You can have more friends, more money! (8)

The Literate Advantage

Children know that they can lose their special multi-layered world if it is not cherished and cultivated. Language shift* resulting in language dominance* or recessive bilingualism* is a reality not to be ignored:

If we don't speak English daily in about 3 months I will lose my English (11)

Therefore, an academic environment, such as the Bilingual Section, provides fertile ground for language maintenance:

Not to lose or forget my English (11)

Because when I was 2 I lived in London and I spoke very good English but when I came back to France I lost all my English words so I came here to speak like I spoke in the past (10)

Learn English because the English at school isn't for bilingual people (11)

But most importantly, it allows them to maintain, develop, and improve their reading and writing:

I want to learn how to write English (6)

Learn more English grammar, vocabulary and spelling (10)

To be more fluent in my writing (13)

To help understand the texts I read (11)

Children's germinating biliteracy gives them a well-developed self-esteem, and even power!

Like I am bilingual, I can help other people who don't have the same chance (12)

You get to correct your own English teacher at school (14)

Conclusion

Ultimately, being bilingual is a question of more:

You can have more homework and I can read more books, go to more countries, have more experiences, you do different and more funny thing. (8)

But you have to work more, sometimes you have to translate for people, read more, write more and do more spelling tests at home! (8)

In the wise words of a 7-year-old:

I can say and write twice as much

Bilingual Schools Project in Spain

Glossary

Simultaneous bilingualism	Learning two languages simultaneously from birth or early in childhood
Successive bilingualism	Learning one language first and the second language at a later stage through street, nursery / school or the community. The age of three has been suggested as an arbitrary demarcation line between simultaneous and successive bilingualism (Baker 2003:77)
Language shift	One language becomes stronger or weaker than the other due to a change in context or amount of exposure to this language which can result in language dominance or language loss.
Recessive bilingualism	Experiencing difficulty in understanding or speaking a language
Language transfer	The effects of one language on the learning of another; it can be positive or negative
Code-mixing / switching	Alternating between one or more languages, within a sentence or between sentences.
Language dominance	One language is stronger or the preferred language of the individual

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“All We Clap Dancers”: The Dancing English Lesson

Harry Kuchah

My students come from a predominantly French and Fulfulde speaking context. It is a regional capital, host to government institutions with people from different parts of the country, some of whom are from the English speaking parts of Cameroon. My school is a French medium secondary school where English is an obligatory subject. The average age of my students is 14+ and they have been learning English for the past three years plus some initial English language awareness and learning in their primary school. Because they have little or no exposure to English language outside the classroom, we have agreed that once every fortnight, we will invite an Anglophone living in the community to come and talk to us about different aspects of his/her culture.

One month ago, a lady from Mankon, in the North-west region of Cameroon, talked to us about marriage in her village. She showed us pictures of her traditional wedding ceremony and talked a lot about how they danced to different traditional rhythms from her village, taking a few dance steps as she talked to us. We were all interested in knowing more about her traditional dances but had no time to explore that. So what about finding out more about music from the North West? To achieve this, we have to set specific aims as follows:

1. Each group assigns one or two people to find a person from the North West living in the community (a resource person/informant).

2. Interview the person to find out:
 - a. The name and brief history of his/her village
 - b. The different traditional dances in his/her village
 - c. His/her favourite traditional dance
 - d. Where and when the dance is performed (dancing context)
 - e. Who is qualified to be member of the dance group
3. Learn how to dance the particular rhythm with the aim of teaching group members. This means learning to give instructions in English.
4. Provide an English summary of the message in the song if it is sung in any of the local languages.
5. Identify/name the languages in the song and find out which other villages speak that language.
6. Translate some words/expressions from the local language into English, paying attention to possible proverbs and other wise sayings.
7. Present the above information orally and in written form to the group for correction and teach the group the dance steps.
8. Present the above information and perform the dance as a group to the rest of the class.

Amadou's neighbour, Pa Talla, is from the North West. Amadou has interviewed him about music from his village. Amadou and his group members have learnt the dance during their private time and they will be presenting the dance in class today. Before that, the group meets with me to tell me what they have done and what they intend to present to the class. My role at this point is to help with editing their written text and to ensure that every member has participated and contributed.

First it is time to dance and the rhythm of the day is a Bottledance tune entitled “Marry na Tie Heart” by Festus Wara. Watch the video via:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMViPZeSs68&feature=related>

Note the dancers’ movements to the instructions of the artist:

*Get steady for foxtroll
Time halt up
Hook up
Foxtroll
Halt and break dancers
Break and shake body
Time halt up
Then danger break dancers
Corner brrrrreak
Inward break same time
Time halt up
And foxtroll
Left and right dancers.*

And in the second part of the song:

*All we clap dancers
Second clap again
Advance lively
And both break backwards
Make your steps easy
Shake inwards
Shake outwards...etc*

After the performance in front of the whole class, the group tells us about the dance. The group presents the history of Bottle dance, the dancing context as it used to be in the past and how popular it has become amongst young people. Then Amadou reads his initial summary of the message in the song as follows:

In this song, the singer asks married women not to live their husband to go and look for other men who like to follow other people’s wives. He asks married women to enjoy life with their husband.

Then another member of the group presents the amended version of the summary agreed upon by the group as follows:

In this song, the artist is advising married women not to abandon their husbands to go to look for other men who go after people’s wives. He advises them to enjoy their marriage by faithfulness to their husbands. Bachelor boys are not good for them, so they must be faithful.

The languages identified in the song are English and Pidgin. Words/Expressions in pidgin and their meaning in English.

Pidgin	English
massa	husband
Garri boy	bachelor
Kine kine enjoyment	All kinds of pleasure
Na weti	What is the matter
I no be know	I did not know/I never knew
Marry na tie heart	Marriage is perseverance
I di beg marry woman dem say make dem stay with their massa	I’m begging married women to be faithful to(or to stay with) their husbands

Follow up

1. Discussion: Do you agree that women are more unfaithful than men?
2. Each member of Amadou’s group is assigned to one of the other groups, to teach them the dance steps making sure that they add their own instructions and dance steps. We will dedicate 15 minutes of classroom time from our weekly 5 hours to one or two group performances and determine the best groups on the basis of how many new instructions they add to the original dance.

Conclusion

There are certainly disadvantages for bringing traditional dance into the English classroom in terms of how much time is devoted to this activity in relation to the language input achieved. But because dancing is fun for my students, they can do most of the interaction outside class hours and only bring the final product to class. My major concern here is not so much the actual English language input as it is the motivational importance of this activity to my students. If they find dancing fun, then they'll be happy to participate in English lessons. Other advantages for bringing traditional music and dance into the English language classroom are:

- It helps my learners to connect with speakers of English outside the classroom
- Even where their informant is not English speaking, the final presentation they bring to the classroom is delivered in English.
- The fact that students talk to people about their culture encourages community participation in education as a whole. This is important in contexts where materials are scarce.

- Other language activities (debates, discussions, parallel writing etc) can be generated after listening to the (translated) lyrics of a traditional song. What is more, Cameroonian languages are full of proverbs and wise sayings than can be translated into English to enrich their expressions.

The educational ideal in Cameroon is to train citizens who are deeply rooted in their culture and at the same time open to the rest of the world. Learning traditional dance in the English classroom is one way of implanting learners' roots in their culture while at the same time learning a language of the world.

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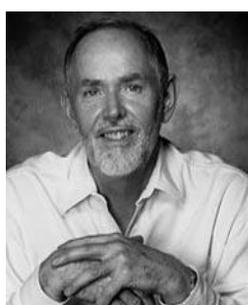
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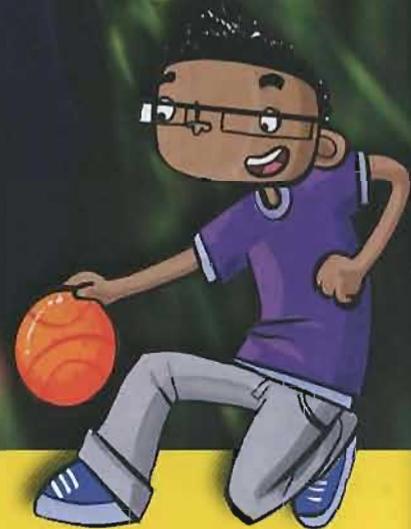
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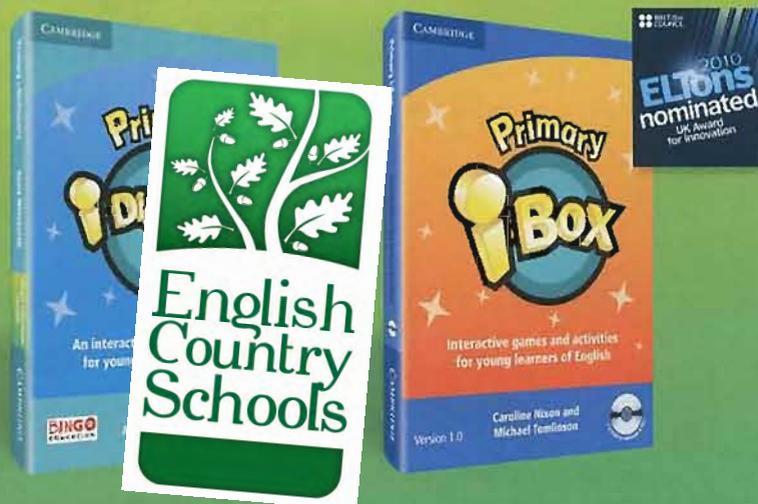


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