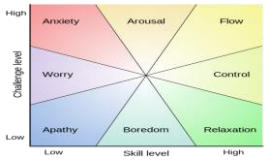
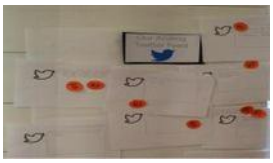
Proceedings. APAC-ELT Convention 2015



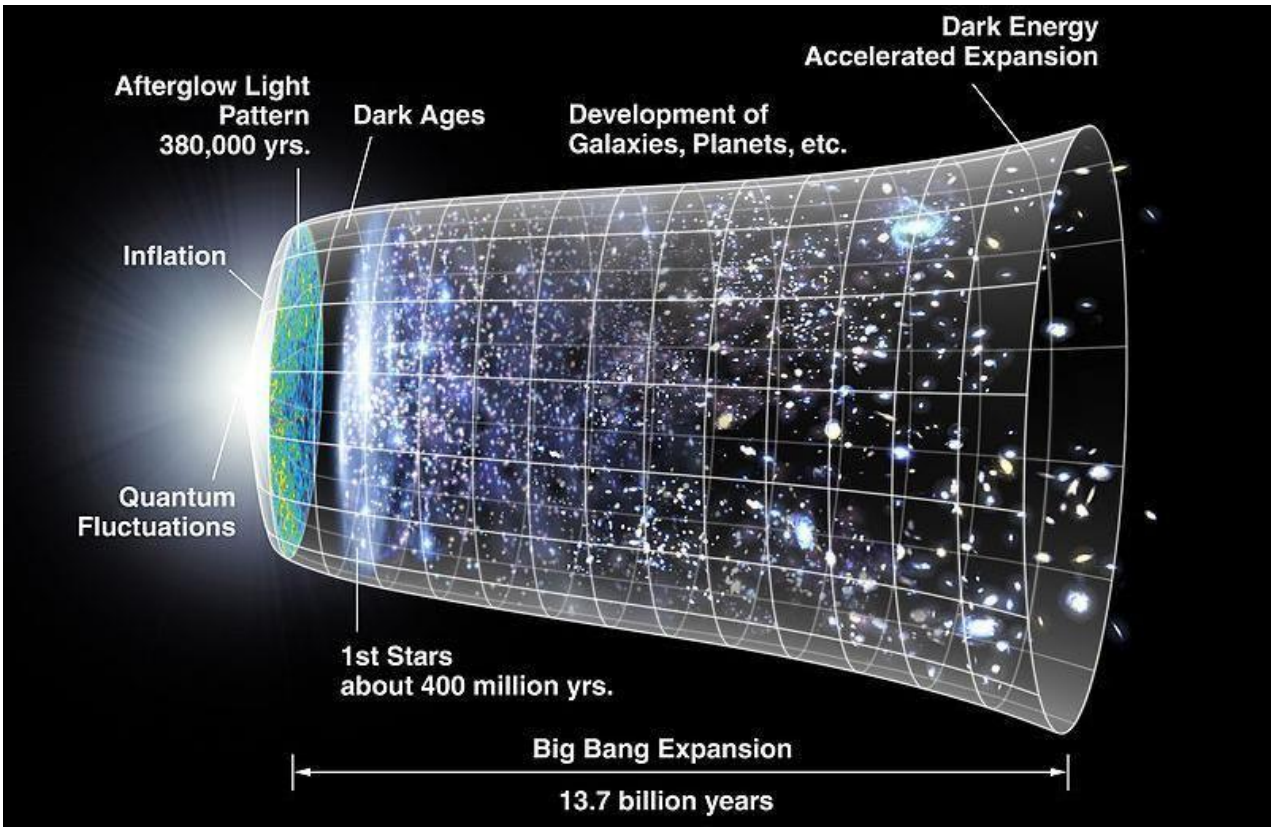
METHODOLOGY
DYNAMICS, MOTIVATION, MODELS



ICT
HIGH-TECH, LOW-TECH

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES
VIDEOS, RAPS

APAC ELT JOURNAL



Schematic of our universe. Author: NASA/WMAP Science Team. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:CMB_Timeline300_no_WMAP.jpg

Big Changes in the APAC ELT Journal

In our expanding universe, time inexorably moves forward; and with APAC, the situation is no different. After many years of excellent service, hard work, and dogged determination, the editor of our journal, Neus Serra has retired. Thus ends an era in which our publications made great gains in quality, both in content and format. The new editor will be me, Jim McCullough, a long-time proofreader under Neus' leadership, and I hope to be able to fill her shoes and maintain the standards you have come to expect from us, the APAC editorial team. All comments, criticism, and suggestions are welcome.

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow / Creeps in this pretty pace from day to day. / To the last syllable of recorded time…

W. Shakespeare

Our change in organization also comes at a time of crisis, locally and globally. Here in Catalonia and also all over the world, there is an economic/financial crisis, as you all are painfully aware of. Along with this, there is also a growing environmental crisis. According to reports, to maintain our current consumption of materials and energy, we earthlings would have to have 3 Earth-like planets at our disposal. Thus, changes have to be made in how we do things.

APAC has been striving to keep membership fees as low as possible during these years of cutbacks. In order to do so, we have reduced the number of yearly issues of the journal as a way of reducing production and shipping costs, but we have increased the size of each issue to continue to bring you the same amount of information as in pre-crisis years.

However, production and shipping costs continue to rise. And since wages and salaries have not risen at the same pace, we are still trying to keep your membership fee as low as possible. Therefore, we have decided to try a new approach to disseminating the articles that you send us. We will be making the October issue of the journal a PDF document and send it to you electronically, while maintaining the paper format for the January issue. It is our way of trying to foster economic and environmental sustainability, in benefit of all of us.

Other benefits of the electronic format are that the links in the articles plus the advertisements can be clicked on to give you easy access to the websites they refer to (as long as a particular web address does not become obsolete); pages can be enlarged or reduced in size to facilitate reading or to see an article from a wider perspective; the PDF can be accessed through many different types of devices, allowing you to have the journal wherever you may be; the material in the journal can be used more easily in class (but please cite the author(s) you got it from); and the document is easy to navigate, as a click on the page numbers in the table of contents will take you straight to the articles, a click on the authors' names will take you to their biodata, a click on the link at the end of each article will take you back to the table of contents, and use of the Search feature will allow you to access all the instances of a particular word or phrase in the issue.

So, we hope you enjoy the new look and feel of the PDF format, and we look forward to hearing from you if you want to suggest improvements we could make.

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Proceedings: APAC-ELT Convention 2015

Opening Speech by APAC President, Miquel Berga

Good afternoon everybody. It's a great pleasure to be here once again, and let me begin by giving a warm welcome to the Cap del Servei de llengües estrangeres, Sra. Montserrat Montagut, who is here on behalf of Consellera Irene Rigau, (Irene Rigau has been a regular at this event for some years but regrettably could not make it this time), to Richard Rooze, director of the British Council in Barcelona, to the long list of speakers in this convention who have come from a number of countries, to the publishing companies and organizations ready to display their latest materials in the Exhibition Hall (we value their faithful support to APAC and their complementary contribution to the aims of this convention), to Universitat Pompeu Fabra for their premises, and last but, believe me, not at all least, to all of you APAC members and participants in what I hope will be three intensive days for all of us to learn, to share and to be inspired.

Today I'd like to share a few thoughts with you about that period of time about which we know nothing: the future. I know. The future has a bad reputation because, as the great Ionesco once put it: You can only predict things... after they have happened. But my thoughts are not so much about predictions as about how to cope with the future, because whatever you think about it, the future always comes soon enough.

My first future is about ourselves as an organization. APAC has long been devoted to promoting informed innovation in ELT and to bringing together the latest research in the field and the experience of practising teachers working daily at the forefront in our classrooms. We organise a big event like this every year, we offer a reasonable amount of meaningful publications, we maintain a web with teaching resources, we offer — via the Department of Education —, summer training courses... This is APAC's spirit. But to keep this spirit alive and renewed we need people like you ready to stand out and engage themselves in organising tasks. I have had the privilege of serving as president of APAC for many years now, and I feel that this term, which has a couple of years before it expires, should really be my last term. So, my dear friends, you have two years to find ways of getting rid of me. Do not lose such a wonderful opportunity. Seriously, I beg you to step forward and contact myself or anyone on the APAC board to offer your help so that we can be as many as possible in actively devising our own future as an organisation.

My second future has to do with a sight that has never ceased to fascinate me. It is the sight of the so many young, glowing faces that every year seem to materialize in our Convention. It is a wonderful experience to watch how the young outnumber us, the old, year after year. We now have a new generation of people who for the last few years have been completing their Master's degrees in ELT. They should gradually make their presence felt in the system and add to the necessary combination of vocation and training that is the trademark of APAC teachers. But no educational system will ever succeed without the commitment, the willingness, and the enthusiasm of the young. Whenever I see these scores of young teachers attending this conference, struggling to become really professional, I feel gratitude and an urge to tell them that little big secret: "So much depends on you."

Let me refer, finally, to a sort of third future that is related to the presence of English in our society. The long road that goes from teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) to teaching ELF (English as a Lingua Franca) has provided an interesting echo in the world of Catalan media. I think it is only fair to mention APAC's active cooperation with El Punt Avui group in developing their plans to make English a regular presence in their several media. Let me just mention the fact that for the last three months El PuntAvui TV has been broadcasting their "English Hour" (or "L'hora d'anglès") daily. The program offers the series "The Class" around the learning dynamics of a group of first-year students in their English class and their life in a state school in a working-class neighbourhood in Barcelona. We are actually having a session with the people involved in that tomorrow afternoon. The program also includes "Story Time", where teachers tell children stories in English. The daily "English Hour" caters for grown-ups, too, and offers chat shows and interviews in English with native speakers and Catalans alike. On top of that, the paper edition of the newspaper "El PuntAvui" includes, daily, two pages of information and articles in English based on the news of the day. Overall, it does represent a substantial increase in the presence of English in what some like to call our "communicational space", and few would doubt that it is going to make lots of potentially significant (and motivating!) materials available for teachers of English in Catalonia. I'd like to see that as a small step forward towards the shaping of a naturally trilingual society in the near future.

And from the future to the very present and to our 2015 APAC convention. Teachers are always faced with two main challenges in their classrooms: one is concerned with motivating learners and the other one is about sustaining their motivation. A consistently strong relationship between motivation and success has been established of old by researchers, and it has become a plain fact of language teaching that language learners' motivation — the dynamically changing nature of their motivation — plays a key role at all curricular stages. We thought that our motto this year — The Dynamics of Motivation — should therefore point towards one of the most relevant, essential aspects in the profession. I hope that, somehow, the motto will be in the air during our discussions on the many related — or apparently non-related — topics in the program for these days.

And that's all from me but for a last wish: Enjoy your 2015 APAC ELT Convention! Thank you.

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Miquel Berga inaugurating the 2015 Convention.

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APAC - British Council John McDowell Award 2014

The judging panel's verdict:

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

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

The Honourable Mention was awarded for the project ***PowerfulNatureKingdom.net***, a joint project carried out by two schools: **Col·legi Sant Josep** de Navàs, on the one hand, and **The First Model Experimental School**, in Alexandroupolis, Greece, on the other. In this interdisciplinary project, the students worked on nature through ICT and shared their experiences with the children from the other country. Students from **5th Grade** in **Col·legi Sant Josep**, along with their teacher, Fina Vendrell, came to the Opening Ceremony and received their award.

Recipients of the Honourable Mention in Type C.

- **First Prize:** This is accompanied by a 300-euro voucher for educational material.

The First Prize went to the project ***Something happened in...***, a workshop led by the students in the **2nd year of ESO** in **Escola Sant Gervasi** in Mollet during the three-day Research Symposium put on by the school. In this workshop, groups of students created stories in English in different English-speaking cities. The prize was received by students from the organizing class and their teacher, Susana Ferret.

Recipients of First Prize in Type C.

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

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

It went to the research project ***Second Language Acquisition. Methodology***, a study in which the author not only analysed different methods for teaching second languages on a theoretical level but also took them into account in observing and teaching English classes in an elementary school. The author is **Paula Font Pujols** from **Institut Pere Fontdevila**, and her project was guided by her project director, **Susana Viladrich**.

Paula Font (centre) with Susana Viladrich and Miquel Berga.

- **First Prize:** This is accompanied by a Tablet.

It was awarded for the research project ***Anglicisms in Catalan and Spanish,*** an exhaustive study in which the author analyses the history and typology of Anglicisms and explains that sometimes society uses Anglicisms for lack of knowledge of the of the corresponding Catalan or Spanish words. The project was carried out by **Daniel Díez Salas,** of **INS Mig Món,** under the guidance of **Elena Casas**.

Daniel Díez (centre) with Elena Casas and Miquel Berga.

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

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

It was awarded to **Lídia Jové** for her project, **A Halloween party. An inter-level experience in a primary school,** which was carried out with students from Initial Cycle and 6th Grade. In this project, the author and students prepared a Halloween party through a variety of activities involving different academic areas.

Lídia Jové and Miquel Berga.

- **First Prize:** This is accompanied by a course in the United Kingdom sponsored by the British Council.

  It was awarded to **Cristina Fernández Currubí** for her project entitled **Loving Science,** a CLIL project for 4th graders involving science and English. Taking her students' needs into account, the author created a teaching unit on animals.

Cristina Fernández and Miquel Berga.

The judges would like to highlight the great number of Baccalaureate research projects that were presented and the high quality they evinced. They would like to reiterate their congratulations to all the award recipients and to encourage everyone to participate in the 2015 APAC-John McDowell Award.

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****

Participants with Joan Kang Shin and in the Scottish Dancing activity.

2015 Convention Assessment

Dear friends and colleagues,

Here is the our annual post-convention assessment of the latest APAC congress held last 19th, 20th and 21st of February at Universitat Pompeu Fabra - Campus Ciutadella in Barcelona. It was our 11th edition there. Many things have happened since 2004, when we moved from Universitat de Barcelona to start at "The Pompeu" with "English in the Forum". We celebrated APAC's 25th anniversary in 2011, and the coming edition will feature our 30th anniversary … not too bad!

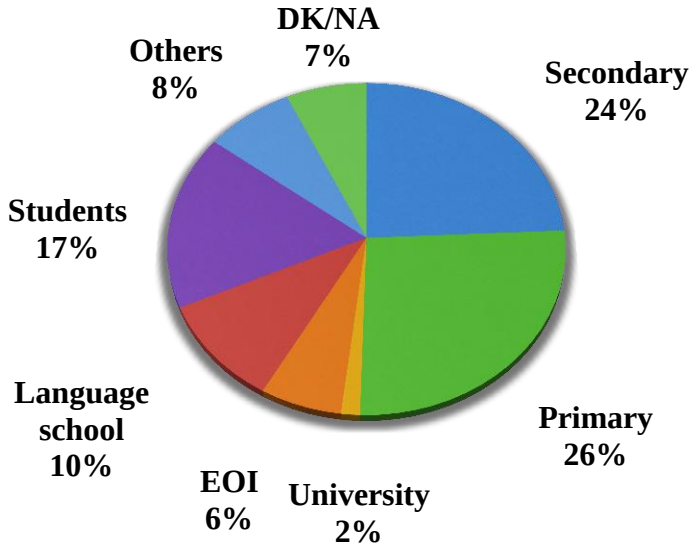
This year was devoted to "The Dynamics of Motivation", with a turnout of 426 registered attendees, 53 sessions, 65 speakers, 22 sponsors, our help team, the extended APAC board and the efficient team of technicians and office and catering staff of the UPF.

Opening session with Joan Kang Shin.

This assessment is a synthesis of your written comments and the marks on your agendas, as well as the data collected from the registration. Graph 1 shows the levels of teaching of these more than 400 participants.

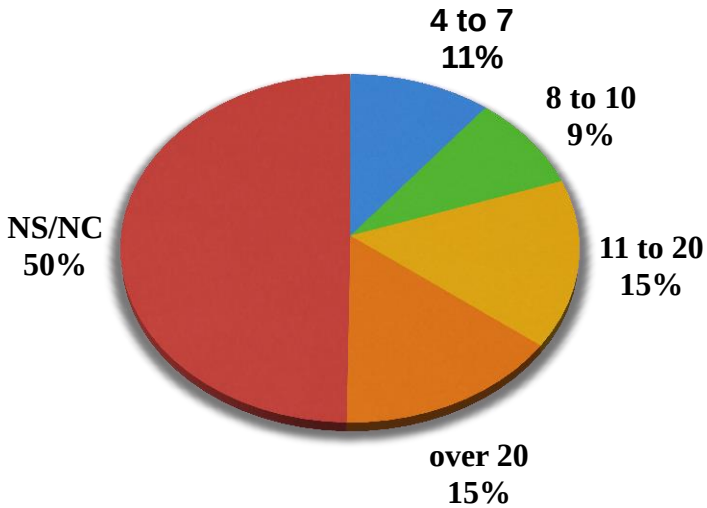
As in previous years, 50% of teachers come from mainstream education, with a bit more than one hundred coming from Primary and about the same from Secondary. We have a consolidated 15-17% of masters students and primary-teachers-to-be that we welcome and celebrate, being as they are the future teachers of our school system. Some 42 teachers come from language schools, about 20 from Escoles Oficials d'Idiomes and 2% of the attendees are from universities.

Graph 1. Professional profile of attendees.



In Graph 2 we can see the years of teaching. There is a 4% group of non-experienced teachers, 10% with an average of 5 years' experience, 9% with 8 to 10 years' experience, and almost 30% (127 attendees) who have more than 11 years' experience in ELT and are still regular comers. It seems that one is never too old or too wise...

Graph 2. Years of teaching experience.



As you know, we like to go through the comments and marks on your agendas to get a whole picture of the speakers' contributions. Let's begin with the opening session, featuring Dr Joan Kang Shin, from Maryland University (thanks to the sponsorship of National Geographic Learning – Cengage Learning), mostly specialised in young learners. Most comments highlight the expertise of the speaker; they found her interesting, genuine, organised, engaging and fun.

However, the people following the session in streaming found it very poor quality. The organising committee apologises for the inconveniences but we were forced to organise it this way due to the fact that the Auditorium was already booked for that particular day. We will do our best to avoid such situations in the future, we promise!

Having said this, the rest of the convention developed in the usual way. We had our *Welcome cava* — the first meeting point in the exhibition hall, which year after year fosters the encounter of all the participants, teachers, speakers, publishers, technicians, students. Then came the plenary sessions, such as Kieran Donaghy's approach to films, Jamie Keddie's tips on video cameras, and Vanessa Reis' views on 21st century teaching, which were all well received. They all scored extremely high.

The extra session from 7:15 to 8:15 p.m., designed for those who cannot make it on Thursday early in the afternoon or on Friday morning had a clear favourite: David Vivanco Turnheim and his Scottish dancing and songs in schools. People appreciated a humorous, lively, active session after such a long day.

On Friday morning Gillie Cunningham dedicated her Keynote speech, kindly sponsored by Cambridge University Press, to talking about errors. A participant defined her as a very nice teacher, full of energy and love for her job. Some others found her ideas not so new, but of course it all depends on your own background, and this happens all the time. It is difficult to label the sessions according to 400 attendees' previous knowledge and experience.

After the coffee break we had the regular APAC round table and two more plenary lectures. "New Kids On The Block" was a panel addressed to both new and experienced teachers, with the idea of providing exchanges ... and some found it too Secondary-oriented whilst the programme stated it as being "General". On the whole, it was considered worthwhile and it got more interesting as the audience got more engaged. There were problems with the sound, some say. Dr Joan Kang Shin's proposal on children's songs was a success again, and Dr Mireia Trenchs' paper on Multilingualism in Secondary Schools was considered too theoretical. True, but we like to present the results of the research at university, and this year it was the UPF's turn. It is certainly a theoretical presentation, but this is what the abstract on the program presents and we at APAC also like to keep up with the research areas in ELT.

The midday lunch break, which some find too long but has to be so for various reasons, led to the workshop structure that lasts till early afternoon on Saturday. We scheduled six simultaneous sessions featuring the widest variety of topics possible and most of the levels we have referred to in Graph 1.

If we have a look at the 3:00 p.m. strand, the champions turn out to be Anna Cole with her "bounce" and Jessica Mackay's lecture on motivating through imagery and imagination. At 4:30 the highest rated sessions were Jamie Keddie's view of the teacher as a story-teller and Vanessa Reis' session for the youngest ones about stories, and at 6:00 p.m., Sandy Alburquerque's approach to pop culture, David Bish on technology, and Alena Widows' reflections about homework in the 21st century all received kudos.

At 4:30 and 6:00 p.m. Àngels Oliva coordinated a poster session in the exhibition hall showcasing five posters from master's students and young teachers in a walking close-up format that we had never tried. The few who participated found it attractive and new.

Again, the late extra sessions were more than welcome, first because they are handy, secondly because Anne Dwyer, Graeme Railton and David Vivanco-Turnheim again were able to shake up the tired bunch of teachers who had run the gauntlet of the full timetable. We want them back next year, don't we?

Saturday started at 9:30 with six more workshops, among which Liam Fitzpatrick's game-based learning, Usoa Sol's tips on how to make motivation last, Alena Widows' views on writing skills in the ICT age, and a brand new lecture on EFL in the VET context by Tònia Cladera got very good comments and scores.

After the coffee break in the exhibition hall, the second and last chance to see everyone who taking part in the convention over a "cuppa", we rushed into six more workshops, from which teachers highlighted Edward Lockhart's tips on how to personalise classes to increase motivation, Rebecca Milner's storytelling techniques for the youngest ones, and Catherine Saint-Jean's very dynamic session on how to bring drama into class.

And, to close the convention, we had the 12:45 speakers, with Rebecca Lemaire's ideas for teaching pronunciation, Irene Roquet's diary and Michael Kennedy's approach to self-correcting practice as the most celebrated presentations. As is customary, all the activities finished before 2:00 and the certificates were delivered right afterwards, as efficiently as possible, to grant a well-deserved free Saturday afternoon to all.

The website and the Facebook and Twitter accounts reach their peak prior to, during and shortly after the convention. As we update the timetable as from January, we get many visitors who want to know the schedule beforehand, and during the sessions attendees tweet their impressions on what they are experiencing more and more. After the convention we post the speakers' materials on the website, and so it is active for at least two more weeks and this information complements the written versions of the presentations. During the rest of the year, the web advertises courses and conferences and fosters the sharing of experiences via Facebook.

The website is also active as from mid-September, with the call-for-papers form for the upcoming convention. We encourage you to send in your proposals. As you know, when presenting one, you have to follow a structure and a protocol that comes in handy to all, but you can also be creative with the format and content. In the last edition we piloted two sessions with posters ... why not try posters again with more experiences, or launch a panel in a small/intimate format on a very particular topic, or present a session with those colleagues you have long been working with? Take your time and think about it until the 5th of November.

And last but not least, we want to thank all the speakers for their infectious enthusiasm, the sponsors for helping us support the event on a yearly basis (which is not easy under present-day circumstances), the technicians and APAC's help team and extended board for their commitment.

As we mentioned above, we are celebrating our 30th anniversary next year. We are really looking forward to seeing you again, and to having you as members of APAC for a long time to come... and to finding new ones to keep APAC growing and getting younger☺ every year!

The organising committee

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Review of APAC's Show & Tell Poster Session 2015

What is APAC's Show & Tell PS?

APAC's ELT Convention is driven by the enthusiasm of the association's members, hundreds of teachers who are willing to spend three days sharing, discussing and learning within the community. That is why in this year's edition of the **APAC ELT Convention** we decided to introduce a very interactive, more informal type of session in which we gave the floor to the newest members of the teaching community so that they could reach out to their new peers and exchange ideas in a less formal manner.

The **Show & Tell PS** promotes networking across different contexts and experiences, thus helping newly trained teachers to integrate into the community with the opportunity to meet up with more experienced teachers and education professionals in an open, friendly and professional setting. During the **Show & Tell PS,** young recruits share with the community rich innovative approaches to TEFL, such as projects aimed at developing students' creative writing and cultural awareness, or content-based materials. Presentations are then followed by an informal discussion with individual authors in which everybody is welcome to participate and share their experiences and beliefs about the nitty-gritty reality of foreign language learning and the infinite possibilities it entails.

So, if you missed your chance to attend the first **APAC Show & Tell PS**, or if you would like to learn a bit more about this year's participants, here you'll find a brief presentation of the posters and their authors.

Participants and Contributions

Ingrid Ventura Roch: "Typing Creativity: Developing Writing and Oral Skills through Creative Writing Workshops and Leisure Education"

Ingrid Ventura is from Tarragona. She graduated from Rovira i Virgili University in English Philology in 2012. She is currently studying a Master's Degree in Humanities at the UOC and has just finished the *Màster de Formació del Professorat* at the UPF/UOC. Keen on stories, she started working as a storyteller for children in 2007 in some libraries and schools. Since 2008, she has also been teaching Creative Writing Workshops to teenagers in l'Escola de Lletres de Tarragona. In 2012 she presented "Senses and Sensibility: The Awakening of Senses in Creative Writing Workshops and Storytelling Sessions" at the Great Writing Conference at Imperial College London.

Ingrid Ventura in the Poster Session.

Ingrid's poster, "Typing Creativity: Developing Writing and Oral Skills through Creative Writing Workshops and Leisure Education", revolved around the use of creative writing workshops to develop students' communicative, intercultural and metalinguistic competences, and their artistic sensibility. Through the creative writing sessions, she proposes to engage students in deep reading activities, followed by creative writing and self- and peer-editing opportunities.

Contact Ingrid at: hola@ingridventura.com

Inma Pérez López: "E-Portfolios in Second Language Teaching and Learning"

Inma Pérez has a B.Sc. in Business Studies from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, a Master's degree in Teaching in Secondary Schools, Vocational Training and Language Centres and a Master's degree in Advanced English Studies form the University of Barcelona.

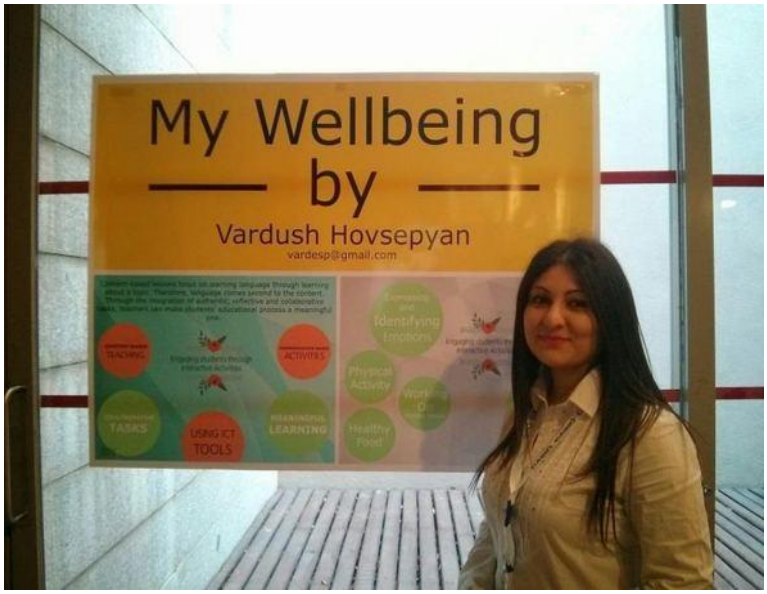
Inma Pérez

Inma's poster, "E-Portfolios in Second Language Teaching and Learning" presents the use of student portfolios, exemplified by a unit on the world of Jane Austen and the Regency. Working with 2nd and 3rd ESO students, Inma draws on portfolios to promote reading as a tool for developing students' intercultural competences and their creativity, using the portfolios to connect and make sense of students' work through different types of interaction, assessment procedures and tasks.

Contact Inma at: inmaperez.barcelona@gmail.com

Varduch Hovsepyan: "My Wellbeing"

Vardush Hovsepyan graduated from the University of Barcelona with an MA in English philology in 2011, and she also has an MA in the Construction and Representation of Cultural Identities (2012), and is working on an MA in teacher training. She is currently working at Princess Margaret School.



Vardush Hovsepyan

Vardush's poster, "My Wellbeing" revolves around the use of content-based learning to engage students and open up the foreign language classroom to issues that are relevant to their lives. She has chosen the topic of wellbeing to work on with teens in order to provide a meaningful context in which to develop students' knowledge of contents (health issues and key terminology, for example), competences (team work, argumentation, description), and interpersonal skills (using debates to promote empathy, for instance).

Contact Vardush at: vardesp@gmail.com

David Soler Ortínez: "Leading CLIL in Educational Institutions"

David Soler holds a degree in English Studies from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and two Master Degrees, one in Teaching English and another in Educational Leadership. He has

worked as an English teacher in Blanquerna (Ramon Llull University), as a consultant in the area of educational innovation at ESADE Business School and as a Secondary Education teacher. In his current research, he is focusing on the relationship between educational leadership and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).

David Soler

David's poster, "Leading CLIL in Educational Institutions", explores the kind of leadership that is necessary to effectively implement CLIL in the present-day context, based on the notions of educational leadership and educational innovation. David's ongoing research project uses a variety of tools such as interviews and case studies to get the agents' views on the nature of leadership that can lead to a successful implementation of CLIL in a range of educational institutions. His project will also shed some light on the main challenges and strengths inherent in the use of CLIL in the context of Catalan education and how they determine issues such as organizational culture, sustainability, teachers' training, stability and programme structure.

Contact David at: davidso1@blanquerna.url.edu

Keylla Barrios: "A Science Fair"

Keylla Barrios graduated in Communication from the Federal University of Alagoas, Brazil (2002), has a post-graduate degree in Educational Psychology from CESMAC, Brazil (2004) and a Master's degree in English Language Teaching (2012). Keylla has been teaching English as a Second Language since 1995. She has developed some work on assessment criteria and also implemented curricular changes to better suit students with educational difficulties. After nine years in Spain, she is currently working at Maple Bear Canadian School in Maceió, Alagoas.

Keylla's poster, "A Science Fair", is an excellent example of CLIL and project-based teaching, open to parents, school staff and students' visits. Keylla introduces a Science Fair project intended to provide students with opportunities to use their communicative and cognitive skills within engaging (and very challenging!) settings well beyond the ones offered in typical classrooms and with an intentionally strong focus on the spoken language. The Science Fair project aims at improving students' awareness of cross-curricular connections, implementing cooperative learning skills and introducing scientific research methodologies.

Keylla Barrios

Contact Keylla at: keyllafarias@gmail.com

Trends for the future

This year's posters reflect innovative views on what it means to be an English teacher in the 21st century, with an emphasis on teachers' role as leaders, guides and facilitators of meaningful hands-on learning. New teachers are curators of contents for students, they monitor students' efforts and enable them to achieve their best both within and beyond the boundaries of the classroom. They are involved with social issues, bringing engaging, up-to-date contents and a more participatory approach to teaching and learning into the foreign language classroom. These features permeate their methodological stance, which shows a strong emphasis on the use of meaningful content to promote real communication, student participation and the shared construction of knowledge. Besides, for these young recruits, ICT comes as a given, it is natural to them, and they include it effortlessly in their planning, thus connecting students' communication habits inside and outside school; they share students' codes. We also find in these new teachers' posters a strong emphasis on the importance of creativity, with a view of the foreign language as a tool for students to interpret the world around them and to construct and articulate their own identities, goals and relationships as part of wider, interconnected, social networks.

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Tweet-Summary of the 2015 APAC ELT Convention

Another innovation in the 2015 Convention was the creation of a Twitter account, which provided participants with the chance to comment on the different presentations they were attending and share their views in real time with other attendees. Sometimes they were just pictures, indicating where the sender was, and other times it was a comment or a combination of picture and comment. Here's a selection of the tweets that were going around.

Sessions on Thursday, 19th February 2015

- ***Opening Speech, by Joan Kang-Chin***

- ***Video Cameras in the Hands of Learners, by Jamie Keddie***

- ***Creating Commitment, by Andrea Tolve***

Sessions on Friday, 20th February 2015

- **Erors *Are OK, Or Are They?, by Gillie Cunningham***

- ***Moving Stories, by Keiran Donaghy***

- ***Motivating Learners Through Imagery and Imagination, by Jessica Mackay***

- **Flying Voices: *When Diversity Is Not a Difference But an Identity, by Carme Carbonell***

JOE and 10 others follow

Pilar Olivares @pilar_olivares · Feb 20

Diversity = identity. What a lovely picture. Carme Carbonell **#apacbcn15**

Alena Widows and 8 others follow

Ellie @Eabfra · Feb 20

Awesome and emotional diversity project #Flyingvoices carried out by #CarmeCarbonell in #IESLaPineda. **#apacbcn15** @APAC_ELT

- ***New Kids on the Block: APAC Roundtable, chaired by Tom Maguire, coordinated by Àngels Oliva***

Usoa Sol retweeted

Ricard Garcia @ricardgarcia5 · Feb 20

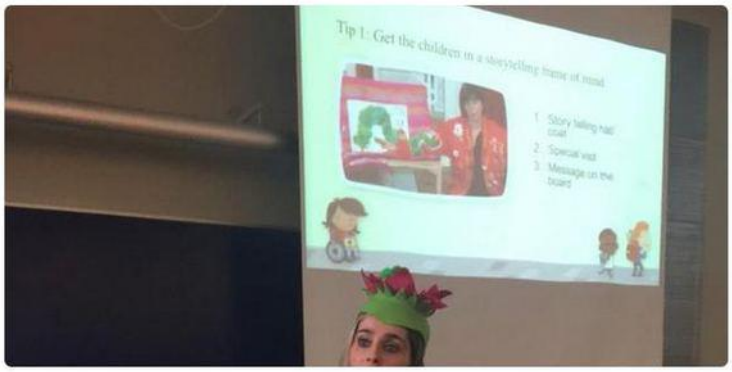
Anna Diaz Points out that being HUMBLE is paramount for a teacher. In total agreement! #rtapac15

- ***Glory, Glory, It's Time for a Story, by Vanessa Reis***

Edward Lockhart favorited

Edward Lockhart @elockhart79 · Feb 20

Vanessa Reis just put on her storytelling hat! Let's open up our ears!!! **#apacbcn15**



- **"The Class"*: The* "Making Of" *the* El Punt Avui TV *Series about Life in a Primary English Class in Catalonia, by Miquel Berga, Oscar Del Estal, Montse Basté and Marta Andreu***

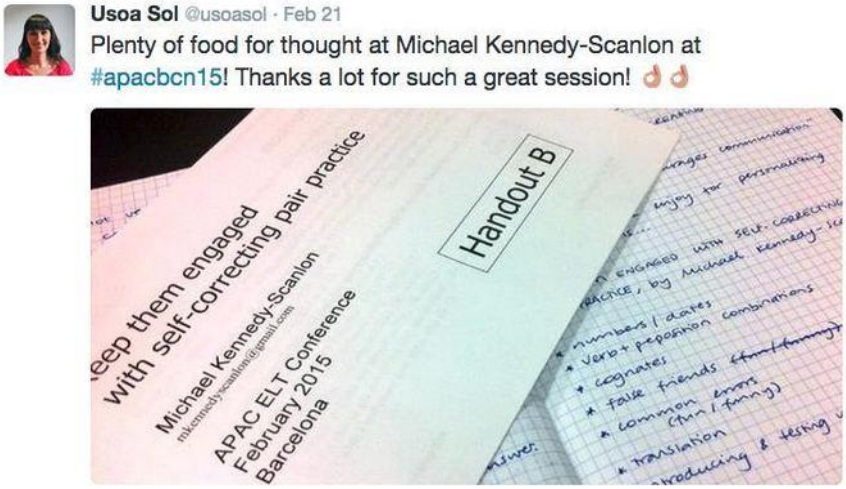
- ***Show & Tell: A Collective Poster Session, coordinated by Àngels Oliva***

- ***Fake It 'Till You Make It… Or Yes We Can!, by Anne Dwyer***

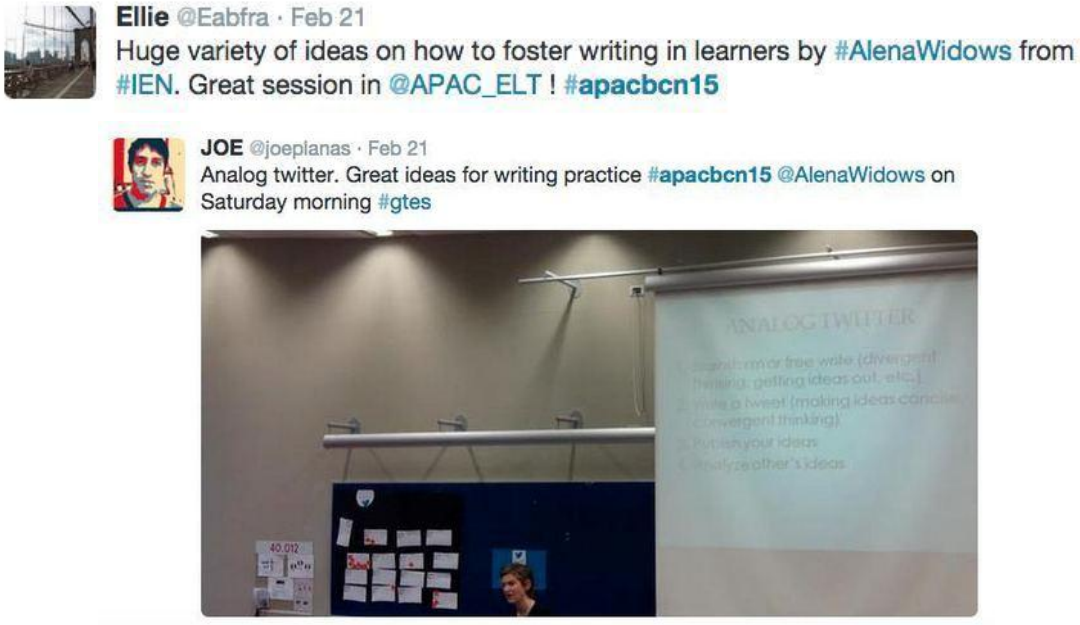
Sessions on Saturday, 21st February 2015

- ***Keep It Up! Or How to Make Motivation Last, by Usoa Sol***

- ***Keep Them Engaged with Self-Correcting Pair Practice, by Michael Kennedy Scanlon***



- ***The Cost of Poor Writing: Helping Students Achieve Written Communication in the Age of Technology, by Alena Widows***



- ***Personalizing Classes, Increasing Motivation, by Edward Lockhart***

- ***Fictitious E-Mails and Their Use As a Motivational Strategy, by Yasmina El Barouki and Julie Waddington***

Overall Feedback on the APAC ELT Convention

And thanks a lot to those who tweeted, retweeted and favourited!

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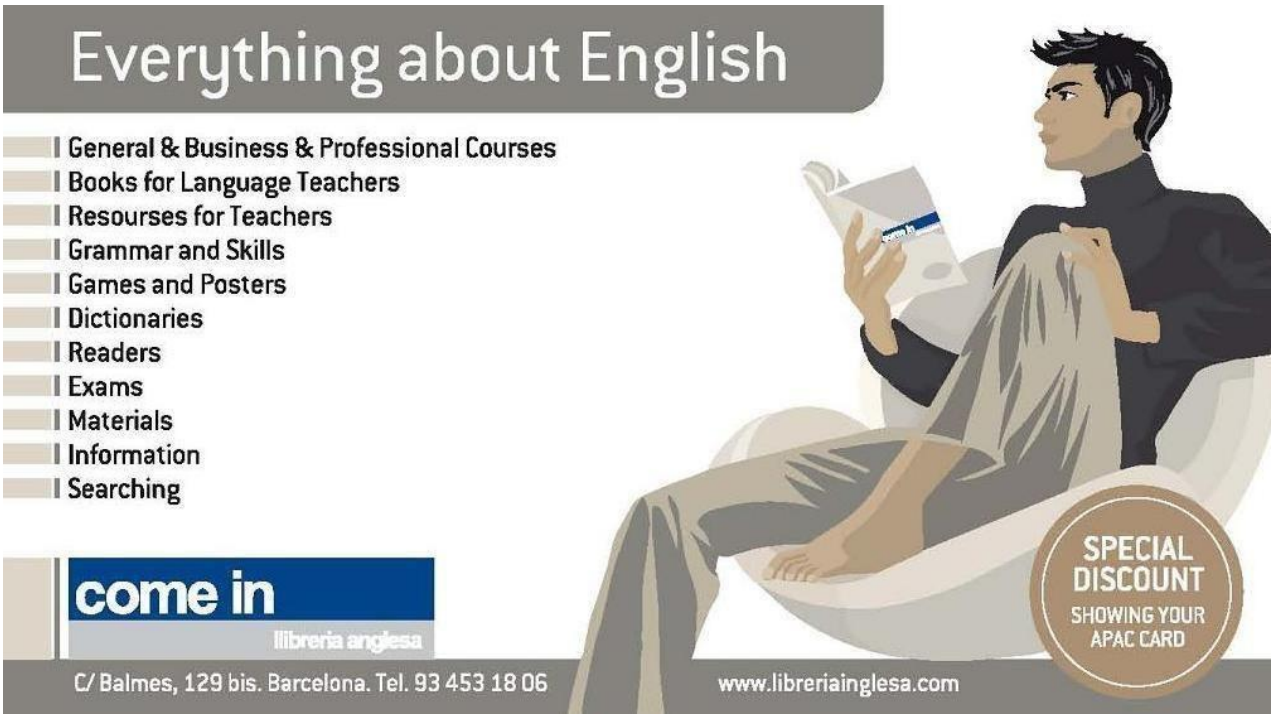
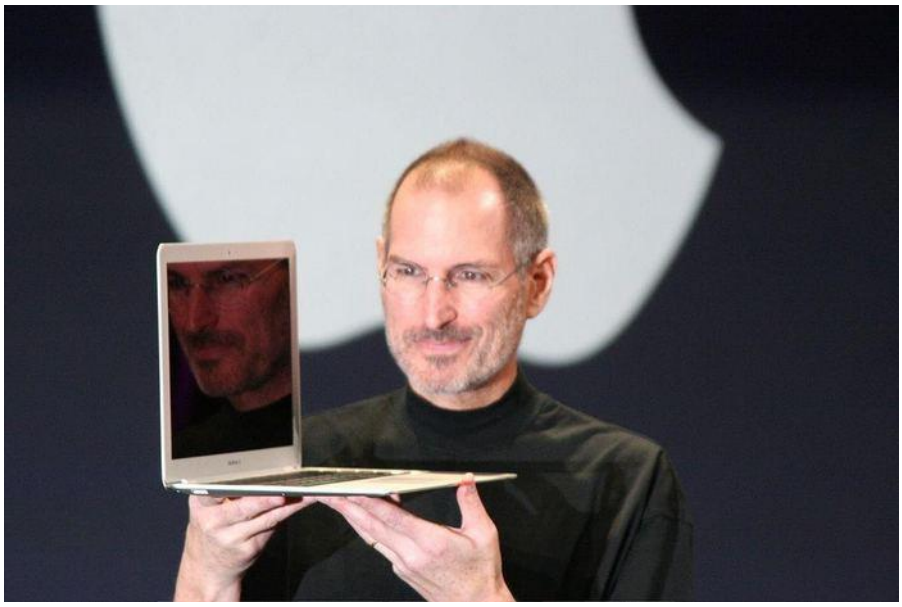


2016 APAC-ELT CONVENTION: 30 Years Connecting the Dots

Teaching is a complex activity which requires those practising it to do many things flexibly and simultaneously. Teaching constantly requires new skills and knowledge and — also at the same time — accessing knowledge and abilities already acquired, either recently or in the past. A good teacher can juggle prior, present and future knowledge and present a coherent and motivating whole to serve students' learning. In actual fact, good teachers are curious individuals who are committed to learning and to helping others learn and who love finding connections that will spark knowledge.

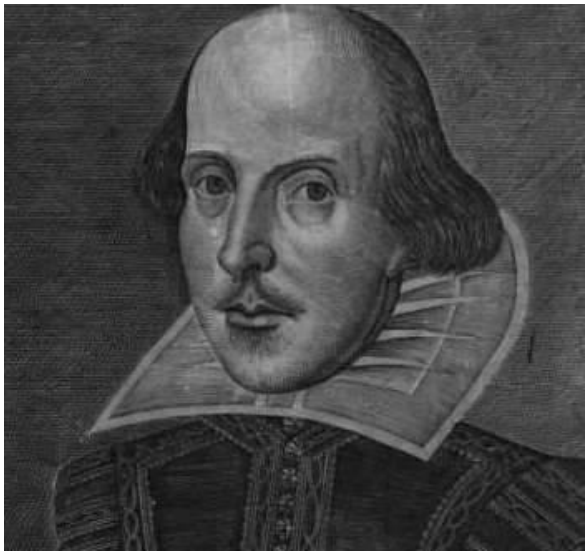
The choice of this year's conference theme was inspired by Steve Jobs' Commencement Address at Stanford in 2005 http://news.stanford.edu/news/2005/june15/jobs-061505.html, where he shared with the audience how he felt that both his failures and his successes, his real interests, and his easy-way-out-choices had had a role in his professional career. Steve Jobs looked back and saw that his life story was the result of the connection of all the steps he had taken previously.



(Steve Jobs. Author: Matthew Yohe. Taken from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Steve_Jobs_with_MacBook_Air.jpg under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/legalcode)

APAC is now about to celebrate 30 years of existence. Looking back we also see that we are the result of the many instances shared at our meetings, at our conventions, at our seminars…. And we feel that as different teachers approach the profession differently, different dots need to be available to make different — tailor-made — connections possible. We understand by different dots sessions on applied linguistics, sessions on English language, sessions on skills, sessions on literature, …, and also sessions to share our thoughts or to vent our frustrations. Any session is an opportunity to learn, either what to do, or what not to do.

This year's convention will be as open as ever, aiming at providing different and challenging sessions, including – of course – our usual hands-on practical sessions, but also sessions commemorating the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death and sessions reflecting on the role of teachers in rather difficult times.



"Droeshout first state" by Martin Droeshout - The First Folio of Shakespeare, 1623. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Droeshout_first_state.jpg#/media/File:Droeshout_first_state.jpg

We look forward to seeing you all in February at the Pompeu!! (Back to the Table of Contents)

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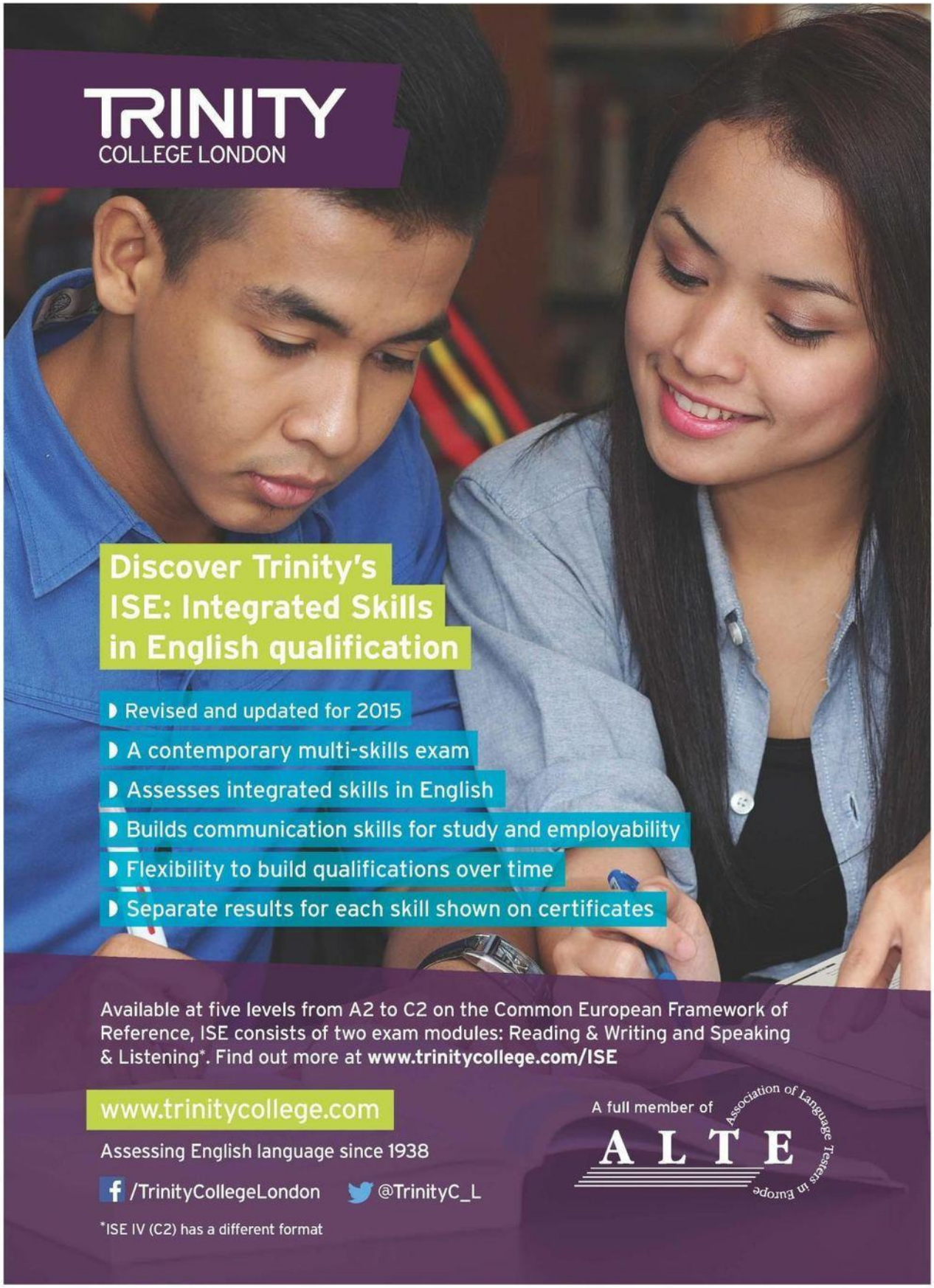
People make it happen!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Put a Bounce in Your Teaching

Anna Cole

Abstract

A key determiner of the quality of an education system is the quality of teachers, broadly understood as teachers' abilities and motivation. With great change ahead, it is ironic that we neglect the learning of teachers when teachers' and learners' motivation are inextricably intertwined. As difficult as it is to measure, research shows that this human factor is the most influential one in rendering good performance in the classroom. Innovative methods employed in the worlds of sports, music and business have a major impact on motivation and performance. By applying these current thoughts on personal and professional development we can develop our knowledge, skills, attitudes and awareness to make an immediate impact on the classroom, on our colleagues and on our profession in a wider way.

Introduction

Last summer, I read '*Bounce*' by Matthew Syed (2011), and that got the motivational ball rolling. I became interested in how high performance is attained in the worlds of sport, music, business and arts and how the coach/leader is crucial to this learning process. In this article, I will identify skills sets and methodologies that underpin great coaching and teaching in these fields: *talent vs. effort, the Pygmalion effect, the Challenge factor, the Flow theory, growth vs. fixed mind-set, the feedback factor*… and identify the elements with the strongest evidence of improving attainment in the classroom.

Talent vs. effort

In '*Bounce*', Matthew Syed — a two-time Olympic table tennis champion, sportswriter and broadcaster — relates stories and statistics of people who have excelled in their field and takes issue with the seductive and pervasive idea that talent is more important than practice. He argues that the correlation between talent and high performance is a cornerstone of Western civilisation; success has to do with a set of aptitudes and gifts, and if you don't have these talents you are doomed, at best, to mediocrity. This talent myth robs individuals of the motivation to change: *why should I bother in the first place, if I'm not naturally good*? It makes sense to give up before you start.

We live in a culture that is driven by the idea of meritocracy — we value the notion that people are gifted and talented over the fact that they worked harder to get where they are than anyone else. Western civilisation worships the talent culture — the seemingly effortless success of football and music stars, their luxury cars and villas — and this can be demotivating for those who want to achieve similar accomplishments without knowing the real effort that will be necessary to succeed.

One of the most striking examples of effort vs. talent is the story of Hungarian educational psychologist, Laszlo Polgar, who believed so strongly in the practice theory of expertise that he

decided to make an experiment of his own family. He announced to the world that his children would be chess champions. Why chess? Compared to art or music, chess ratings are based on objective performance. His three daughters became the best female players ever. The eldest, Susan Polgar, was the first ever female grandmaster. Polgar trained for excellence and proved that abilities can be learnt and are not set in genetic stone.

- **We are all talented, and practice is more important than talent.**
- **Anybody can achieve the same results with opportunity and dedication.**
- **Good teachers, like good language learners, are made, not born.**

10,000 hours – or no pain, no gain

It takes time to be good, and it takes a lot of time to be great. Dr K. Anders Ericsson's research into the quality and quantity of practice that is necessary for success at the Music Academy in West Berlin indicated that the difference between performers was the number of practice hours: an average of 10,000 hours to become a top soloist, more than 2,000 hours more than those good enough to play in top orchestras and 6,000 hours more than violinists who hoped to become music teachers. World-renowned psychologists who specialise in the acquisition and development of expertise and expert performance agree that to become a master in your own field, you need to put in around 10,000 hours of sustained, purposeful practice.

But how much of a typical 90-minute class is intense, focused learning? This would suggest that the 1000-1200 Guided Learning Hours (GLHs) recommended by the Common European Framework in order to reach a C2 level is too low. As a consequence we should be aware of how much extra input students may need outside the class, especially from B1 on and particularly if students need academic English. Musicians and sportsmen leave every training session literally a changed person, focusing with specific, sustained effort on something they can't do well. A Guided Learning Hour has to be that intense with that depth of concentration and sense of purpose.

I've driven a car for more than 10,000 hours but I'm not a Formula 1 driver. We do our jobs, but we often go through the motions on auto-pilot. If we have been in the same job for long time, we can get into a bit of a rut. We know 'what works' for us. This is why the length of time in our own jobs is only weakly related to performance. We may need to up our own game and become a good model of mastery-oriented learning if we want to perform the best that we can.

- **Increase the intensity of each learning hour.**
- **Help learners increase their language input outside the classroom.**
- **Question your position on the continuum of professional development — experience without deep concentration does not translate into progress**

The Pygmalion Effect

Positive expectations influence performance positively, and negative expectations influence performance negatively. In educational circles, this has been termed the *Pygmalion Effect*, more colloquially known as a self-fulfilling prophecy, whereby the greater the expectation placed upon people, the better they perform.

Malcolm Gladwell, in his books '*Outliers*' (2008), writes about the disproportionate number of ice-hockey players that were born in January and February. Youth leagues pick teams according to the calendar year and those born in January and February who are 12 years old are not only older than their peers, they are also usually more mature and stronger. Coaches' input and attention is monopolised by this superior minority and a cascade of consequences are set off. Within months there may be an unbridgeable chasm between those who at first were equally equipped given the right encouragement. The 'Summer-Born' debate in the UK also points to this alarming correlation between age and improvement that has long-lasting effects on students' self-esteem. Children who are born after the summer in the UK perform worse compared to students who were born earlier in the year — not just in secondary school, but in the longer term as well.

There is a very strong correlation between a coach's/teachers' expectations and students' learning. As teachers in the classroom, it is easy to celebrate and champion a certain set of behaviours; praising eager, faster students more. Subconsciously, we may have far lower expectations for the less confident, quieter and less able students, the very ones who would benefit from the most support and higher expectations. This positive loop offers an accumulative advantage to the more vocal and participative students and sets the tone for the course of the year.

Our expectations are subjective. Christina Hoff Sommers in her book '*The War against Boys*' (2001) relates a much-told story in educational circles. A teacher, Mrs Daugherty, found her class impossible to control and worried that many of her students had serious learning disabilities. When the headmaster was away, she did something teachers were not supposed to do and looked in the file where students' IQ's were recorded. She was amazed to find out that most students were way above average in intelligence, many with IQ's in the 120s and 130s. One of the most difficult students was brilliant, with an IQ of 145. She immediately raised her expectations and changed her approach to the class. The headmaster, delighted by the turnaround at the end of the year, asked Mrs Daugherty what she had done. She told him the truth. He forgave her and congratulated her. But then he added, 'I think you should know, Mrs Daugherty, those numbers next to the children's names — those are not their IQ scores. Those are their locker numbers.'

- **Have massive expectations for all your students — label all the class your top students.**
- **Give frequent and early feedback that students can do well.**
- **Offer equal opportunities for participation — include the quieter ones.**
- **Start each class with a clean sheet.**

Getting in touch with your own transformability

If we believe that everyone can learn and that it's just a question of effort, it helps a lot to know that the brain is a muscle that grows with use. Research shows that the brain has far more plasticity than previously believed: it is soft and can be sculpted well into adulthood. Knowing this has a significant impact on motivation and performance. Behind physical prowess is mental prowess; top sports stars say that 90% is in the mind and 10% in the body.

We can learn how to learn more efficiently. A key aspect of brain transformation is myelin — a substance that wraps around nerve fibres and can dramatically increase the speed with which signals pass through the brain. Purposeful practice leads to new neural connections, we incorporate new areas of grey matter in our quest to improve. When we are fending off distractions, the area of the brain called the globus pallidus is highly active. People with stronger working memories are not more gifted: they have trained themselves to concentrate.

- **Believe students can learn at any age.**
- **Help students concentrate and fight off distractions.**
- **Talk explicitly about brain training with your students.**

Repetition and automaticity

High-quality practice leads to pattern recognition, a chunking of information that is essential for success. Roger Federer is revered for his super-fast serve return, but he is not just demonstrating faster reactions, he is showing quicker anticipation. He is able to make sharp, accurate inferences, predicting in a split second before the ball is even hit where it will go by reading subtle patterns of movement and postural clues in his opponent. This combinatorial explosion of skills is not innate — it is learnable. Hours of practice leads to a type of expert-induced amnesia where retrieving a well-learned skill stored as a procedural memory is mostly unconscious and automatic.

Better coaching leads to better skills acquisition. On our journey as teachers, we also develop automaticity, an expert-induced amnesia where we can intuitively read what is happening in the classroom and make subtle but important adjustments. Highly effective teachers use body language to communicate with students — confident gestures, eye contact, smiles, walking around, standing straight, getting down on haunches to talk to students, all of which build rapport with them and make them feel safe and supported. An expert awareness of students' body language in the classroom helps us make intuitive decisions to cut activities, change energy levels, etc.

Raising students' awareness of linguistic and contextual clues is particularly important in Task-Based Learning, where content comes first and learners must deduce and make inferences from linguistic and non-linguistic clues. We need to sharpen students' thinking skills so that they can infer meaning by associating, comparing and so on. Language isn't produced in a vacuum: being aware of the psychological, physical and social background of a situation — Purpose, Actors, Relationships, Topic, Settings (PARTS) **—** helps students anticipate, plan and reason alternative courses of action.

We can help students move towards pattern recognition by encouraging them to chunk information into meaningful wholes and patterns. This can help avoid an informational bottleneck, speeding up the process of learning and in effect packing more in. Repetition facilitates deep concentration and internalisation. This can be as simple as working on the same exercise in a different way — a 4-3-2 activity where students practise a presentation in pairs for 4 minutes, in another pair for 3 minutes and finally in a different pair for 2 minutes. The time available to deliver the talk is reduced each time the talk is given. Students repeat the same talk, which means that they will develop confidence in their ability to deliver the talk and will have less difficulty in accessing the language they need to deliver it. Repetition provides the opportunity to develop fluency.

- **Good body language improves communication for teachers and students.**
- **Repetitive practice gives access to pattern recognition and speeds up the language process.**

The challenge factor

Practice must stretch, pitching tasks just beyond students' capacities at the point where they are capable of taking the next step, and the teacher is vital in helping the learner take this step. In his role as a music coach, Richard Bonynge, realised that the great opera singer Joan Sutherland did not have perfect pitch. He began hiding the piano keys and transposing tunes to raise her voice from a mezzo to a coloratura soprano. This example helps us reflect on how much challenge there is in our classes; are we challenge-low, demand-low? We may think we are serving up a juicy steak, but for students it might seem more like liquidised baby food. Knowing how and when to push in the right places and move students out of their comfort zone is a finely honed skill. Careful scaffolding of activities will provide support at the initial stages, and as learners are stretched, support can be gradually taken away.

A study of figure skaters showed that they spent a lot of time practising jumps they knew how to do. In *'Talent is Overrated'*, Geoff Colvin (2008) notes that Arakawa, an Olympic champion at 24, had pushed herself further to practice the incredibly difficult Ina-Bauer jump — bending backwards with feet in the opposite direction. In her life she had endured over 20,000 derrière impacts on an unforgiving surface to perfect the jump and win. We need to make sure students are prepared to fall over and over again. For students to take risks involved in learning, we need to make the classroom a safe place where students feel supported by giving them plenty of examples, increasing our wait-time for answers, allowing them time to compare in pairs, etc. A focus on fluency and communication rather than error spotting will encourage students to take positive steps to upgrade their language so that it is the best they can produce.

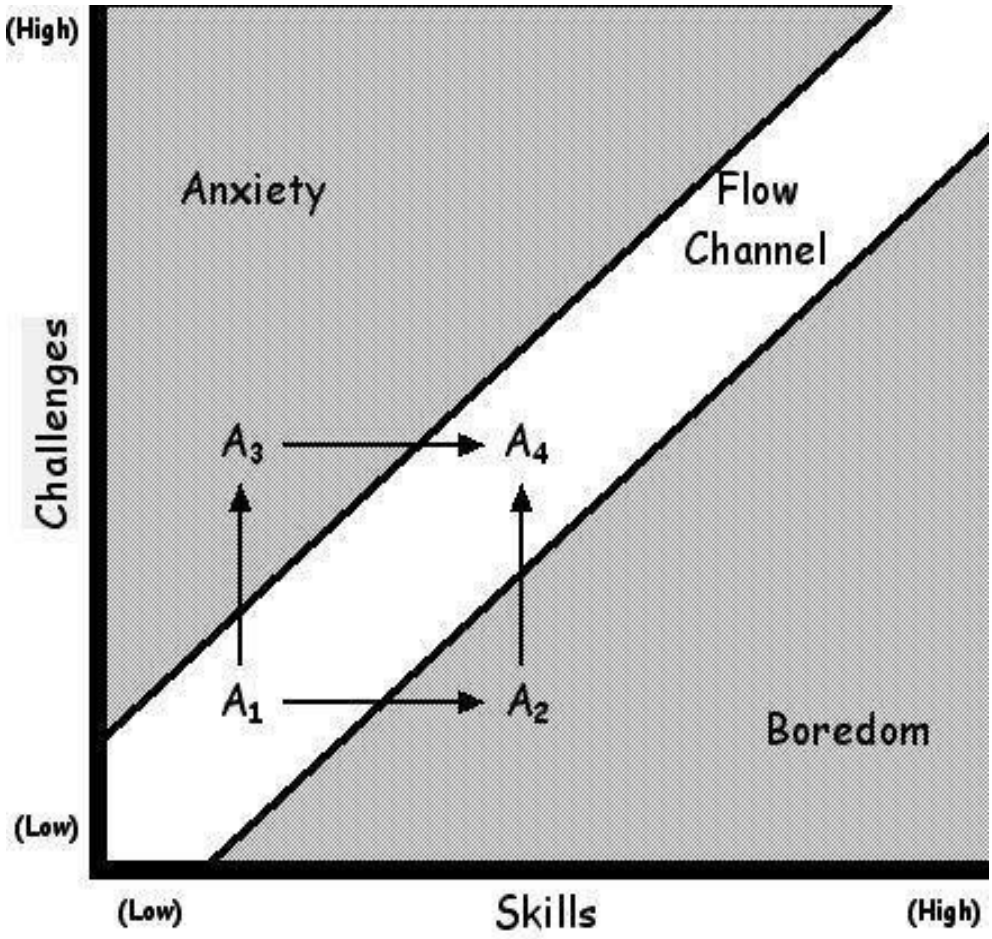
- **Expose learners to stories that portray how others have succeeded or overcome adversity.**
- **Provide opportunities for students to take risks; take their own initiative to do things.**
- **Accept our own setbacks as formative struggles not summative failures.**

Flow

The theory of flow is a tenet of Eastern philosophy and thought, re-popularized by Mihaly Csíkszentmihályi (2003). It is the complete merging of task and doer — a state of being where a body, mind, and task resonate effortlessly and result in improved performance and extraordinary satisfaction.

This state occurs when the level of challenge is in balance with the skills required for the task. If challenges are too high, one gets frustrated, then worried, and eventually anxious. If challenges are too low relative to one's skills, one gets relaxed, then bored. If both challenges and skills are perceived to be low, one gets to feeling apathetic. When challenge is matched with the skill required to achieve the task, then one feels deeply involved. This flow state keeps distractions from creeping into our minds and we push ourselves to a higher level.

Sports personalities and musicians describe flow as 'being in the zone' — a sense of control, engagement and focus on what they are doing that pushes them to higher levels of performance and to using exploratory behaviours. Flow in the classroom may indicate that the relationship between tasks is more important than the choice of any one task. Flow might take place in a seamless lesson where students are deeply absorbed in a logical and creative sequencing of activities. We can collect these memorable flow experiences and find common factors to understand how and why flow happened in order to repeat these experiences.



From Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience
by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (page 74)

Experiencing flow at work is probably one of the best signs that you enjoy your job. Elevating your awareness of the skill/challenge ratio allows you to begin taking control over how much flow you experience on a daily basis. Your job satisfaction is not the responsibility of others and it's not something that happens if you're 'lucky enough' to have the right kind of job — it's up to you.

- **Evaluate flow in the classroom — why does it happen, when does it happen?**
- **Take control over how much flow we experience by increasing our skills, working on new challenges or both.**

***Fixed* vs. *growth* mindset**

Research has now shown that well-intended practices, such as praising students' intelligence or talent (as opposed to their efforts or strategies), often backfire. We need to know which mindsets and non-cognitive skills matter and how best to impart them in an educational setting. One of the most robust in terms of qualitative and quantitative research into mindsets is the work of Carol Dweck as described in '*Mindsets*' (2012). She relates how praise, specifically praise for intelligence, encourages a *fixed mindset* which can negatively impact on future learning. A fixed mindset is intelligence- and talent-oriented — you've either got it or you haven't, performance is the only thing that matters, and effort isn't necessary if you are smart. Her argument is that we should take a different journey and move towards a *growth mindset* — where there is enjoyment in the effort and process of learning and everyone has the potential to learn on an ever-expanding continuum.

In Dweck's famous experiment, she took 400 students and gave them a simple puzzle. Afterwards, each student was given six words of praise. Half were praised for intelligence: "*Wow, you must be really smart*." The other half were praised for effort: "*Wow, you must be hard-working*." Dweck wanted to test if these words could make a difference to the students' mindsets. The results were astounding. After the first test, the students were given a choice of whether to take a hard or an easy test. Two-thirds of the group praised for intelligence chose the easy task: they did not want to risk losing their 'smart' label. But 90 per cent of the effort-praised group chose the more difficult test: they wanted to prove just how hard-working they were. Then students took a test of equal difficulty to the first test. The group praised for intelligence showed a 20 per cent decline in performance. The effort-praised group increased their score by 30 per cent: failure had actually spurred them on.

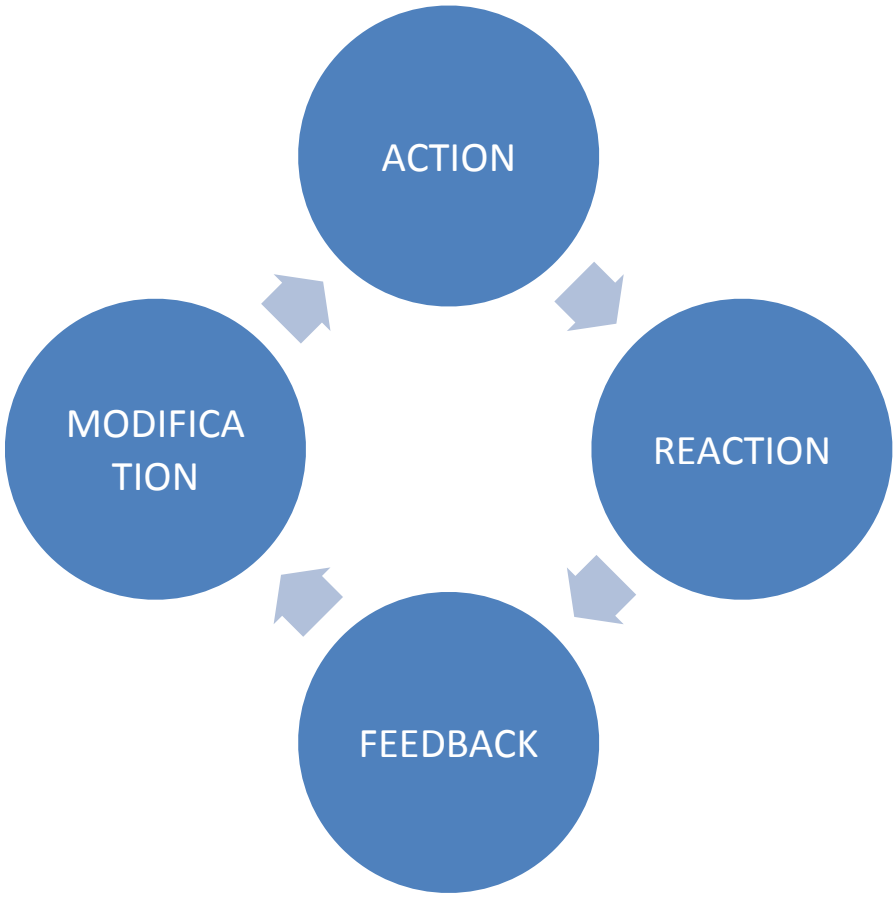
The view that you adopt for yourself can profoundly affect your self-belief, motivation to learn and your resilience. When a student gets a 5.4 does she opt out and spend less time on her English or come up with a strategy-oriented, resilient reaction? We need to gauge how students react when challenged and help them develop a growth mindset. We can reinforce the growth mindset in the classroom by praising effort not cleverness or talent — *You worked hard at improving your spelling* not *You're really good at this* — by being specific and informative in our praise, and by highlighting strategies that lead to success — *I liked the way you contributed today to the class discussion / I noticed you paid good attention / I see that you've been practicing the vocabulary we are working on; what a great improvement! / Your focus on improving your writing has really made a positive difference / When you put in the effort, it really shows in your marks. Keep practising!*

- **Model, teach and reinforce the growth mindset: praise effort not intelligence.**
- **Be specific and informative with your praise.**
- **Focus on underperforming students, and diagnose and correct what is going wrong in their learning process.**

The feedback factor

'*The most powerful single influence enhancing achievement is feedback,'* say John Hattie and Helen Timperley (2007).

Feedback is a decisive and highly effective tool for motivation and self-direction. Comments, not grades, on our performance are often what we remember most. A great coach encourages self-reflection and embeds feedback into the next drill — a loop of activity where you do something (Action), you see the consequences of what you did (Reaction) and then modify how you do something based on your observations (Modification) before finally doing something with the tweaks and fine-tuning in place.



We should make sure feedback is always related to tasks and processes relative to the learning goals and help students develop and embrace reflective habits in their work. Good feedback not only encourages students to critically appraise their learning and identify areas of weakness and strength, but also increases their critical awareness of the metacognitive processes involved in their learning. The ultimate goal of feedback is to enable the receiver to be able to give feedback to him or herself — to know where to seek help, when to try a different approach, to rethink and think anew. We can assist learners in reflecting on and evaluating their learning experiences and give them access to information about their performance and help them learn how to use it. This is a long-lasting benefit of sharing feedback.

Our questions during feedback could engage students in retrospective assessments of their learning and ask: Where am I going (what's my goal)? How am I doing (in relation to this goal on a wider perspective)? Where am I going next (what steps do I need to take)? Feedback should directly address a performance goal — anything that is not relevant to this is not worth bringing up, as it will detract from your main message. We may need to reflect on how we can increase learners''goal-orientedness' (writing goals on the board at the beginning of the lesson, assessing goal achievement at the end of the lesson, discussing long-term goals).

- **The ultimate goal is to enable students to give feedback to themselves.**
- **Feedback is most effective if it addresses a performance goal.**
- **Train students to give peer feedback (give them rubrics for assessment, checklists, good and not so good models, etc.).**

A sense of belonging

Research into how leaders inspire others has uncovered a useful fact — the most important competency is the ability to make emotional connections with your team. The 'me too' effect can be incredibly subtle. An example of this is an experiment conducted by Dr Geoff Cohen and Gregory Walton. Maths students at Yale University were presented with an unsolvable problem. Half of the students had previously read about a text supposedly written by a former Yale student now on the maths faculty. The text contained nothing particularly special, except that the fictitious student's birthdate had been changed to match the students' own birthdate. The birthday-matched group persisted for an amazing 65% longer on the problem.

To build a sense of belonging we need a range of strategies that will value and include every student. Spread *getting to know you* activities over the whole year, take advantage of the First Five Minutes to find out what's going on in their lives and build connections; include their hobbies and interests in class activities; encourage peer correction; have intra-class competitions, group presentations, projects.

- **Share values, experiences and aspirations to establish emotional ties.**
- **Challenge, but nurture.**

Conclusion

So on one side we have talent. At the opposite end of this spectrum are endeavour, drive and persistence. Where we stand on this spectrum has a direct effect on how we behave in the classroom. More important possibly than a teacher's actual language proficiency is the ability to consciously teach the skill of self-confidence and favour commitment, dedication and effort over intelligence and talent. With a greater awareness of non-cognitive factors, we may be able to transform relatively small things in the classroom that make a significant difference to motivation and performance — both for ourselves and our students.

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Biodata

Anna Cole taught English at the British Council, and, after completing her teaching diploma, she became a Director of Studies in a business language school before becoming Director of Studies at Merit School. She now works part-time as the Director of Online Projects at Merit School. She also writes materials for Macmillan. She has written Teacher's books for the following series: Brilliant, Imagine, Definitions, United, Macmillan Secondary Course, Gateway and Beyond.

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The Dynamics of Motivation: Critical Thinking

Nuria García Flor
Trini Ureña Mora

Abstract

The aim of the following paper is to analyse the engaging potential of maths in a different approach called "critical thinking" where 1st and 2nd ESO students cooperate to develop their mathematical skills, as well as to cater for a diversity of materials which can be used in maths lessons to motivate students. The experience started the 2013-14 school year and it is an ongoing project at St. Peter's School. This is a reflection on the activities done and a review of the theory behind students' motivation according to Keller's model based on a synthesis of motivational concepts: Attention (A), Relevance (R), Confidence (C), and Satisfaction (S). The focus is on maths, but the ARCS model and approach to lesson planning can be applied to CLIL classes of all kinds and general English language classes as well.

Introduction

According to Mora (2013a), "A teacher changes the physics, the chemistry, the anatomy and the physiology of a child by transforming – for good or bad — his/her brain." This is no idle talk but the words of a neuroscientist based on recent studies (Mora, 2013b) that prove curiosity is the door to attention, and the latter is the means to long-lasting, significant learning. The explanation relies on the fact that dopamine is released by our brain every time we find the answer to a question. This neurotransmitter is responsible for a feeling of satisfaction and it is also released to promote different kinds of conduct that ensure our survival as a species: eating, interacting with others or reproducing.

Nevertheless, there are certain variables that affect our curiosity. Age is one of them: younger children are more curious than teenagers. As we develop our brain and cognitive mechanisms to explore the world, we reach a comfort zone and then we reduce our inquisitiveness (Gopnik et al., 2000). Previous knowledge of a topic also raises curiosity, and this seems to be related to the positive feedback generated by dopamine. The more we know about something, the more areas this topic activates in our brain and the easier it is to establish memory links (Tobias, 1994). Environmental conditions are also known to affect our predisposition to investigate, such as time of day, amount of light in the room, etc. (Mora, 2013a).

Some of these variables have already been considered for several decades (Lai, 2011), nevertheless, educators still find stimulating and sustaining student motivation to be challenging. Traditionally, we have relied on compilations of personal experiences by successful teachers and listings of results from academic studies. One approach to meeting this challenge is provided by the ARCS model of motivation, which is an evolving model resulting from reviews and integration of research literature and successful practice. It has been validated in numerous research studies (Keller, 2000). However, it does not offer simple, prescriptive solutions to motivational problems. It offers a problem-solving approach that leads one to solutions suitable for a given situation. In this paper we will use the ARCS model to analyse a typical lesson where the aim is to link daily experiences and Maths in order to raise mathematical awareness and promote critical thinking. This can be applied to other subjects as well, including CLIL classes and English language classes.

ARCS model

The ARCS model is based on a series of motivational concepts and characteristics that fit into four categories: Attention (A), Relevance (R), Confidence (C) and Satisfaction (S). These categories comprise a range of conditions necessary for a person to be motivated. Figure 1 summarises this.

Figure 1. Categories comprising the range of conditions for a student to be motivated.

In order to raise awareness, we need an attention-catcher that may come from unexpected events or from stimulating problems that engage a deeper level of curiosity, particularly at the beginning of the lesson.

As a second step to continue scaffolding the learning process, relevance is needed. If the content is not perceived as something valuable by the learner, it will not be meaningful and thus it will be difficult to remember. It might be a good idea to relate the contents to future daily life situations.

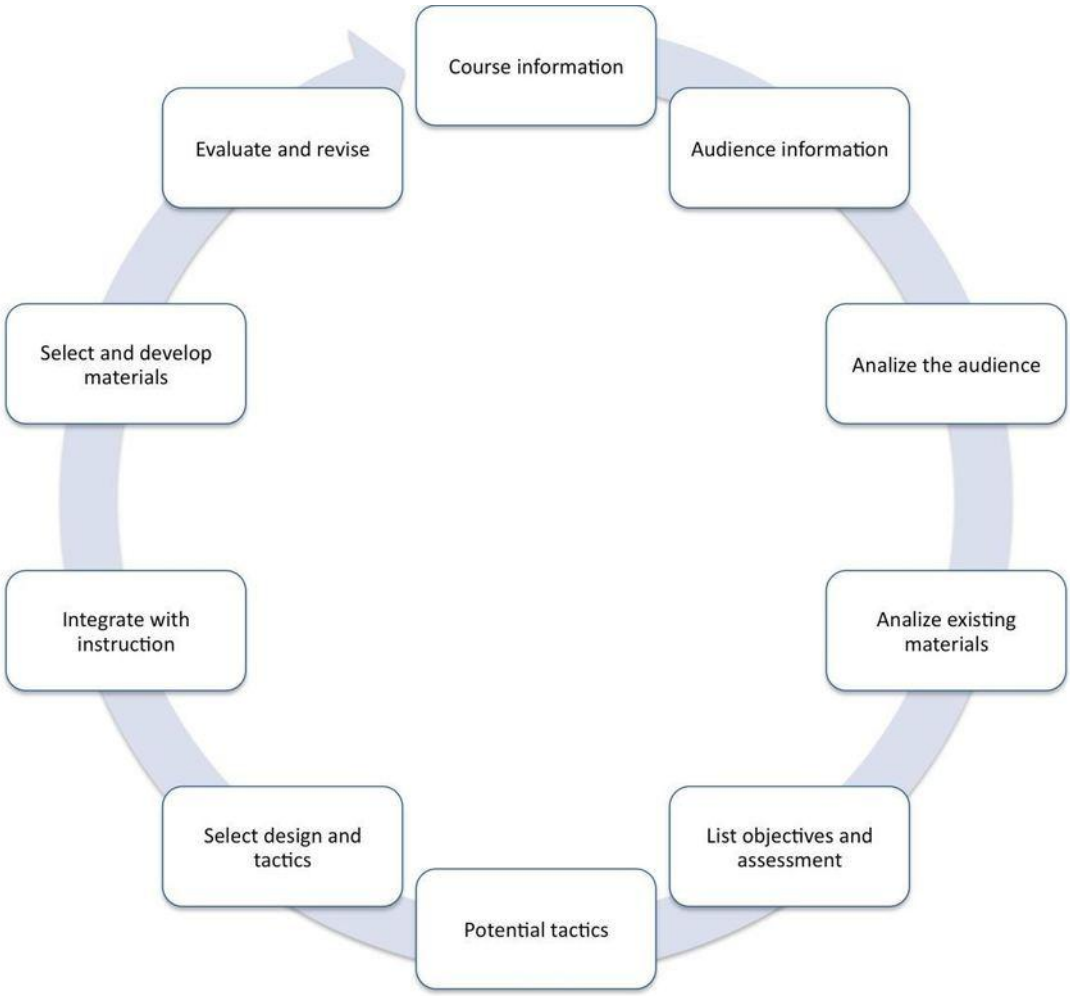
Confidence is the third condition required. If students establish positive expectancies of success, they are prone to achieve the targets and feel better about it, which in the end results in positive feedback; students improve their overall confidence and are willing to explore a little more beyond their comfort zone.

Finally, learners who are attentive, interested in the subject because they think it is relevant, and confident in their abilities feel a moderate degree of satisfaction if they receive recognition or if they feel their learning experiences are successful. This is possible if there is consistency between

the aims of the lesson, the tasks and the results. The amount of work required in the lesson should be balanced and in accordance with the assessment.

The ARCS model contains a ten-step design process (Figure 2) for the development of motivation in learning settings.

Figure 2. Steps to consider in order to plan an engaging lesson (Source: Keller, 2000)



However, this design process has two limitations (Keller, 2000): it requires mastering the motivational categories mentioned above, and it might be time consuming to implement all the steps. In this sense, a simplified approach was developed (Suzuki and Keller, 1996; Keller, 1997) based on a matrix where the columns are the motivational categories stated above, and the rows are the settings such as the students' overall motivation, the task, the material used or the engaging elements used. Table 1 shows the adapted matrix that will be used to analyse one of our Critical Thinking sessions, but that could be used for any type of material presented.

Table 1. Simplified matrix design (general) (adapted from Keller, 2000).

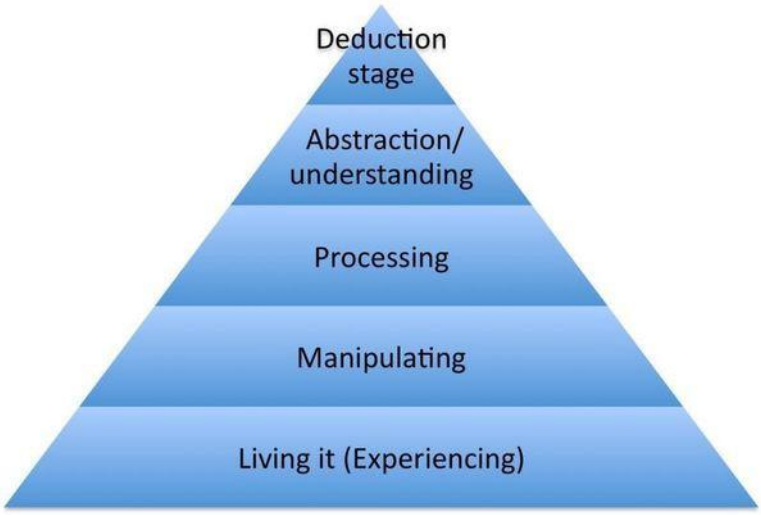
Design factors	ARCS categories			
	Attention	**Relevance**	**Confidence**	**Satisfaction**
Learner characteristics	Willing to participate [+] Receptive Not receptive [-]	Committed[+] Committed but not willing to put in too much effort Not committed [-]	Confident in Maths[+] Low skills calculating Low maths skills[-]	Prone to enjoy group work[+] Prone to enjoy individual tasks [-] Good Rapport with the teacher (willing to ask for help) [+]
Learning task (learner's attitudes towards…)	New, attractive, adventurous[+] Similar to previous ones used in class [-]	High public interest [+] Useful in the future [+] Connected to daily life situations [+] Not realistic [-]	Seems feasible[+] Known methodology [+] Seems difficult [-] First exposure [-]	High applicability of acquired skills [+] Moderate applicability of acquired skills [-] Exciting outcome [+] Not attractive outcome [-]
Medium/ material	Interesting/new material [+] Known material Old material	Limited access to the material used Accessible material [+]	Easy to manipulate[+] Robust material [+] Difficult to manipulate [-] Fragile material [-]	Immediate feedback [+] Not immediate feedback[-]
Session characteristics	Competition	Team work [+] Individual task [-]	Being in group [+] Loneliness[-] Use of English in class [-]	Participatory [+] Practical [+]
Motivational tactics for the lesson	Games Competition Emphasize the opportunity to communicate Interaction (between students)	Related to recent topics done in Maths or Science	Set objectives cumulatively from experiencing to generalisation Teacher availability in class Use of Mother tongue to communicate (¿?)	Promote reinforcement from class-mates Positive comments from the teacher

Subject philosophy

Critical thinking, in our field, was originally conceived of as an extension of Maths lessons, providing manipulative experiences that allowed students to practice what they were being taught in the more theoretical lessons. One of the main ideas was to foster cooperative work as well, since traditionally, mathematics tasks were done individually in the more standard type of sessions.

The maths-learning process involves the steps shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Methodological steps for Maths learning.



From the more direct to the more abstract processes, the tasks are designed to follow these steps. For example, experiencing (one and one are two plastic caps), manipulating (using plastic caps to add different amounts), symbolic processing (adding), abstraction or understanding ("and" means adding) and generalisation or the deduction stage (we can identify situations where adding is needed or even interpret subtraction as the addition of negative numbers).

A typical lesson

The following section aims to depict a typical lesson in critical thinking. The structure of the session closely follows the maths-learning steps mentioned before and summarised in Figure 3. Thus, the maths-learning pyramid will be the guide that will help us describe the session to be analysed with the ARCS model adapted matrix (Table 1). It is important to mention that many different kinds of objects, tools, measuring equipment, pieces of realia, etc., are used in other lessons.

1. Experiencing / manipulating

The initial stage is experiencing the problem to be solved. In some cases it is possible to do the experiencing itself — for example, imagining we are frogs that need to jump onto water lilies. However, other types of problems may not allow for live experiencing, and we move on to hands-on simulations, like in this case. The teacher brings in several fish for each group of students.

Before the hands-on activity itself takes place, there is a material display, and enquiries are made to the students in order to stimulate their curiosity and also to get them thinking about possible problems that may be proposed.

Generally, there are two possibilities, either the students have to set up the problem using the material, or the teacher introduces the problem after asking them what mathematical concept they think they are going to be working on according to the material shown. In this particular case, we would be in the second situation.

2. Thinking

Before working in groups, the students are given a certain amount of time to think about the possible outcomes of the task. Students think individually for three minutes, then, in pairs they share their thoughts while keeping the seating arrangement given by their class teacher for five more minutes. Finally, the students are placed in cooperative groups designed by the teacher according to mixed-ability groups. However, depending on the activity (and the session) they may be allowed to make their own groups, or even be grouped randomly.

3. Providing the task

The children are given the material. It could be real things or didactic material, a photograph or even a drawing to engage their attention as well as to introduce the question to tackle. In the session we are analysing, the question was the following:

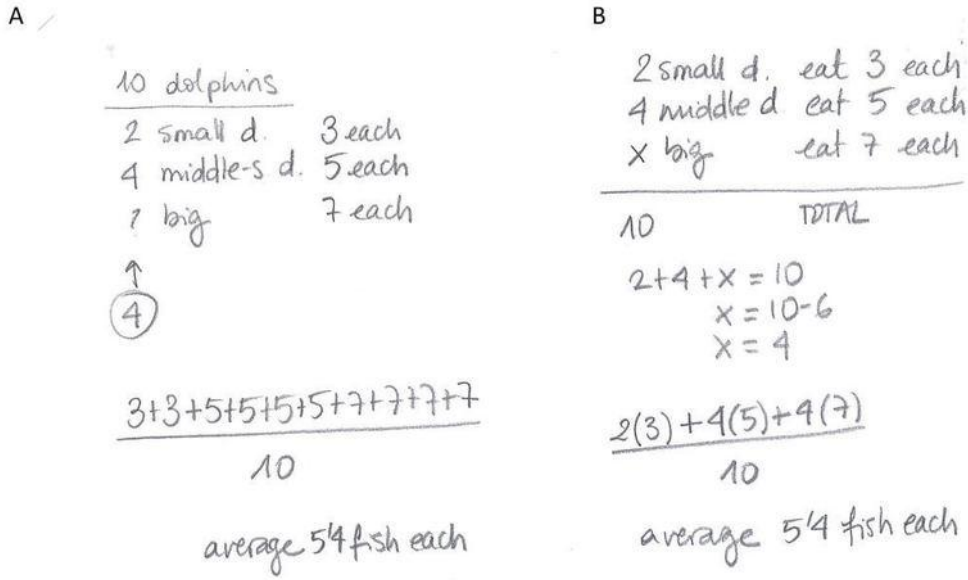
"Ten dolphins in the aquarium are fed fresh fish each day. The two smallest dolphins eat three fish apiece. The four middle-sized dolphins eat five fish each, and the largest eat seven fish each. What is the average number of fish eaten by the dolphins each day?"

4. Group thinking (Processing)

At this stage the students start talking about the problem and how they would solve it orally. Usually they are given a pencil and a paper to illustrate the way they plan to reach a conclusion. It does not matter whether the process to solve the problem is abstract and based on calculations or if it is slightly elaborate and more practical, the emphasis is placed on being able to describe the strategy to follow (and the reason for choosing it) as well as the result. Different children think differently, but they should reach the same conclusion.

Regarding the problem given in this case, the majority will end up working out the average of fish consumed each day at the aquarium either by means of A or B in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Different means of solving the problem: (A) using addition, subtraction and traditional average (B) using equations and the distributive property.



5. <u>Group Conclusions (Abstraction)</u>

While students complete the tasks, the teacher walks around the class and provides the scaffolding necessary for the students to reach a conclusion. It is important to mention that while some groups of students will just answer the question, others will wonder about the meaning of the result. Since a decimal number is obtained, some will ask, "How is it possible, if the dolphins were being fed complete fish and not pieces of them? What is the real meaning of the average obtained?" The teacher's interventions with the groups aim to lead the students towards reflecting on the meaning of "average".

6. <u>Class Conclusions (Complete understanding)</u>

Finally, each group's results are commented on and the students wondering about the decimal point in the average ask their questions. Also, the different ways of reaching the result are analysed on the whiteboard and then an extension or connection with examples in other areas of study is made.

For instance, this particular example is really useful for the students in 2nd ESO doing chemistry, as understanding relative atomic mass of the elements in the periodic table is something that is not particularly easy for them. Protons and neutrons are whole units, but the atomic mass of chlorine is 35.5 a.m.u. Understanding that this number comes from including the relative abundance of each isotope found in nature is much easier after having worked on the previous problem.

Since, fish are something "close" to the students, it is easier for them to imagine this situation than if the chemistry teacher had started talking initially about the problem with protons and neutrons in the nucleus of the atom.

Analysis

The analysis of the design of the session was done using the adapted ARCS model shown earlier in Table 1. In the rows the designer considers: 1) salient characteristics of the learners, 2) the designer's judgements about how appealing the task will be, 3) and 4) the student's expected attitudes towards the material and the session characteristics. The "plus" or "minus" signs help identify whether the factor's motivational effect is positive or negative. Based on this row, the designer can decide how much motivational support is needed and the tactics to use (fifth row).

See Table 2 to observe the main traits of the session proposed here.

Table 2. Simplified matrix design (according to the Critical Thinking Session we planned).

Design factors	**ARCS categories**			
	Attention	**Relevance**	**Confidence**	**Satisfaction**
Learner characteristics	Receptive	Committed but not willing to put in too much effort	Low skills calculating	Prone to enjoy group work[+]
Learning task (learner's attitudes towards…)	Similar to previous ones used in class [-]	Useful in the future [+]	Seems feasible [+]	High applicability of acquired skills [+]
Medium/ material	Interesting/new material [+]	Limited access to the material used	Easy to manipulate [+]	Immediate feedback [+]
Session characteristics		Team work [+]	Being in group [+] Use of English in class [-]	Participatory [+]
Motivational tactics for the lesson	Games Emphasize the opportunity to communicate Interaction (between students)	Related to recent topics done in Maths or Science	Set objectives cumulatively from experiencing to generalisation Teacher availability in class Use of mother tongue to communicate (?)	Promote reinforcement from class-mates Positive comments from the teacher

In this case, the students tend to be receptive and committed although not always willing to put in too much effort, as some of them have low-level skills in calculating. In this sense, grouping according to mixed ability is the key, as this makes them more likely to enjoy group work. The main drawbacks of the session are the fact the lesson's scheme is similar to previous ones used in

class and the fact that the outcome is not a very attractive one. In this sense, the teacher will have to insist in order to promote the last two steps of mathematical thinking (applying it and complete understanding) by promoting reinforcement from classmates, providing positive feedback and relating it to science topics.

Conclusion

Benefits of this type of lesson plan are that it allows one to:

- "See" the overall structure of the session.
- Check the lesson for balance of content and activities.
- Easily check to see that there is variation in approach (that is, that the same pattern of instructional or motivational techniques is not used over and over again).
- Critically review the content, instructional tactics, and motivational tactics in terms of internal consistency according to the targets previously set.
- Easily review with parallel teachers who can help you check the structure and content of the lesson.
- Check if the lesson caters for a variety of types of learning: establishing connections between concepts, oral learning and visual learning.

Moreover, the students benefit from a different way of exploring the subject they are studying, raising their awareness of it by using a different methodology. In our case, it would be a great achievement if we saw our students extend their knowledge, observe nature and carry out Maths experiments.

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Website Recommendations

http://www.mathplayground.com/games.html (Tangram)

http://www.iboard.co.uk/ (Adding and Subtracting)

http://www.primaryresources.co.uk

http://www.maths-games.org

http://www.crickweb.org

http://www.neok12.com/

http://www.allmath.com/

http://www.Mathisfun.co.uk

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/maths/

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks2/maths/

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks3/maths/number/

http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/z6pfb9q

Biodata

Trini Ureña has been a primary teacher since 2003 at St. Peter's School. She has been teaching students from 5 to 14 in the most diverse subjects. She regards herself as a lifelong learner and complemented her studies with several courses to help both talented and special needs students. Two years ago she took a training course in Germany called SMEC offered by the Deutsches Museum and the APEE (Organismo Autónomo de Programas Educativos Europeos) in order to help students apply their maths knowledge to daily life. Currently, she is working on a project to foster creativity.

Núria García studied environmental sciences at the UAB and University of Hertfordshire and became a secondary school teacher after a brief period in scientific research. Her experience teaching CLIL (science) to ESO students raised her awareness of the linguistic needs of students and, thus, she decided to start a second degree in teaching (TEFL) at the UB. She also did part of her training in Birmingham. Currently, she is working on a project to foster cross-curricular learning with English, Science and Maths in St. Peter's School, where she has been working for the past 9 years.

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Analog Techniques for Addressing Digital-Age ESOL Issues

Alena N. Widows

Abstract

Internet blogging, specialized social media messaging systems, phone texting and related digital-age communication methods such as email and Twitter are permeating language use worldwide. To optimally serve ESOL students, instructors should provide techniques to adapt language learning to this growing trend in information exchange. This article covers "analog" approaches for addressing these "digital" challenges. Ever-changing fashions in digital preferences make it impossible to predict the nature of which incipient systems might ascend to large-scale adoption. Therefore, relatively general approaches delivered in analog environments are herein presented that should benefit student adaptation to most future digital communications challenges.

Introduction

As the use of digital technology has widened and influenced the way in which we communicate, so has the necessity for quality writing that conforms to these new media. But what is quality writing in the 21st century? Technology has transformed writing from a solitary task mostly done in school to be handed in and corrected by a teacher (opinion essays, formal letters, reports, etc.) to a mode of communication that is interactive, concise, and many times public. We commonly write about our thoughts and experiences to post on various forms of social media. We make plans and decisions via instant messaging and emailing. We write blogs, have online debates, comment on photos, articles, ideas, and even publically review restaurants and other businesses.

As companies increase their online presence through websites, blogging and microblogging, quality writing in these many and varied media also becomes critical to job success. According to an article published in Forbes magazine, "more than two thirds of salaried jobs require a significant amount of writing" (Conner 2012). In a BBC news article, the network's education correspondent Sean Coughlan (2011) cites Charles Duncombe, who runs websites in several retail fields and who says that spelling and grammar are "important to the credibility of a website." Duncombe adds, "When there are underlying concerns about fraud and safety, then getting the basics right is essential." As writing becomes an increasingly important tool for communication and job success (and while English continues to grow as the language of many companies and of the internet, scientific and technical academic papers, travel, etc.), it is critical that English language teachers provide their students with opportunities to develop these new styles of writing to successfully navigate 21st-century communications media in English.

As English language teachers, we must come round to the crucial idea that as writing transforms, so must the way that we approach it in the classroom. Although 20th-century writing is still useful to students, teachers must create opportunities for students to develop 21st-century writing skills by providing writing tasks that simulate authentic communications needs. This article will explore two writing needs that have developed out of technological advancements and explain simple and effective ways to provide students with the practice and feedback they need to master these skills. The skills focused on here are writing concisely (for microblogging, emailing, instant messaging, etc.) and interactive or collaborative writing (writing as a dialogue between two or more people in order to solve problems, come to decisions, and debate).

One Solution to Digital-Age Challenges Facing ESOL Teachers

"Microblogging" (like Twitter) requires writing that is very concise and accurate. When receiving information via emails or navigating websites, readers do not want long-winded explanations that make the relevant or sought-after information difficult to find. They want the information to be easily found and presented succinctly and to the point. The most popular tweets do this while maintaining correct grammar and spelling (i.e., avoiding abbreviations). So our students need to develop writing that can concisely and accurately convey information or a point within the allowable word count (as opposed to the minimum word count traditionally assigned by teachers). In order to do this, teachers can set up lessons that incorporate an authentic need to write in this style. One example of this is "analog social media" in the classroom. Analog social media is defined as an effective and simple way to practice real-world social media writing without the need for technology. So let's start by exploring what can be described as "analog Twitter."

Before examining the various uses of analog Twitter in the classroom we must first understand the real uses of Twitter. This fashionable channel of communication is a form of social media used by individuals and companies to share ideas, opinions, information and news. The content that is written is in the form of "tweets" that can be viewed by anyone following an individual or organization. Tweets become popular (or "viral") when they are "favorited" (sic) or "retweeted" by other individuals or organizations. Twitter has a 140-character limitation per tweet and, according to researchers at Cornell University, the tweets that are the most likely to go viral are well written and imitate newspaper-style headlines (Dormehl, 2015). Popular blogs like *Grammar Girl* (Fogarty 2009) and *Ignite Social Media* (Chilcote 2013) also encourage correct use of grammar and the avoidance of abbreviations. In other words, successful tweets need to be well composed and concise.

For example, a Twitter string such as "…Thank you for a great idea…" is far more likely to attract wide attention than "…TQ 4 a G8 idea…" even though the latter uses fewer characters and might seem more trendy to some. A statement conveyed in succinct, precisely stated English is likely to be better appreciated and enjoy a longer and more successful existence than the same thought in some ephemeral pseudo-techno-lingua likely to evaporate out of style as quickly as it had burst into fashion.

Applying "Analog Twitter" in the Classroom

So, one suggested activity for practicing a widely used form of social media in the classroom is "analog Twitter." This teaching technique involves students creating and evaluating Twitter-like activities non-digitally. In order to do this, a teacher can simply set aside some wall space and put up a sign that says "analog twitter" along with something resembling the twitter logo. Students then write "tweets" to put on the analog twitter wall. Since part of 21st-century writing stresses precision in communications, it is important to give students a maximum word count (so as not to confine them to Twitter's 140-character constraint). For example, the challenge can be for students to write tweets of 10 or fewer words. To make analog twitter even more authentic, tweets can be written into a speech bubble that resembles a real tweet. Notice how an example of an analog tweet can be summed up in exactly 10 words: "Analog Twitter is an excellent resource for English-language learning."

After students have written and published or "tweeted" their messages by posting them on the "analog Twitter wall," they are then directed to read the other tweets on the wall and decide individually or in pairs which should be "retweeted." The teacher can give them a piece of paper with "RT" (for "retweet") on it, and in pairs the students move around the analog Twitter wall deciding which tweet is the one that they want to retweet. A good rule is that the students are not allowed to retweet their own tweet. By giving students one RT per pair, the teacher is encouraging a dialog between students that promotes in-depth analyses of the messages as well as the use of writing as a springboard to speaking. The teacher can then move the most popular tweets to a "trending wall" as a final step.

Practical Suggestions for Successful Analog Twitter

Below is a list of ideas for using analog Twitter in the English language classroom.

1. Have a "trending topic" by putting a hashtag (#) before a topic on the board. The trending topic might elicit a certain theme, language point or vocabulary. Students then look at the trending topic and create a tweet.

For example, #annoyingthingspeopledoonthemetro

This might be the theme of the class or the introduction to a listening or reading. It might also be practice in the areas of language for describe habits. "People always…"

2. Have students read an article and summarize it in a tweet. This is a unique way to check comprehension and a very authentic practice activity, as people frequently suggest articles via social media and summarize them in a sentence to build interest.

3. Have students create a topic sentence or main idea of an essay by first creating a tweet. For example, imagine that the final task for the students is to write a "for or against" essay about the usefulness of social media. The class might follow these steps.

    a. Brainstorm pros and cons of social media.
    b. Explore the language of opinions.
    c. Write a tweet giving your opinion while using the language of opinions previously practiced.
    d. Examine some examples of "for and against" essays.
    e. Write an essay using your tweet as the topic sentence. Students only need to explain and elaborate on their ideas.

4. Present an image such as a historical figure, a character from a book, etc. Students need to use the prompt to create a tweet.

"Analog Facebook" as a Classroom Tool

A similar idea to "analog Twitter" is "analog Facebook." Again, a teacher can set up a Facebook wall by printing out the Facebook logo and attaching it to any designated wall space in the classroom. The teacher can then have the students post their "status," which can be based on any topic or language point. For example, the students might be practicing using "be going to" to talk about weekend plans. The students can post a status with a plan for the weekend. Students then go around the "wall" and comment on each other's posts. Other ideas for analog Facebook would be to post an activity from the previous weekend or to practice past experiences. They can also summarize articles, or give opinions about their favorite restaurants using superlatives, etc. Teachers can also provide extra support for official exam practice by putting images on the Facebook wall and encouraging students to circulate around the room and comment on the images. This reinforces discussing the images instead of describing them, an important feature in the oral part of many official exams. A similar activity might be done with "analog Instagram."

Analog Facebook is also an effective way to practice language structures that previously were confined primarily to oral use but are now also used in writing. For example, "I completely agree with you," or "That sounds really fun", "So do I," or short answers like, "Yes, I do." A teacher may even follow up the Facebook activity with a similar activity done orally. The written practice may improve performance during the oral activity.

The challenge of technology's melding of the vernacular with the properly written

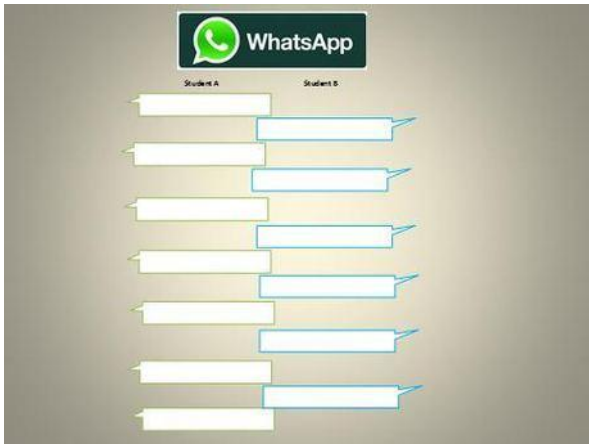
Other forms of authentic writing needs that require a word limit and a high level of accuracy are found in popular sites such as LinkedIn, Instagram, Travelocity, TripAdvisor or Snapchat. All of these forms of writing can be modified into an analog activity easily practiced in the English language classroom.

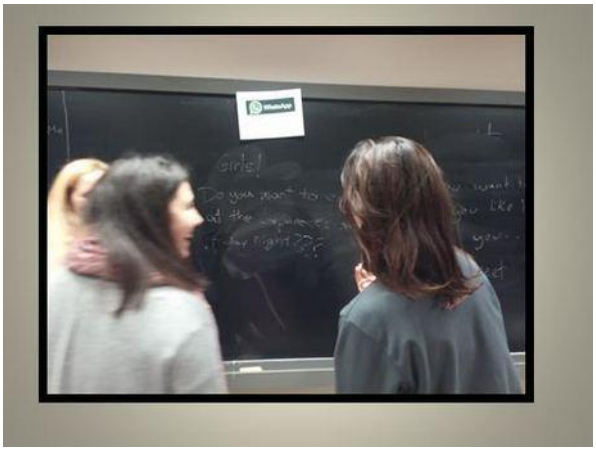
This leads to another form of writing important to English language learners: writing as an interaction or dialogue between two or more people. Because of tools like instant messaging, people are now debating, solving problems, collaborating, commenting and sharing points of view via writing. This means that students need to practice conversational English, discourse language and commenting that was once mostly used in oral English. For example, someone might post something about an upcoming holiday and a friend might write, "That sounds really fun." Or

someone might write an opinion about a news article they've shared on Twitter and the comment that follows might be, "Oh, really? I completely disagree." Again, this is language that was traditionally used in oral conversations that is now relevant and important in written English. Instant messaging also creates collaboration in writing, whereas 20th-century writing was much more of a solitary task. People use instant messaging to make decisions and come to agreements. For example, a dialogue that in the 20th-century may have only been done orally is now commonly done through writing.

A: Do you want to meet for dinner tonight?
B: Sure. But I can't meet until 21:00.
A: No, problem. Let's meet in Poble Sec for pizza.
B: Sounds good. Where?
A: Belle Napoli has the best pizza in the neighborhood, doesn't it?
A: I totally agree! I love that place. I love their appetizers too.
B: So do I!
A: Great! See you then.
B: See you.

Traditionally, this type of interaction would have been done orally (face to face or over the telephone). However, it is now very common for a conversation like this to take place via WhatsApp or other popular forms of instant messaging. The two parties quickly write back and forth in order to come to a decision or solve a problem.





In order to practice this style of writing (or this type of language used in writing), a teacher can take an oral activity and turn it into a written activity. Below are several examples of tasks.

- You are going on a three-day trip to New York City and can only pack one bag. You have packed all of your clothes and only have space for one more item. With your partner, decide what item from the list you will take: camera, cell phone, subway map, journal, guidebook, dictionary, novel.
- There are many things that people should do to conserve natural resources. With your partner, decide on the most important one that individuals can do at home.
- You and your partner are meeting for dinner tonight. Decide where and what time.

It is key in this form of writing that students make the decision or have the debate without speaking. The teacher can provide the students with a worksheet containing empty "speech bubbles." She might also encourage specific language use such as, "I completely disagree" or "I don't agree at all." The teacher can also set a time limit and a scenario such as: you are waiting for

the metro and you will lose telephone coverage once you get on it; or you have two minutes to decide what you will have for lunch. Go! Once the task is completed the teacher could redirect the students to focus on accuracy and have them try to correct their writing. In a small class the teacher could have the students complete the task at the front of the room using the board or on board paper. Then the teacher can elicit corrections from the students. Again, the teacher might follow up the task with a similar oral activity to use the writing as a springboard to speaking.

Conclusion

Using analog social media and instant messaging activities in the English language learning classroom are simple ways (without the need for technology) that teachers can introduce and provide practice of 21st-century writing skills with students. It is not only that the activities mimic popular forms of written communication like Twitter and WhatsApp, but that the activities mimic a skill that is becoming increasingly important to students' success in the 21st century. As writing gains importance in communicating in our daily lives and in the world of work, English-language students must have opportunities to build on 21st-century writing skills like writing concisely and collaborative writing. Although 20th-century writing practice is still very relevant and essential, without 21st-century writing skills English-language students will not have the tools they need to successfully navigate a world increasingly dominated by written English.

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Biodata

Alena Widows has been teaching English for over 10 years; first in the U.S.A. to immigrants and refugees from all over the world, and now in Barcelona, Spain. She is currently a program coordinator at the Institut Nord-Americà where she mentors new teachers, develops and implements training sessions and supports teachers and students. She is most interested in trends in education and how they can be applied to TEFL teaching.

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Flying Voices. Multilingual Testimony: When Diversity Becomes Identity

M. Carme Carbonell Benet

Abstract

This article examines a 3rd-year ESO English class project that illustrates the impact of first- and second-generation immigrants at school in terms of linguistic diversity and social cohesion. The 'commonly unnoticed' students from a single class narrated a tale demonstrating linguistic heterogeneity, visibility and recognition in action. Each student was responsible for a piece of text that they read in their first language, which was later recorded and filmed. Along with their voices, English subtitles of what they were narrating appeared in the video. Hence, English became their lingua franca in order to understand each other. The admiration resulting from the film has made students' self-esteem and motivation rise significantly. Finally, the project has become a book: *Flying Voices*, a multilingual testimony based on respect, tolerance and acceptance.

Introduction

The project presented here shows the process of visibility and recognition that students from a single class of 3rd ESO experienced and the effects it had.

Two years ago I had one of the most intense and enriching experiences of my life when I moved to a depressed suburb located 10 miles west of downtown Chicago. There I would teach English to 90 slang-proficient Afro-American students every single day. They were not familiar with Standard English and I was not familiar with their slang. It was a matter of time, patience and acceptance. It was the beginning of a personal and professional change.

It was on that journey that I learnt what culture shock meant and the different stages a person goes through when emigrating.

At that point I made the following reflection: If I, an educated person, an adult with resources to solve my problems and with the possibility of going back to where I came from, was going through this hard time, what about all the students we have from Morocco, Romania, Ecuador, China, Pakistan, Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, and Senegal, who were not even asked if they wanted to emigrate? They go through the same process in silence and on their own. I realized I had to do something for them. I wanted to make them visible, recognized, admired, accepted and respected.

Procedure

Making use of the fact that the **World Day of Social Justice** and **International Day of Mother Tongues** was coming, I proposed to the students that they talk about their own languages, how they sounded and how frequently they used them. I asked them if they knew any popular oral story or tale they used to be told when they were little. We chose one from India that exemplified a social injustice: abuse towards children and the invisibility of women, a reality some students were familiar with.

First of all, I established my objectives for the project: Students would identify and discuss social injustices. By the end of the project, students would have to be able to evaluate social injustices and create their own version of the tale.

Some students could possess content knowledge that they could not demonstrate in English yet, so it was necessary to **activate their prior knowledge**, looking for opportunities to make associations between students' experiences and new content. In the same way, I built up background knowledge in those students with limited or interrupted schooling, who did not have the same level of knowledge as their peers, especially when it came to historical or cultural topics.

How did I achieve this activation? I started naming some countries, most of them represented in the class, going through the same social injustice as the one in text. Most of the students knew what I was talking about due to their own experiences. I proposed to bring English into the class in a way in which they would fancy using it, without limitations, taking risks and letting it flow. I wanted them to feel motivated and I knew that the only way was by making the task relevant and meaningful for them.

Teaching vocabulary

Once students were engaged in the topic, teaching vocabulary was essential for the comprehension of the text we were going to read. It was done in context to make it more meaningful than just teaching with wordlists. Students have a better understanding of a word when they see and hear how it is used in daily life or how its meaning is related to their own reality. We used realia to picture the context in which the story in the text took place: we brought in flowers, fragrances and objects. When it was not possible to represent it with something real, we used images; and for students with learning difficulties, graphic organizers.

I also introduced **new concepts** using educational, inspirational and motivational advertisements and short movies. Ads usually come with a short text, lots of visual input and a controversial topic, which may act as scaffolding for those who could lag behind. With all the material presented and what I was going to introduce, the four skills were integrated: listening and reading at a level they could follow with nobody being left behind, and writing and speaking when it came to planning out their ideas in order to discuss the topic of the video and carry out interaction. The reason for choosing advertisements was to help students develop their critical sense in regard to social issues. At this point students focused more on content than on form, with the teacher keeping them on task. This fact diminished the risk of them giving up because of feeling frustrated.

After this, it was time to **introduce the text and work directly with it**. Students were going to apply **reading strategies** previously taught. First, we made **predictions** about what they were going to read in order to take advantage of the background knowledge previously activated. We related social injustices with the new words, new concepts and the short films to predict the content of the text. Predicting involves thinking ahead while reading and anticipating information and events in the text. After making predictions, students can read through the text, revise, and verify them. By asking them what they think might occur in the story, this strategy actively engages students, connects them to the text and helps them relate new information with what they already know. Why are these connections with a text that important? Because when there is a connection between the reader and the text, there is a greater interest and focus, which results in better strategy use, allowing for deeper levels of comprehension and a greater chance of recalling and understanding (Hidi 1990, 2001; Schiefele & Krapp, 1996).

Second, students would use **visualization and monitoring strategies**. Some students often have problems mastering concepts in science, math, or social studies because they cannot comprehend the textbooks for these subjects. These learners and especially English language learners at all levels of English proficiency, and literacy, benefit from explicit instruction of comprehension skills. **Visualization** is creating pictures in our mind as we read in order to comprehend the reading material. When we visualiz**e**, we think about smells, sounds, tastes, sights, and even feelings. It is as if we are making a movie out of the material as we read it. Visualization brings the reading to life. We are able to see the characters and their actions and feel as if we are a part of the scene. Finally, it creates a more personal experience and even links us with the story.

The second strategy**, monitoring and repairing comprehension**, is the ability of a reader to detect whether a text is making sense or not. It teaches students to recognize when they do not understand parts of a text and to take necessary steps to restore meaning, thus, they can employ "fix-up" strategies to address a comprehension obstacle. Monitoring/Repairing helps students learn to be actively involved and monitor their comprehension as they read. Monitoring and repairing helps students to focus their attention on the fact that there may be reasons why the text is difficult to understand. Students can be taught to ask questions, reread, restate, and visualize, making the text more comprehensible. This strategy allows the reader to regulate the level of understanding he needs in relation to the purpose of reading. At this final point, the reader can make a final check, explicitly reflecting on whether the problem is really solved, or just keep reading. If the information matches and new understanding is created, the problem is solved.

By explicitly teaching lower-achieving students metacognitive strategies and skills, we can increase their chances of experiencing meaningful success. Once students have experienced success, they may lose their hopeless attitude toward schoolwork and have higher expectations of success in the future. After all, what is one of the best motivators for students? Experiencing success.

Short film

Once the text was read using the above-mentioned strategies, the text and the life of Lalit, the protagonist, were discussed, and students exchanged opinions. In order to carry out this interaction, students could use writing outlines and sentence frames provided. Then it was time now to act; we were all ready **to make our own video fostering recognition.**

The story was divided into as many **fragments** as people with a native language other than Catalan and/or Spanish from our geographical area. This made a total of 11 pieces. The students who had Catalan or Spanish as their L1 were in charge of the **introduction** of the film; others were responsible for **filming**, they had to think about the staging, lighting, props, *attrezzo* and music. Others **edited** the video, making sure that everything just mentioned was in the right place, obviously including and matching the English **subtitles**, which constituted the unifying element throughout the process.

Students rehearsing.

Filming the video.

It was time to rehearse, and that was when we discovered each other for the first time. With the music playing, students started telling the tale, one after another, using their L1s. All of us were astonished after listening to this mixture of voices flying. When they were done, we were really excited about all the richness we had in front of us that we had never looked at and realized before. **RECOGNITION** and **ADMIRATION** became our words. So far, we had learnt values, identities, cultures and lifestyles, and we had shared excitement, stress, support and esteem.

There were also other positive aspects to the project. On the one hand, students participated directly and actively. They were learning what they really wanted to learn. On the other hand, cooperation and mutual support made a more successful type of learning possible. It allowed students to learn more deeply and better.

Throughout the project, English was present, benefiting from all these aspects, tinged with meaning, affection and acceptance because it was the element that gave widespread meaning to their words. This relevance students felt towards the work they were doing directly affected their academic **motivation**.

The final result was this video:
http://blocs.xtec.cat/desenvolupamentprofessional/flying-voices/curtmetratge/ (Titled: Students' First Languages)

Academic motivation

In fact, academic motivation has great importance in the explanation, prediction and guidance of students' conduct in education. Where does this conduct come from? Part and parcel, from the image students have of themselves. And can we modify this image perception?

Most experts say that the task largely determines motivation and that task performance is partially determined by individuals' self-esteem. It is necessary for students to see academic tasks as occasions for learning, so they will face them with the purpose of learning. Otherwise, students' attention, efforts and ways of thinking will not be directed towards the understanding, development and integration of the information presented. How must these occasions be? They have to be meaningful, useful and doable. This will have an impact on students' motivation towards the task and, consequently, towards the resulting school learning.

Although learning is the result of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, it is much more productive in terms of quantity and quality when learning is guided by intrinsic motivation, since it remains by itself, without external supports. And that was what happened in this group of 3rd of ESO: students worked in an intrinsically motivated way, they remained absorbed in the work and even thought about **learning as the achievement of a personal project**.

Some of the students involved in this project had not developed all the skills needed to be fully competent in our education system yet. They were used to failing certain subjects. The feeling stemming from failure could make them feel incompetent with respect to successful students. This was one of the reasons for this project: to give them the opportunity to be proud of themselves in a holistic sense, that is, proud of their origins, their language, their identity and their role in this task. The result of their will, their actions and the experience originating from their work offered them a positive image of themselves and an increase in their self-esteem. All of them saw themselves as valuable and unique, so they could also recognize and accept these features in others.

As their **self-concept** had been positively modified, their **approach to ESL** also changed: they were confident, English was not the unattainable subject, they took risks when it came to reading; what is more, they were willing to do it because it was meaningful to them. English, music, their voices and their own stories made up one common goal. English became the key to developing the admiration students felt towards each other. They were all aware of this learning. They were just feeling it, going with the flow. **They were learning because they had made the choice.**

During the creation of *Flying Voices*, instruction was tailored in order to help learners perceive competence as achievable and to enhance their sense of control over learning tasks. Students believed in their power to make a difference by improving with respect to their own past performance rather than with respect to their classmates. It was possible thanks to working cooperatively.

Cooperative work

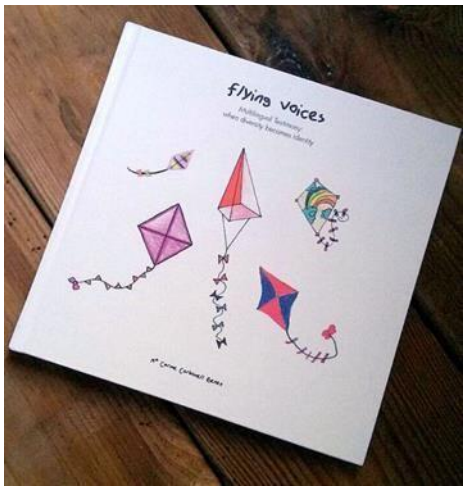
Students were connected through a **common goal**; they belonged to the same big team. In terms of inclusion, they realized that diversity became identity. Differences in interests, origins and even abilities turned out to be beneficial for everybody in the team because they fed into the final result of our project. Each student felt valued.

Once they accomplished their goal, it was valued, individually and as a team. It signified an **individual and collective success** and, as such, we celebrated it, disseminating our work beyond our class. As we all know, positive student recognition is probably the best incentive and motivator for continued student progress and good behavior. First, the short film was uploaded to the school webpage and to the Departament d'Educació website. It was shown in the rest of the school's classes as an example of respect. Second, students took part in **La Marató de Badalona**, an internet radio broadcast throughout the morning, made up of live radio programs that primary and high schools prepared. Third, they were in charge of a **two-hour workshop** on Saint George's Day. They had to walk participants through the entire process they had followed. They talked about how the project was born and how they got involved in it just because they believed in what they were doing. They were able to explain why they did it, what they learnt, how it changed the class climate and why it was meaningful for them. Finally, last July, the town hall of Montcada i Reixac hosted an **exhibition** consisting of objects, photographs and other audiovisual material that showed people's daily lives in countries around the world. The video we made as a group was played for 20 days, which also occurred in Bilbao, where the exhibition was later held.

Flying Voices. Our book

However, this was not the end. As students believed in what they were doing, they felt recognized, valued and proud of themselves, so intrinsic motivation shot up and, what is more important, remained. Students were experiencing success. Never having seen my class so involved and motivated, I decided to make the project grow even more, and this is when the idea of making our own tale arose. Students were asked to draw something that represented what they had read. What was the result? The **project-book** *Flying Voices. Multilingual Testimony: When Diversity Becomes Identity*. Through it, the reader has the opportunity to travel through countries, voices and languages. Students' drawings became the illustrations for the covers and the inside. As one walks through the text, the tale emerges in the different languages represented in our class and with an 'inspirational sentence' in Catalan. The purpose of this sentence is to help less able readers build meaning from the text by inferring content and drawing conclusions. At the end of the book, the English version of the tale and the DVD with our students' voices are provided.

Preparing the book.



The final result.

Conclusion

Flying Voices is not just a book; it is a multilingual testimony full of diversity, excitement, trust and identity. It is an English project fed with students' L1s and with Catalan as inspiration and support. Beginning with their names and full consideration for them, continuing with their origins, their work and the promotion of their efforts, students' recognition was the motor of this project. The perception they had of themselves and the ideals they would like to have were closer than ever. Believing was AN option, and in our class it was THE option.

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Biodata

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Hold fast to dreams,
For if dreams die,
Life is a broken-winged
Bird that cannot fly.
- Langston Hughes

One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar.
- Helen Keller

Yesterday is but today's memory,
And tomorrow is today's dream.
- Khalil Gibran

As long as you keep a person down, some part of you has to be down there to hold him down, so it means you cannot soar as you otherwise might.
- Marian Anderson

Without leaps of imagination, or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities. Dreaming, after all, is a form of planning.
- Gloria Steinem

If you look at any other group of people suffering injustice, women are always in the worst situation within that group.
- Salma Hayek

Tread softly, because you tread on my dreams.
- William Butler Yeats

Shall We Rap?

Núria Medina Casanovas

Abstract

Interdisciplinary strategies have gained popularity among educators during the last decade. In our study we would like to consider the advantages of teaching Music and English together in Primary education. Our work aims to set an array of creative tasks in which L2 learners (aged 12) compose their own rap lyrics. We understand that rap has become a mechanism which can be very useful for motivating students to learn a language while empowering them to communicate their own emotions. Indeed, using rap music to write poems in English in 6th year of primary school may constitute a key element for engaging young learners.

Introduction

Over the past 20 years numerous studies have analyzed the impact of language attitudes, self-confidence and particularly motivation on students' achievement. Gardner (1985) states that success in second or foreign language learning depends on the learner's attitudes towards the linguistic cultural community of the target language. Dörnyei (1994) refers to the instrumental value of learning a foreign language in the field of leisure activities which involve a natural use of that language. He has also elaborated the theory of "Directed Motivational Current" (DMC), which may occur when time and context factors come together in an individual (or in a group) and help them pursue a goal along a pre-determined path (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). In our research project we have investigated the instrumental value of using English to write rap poems and how a group of young learners took advantage of the challenge of writing about what they wanted to express while singing in a foreign language.

Why Music-and-English interdisciplinary work?

Interdisciplinary strategies have certainly gained popularity among educators during the last decade. Research studies seem to point out that children grasp reality in a global way, and interdisciplinary teaching techniques may be a good tool to help students see connections between concepts and specific competencies in each subject area. The Curriculum Document of Catalonia establishes that "*further than acquiring one subject in depth, the teacher should promote the student to develop the capacity to connect the knowledge of one subject to other disciplines.*" (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2009: 151). The document goes on to encourage teachers to find connections between the different areas and sequence them in a coherent way.

Neuroscience research in recent years suggests profound relationships between music and language (Patel, 2008). Children acquire music and language by getting immersed in the sound environment we live in (Bruner, 1985; Hallam, 2010). Music and language learning are likely to be developmentally related (Levitin, 2006), since the connections between these two areas are created during the prenatal period.

The power of song

Musical activities tend to be pleasant for children and are said to be a source of motivation, particularly with teenagers because of their rhythm and movement. Music can really involve all the children; even those students who don't like singing can join in by miming or dancing. It is a group activity which has been proven to have a positive impact on children's socialization, their emotional development, and their creativity and imagination, among other areas. Focusing on cognition and language learning, some studies suggest that singing helps L1 learning. Songs support not only phonetic and language awareness, but also literacy learning.

Rapping: good for language, creativity and socialization.

Obviously, language and music come together in the song, so using songs is a powerful tool for learning a foreign language for several reasons:

- Some researchers state that singing makes people feel more confident in the language they sing in. If students are more relaxed, their affective filter is lowered (Krashen, 1982), they pay more attention, and so they are more receptive to learning.
- On the other hand, some studies claim that, even though the right hemisphere of our brain is more active, due to the fact that emotions are processed there, songs stimulate both hemispheres (Silva, 2006). Using songs like nursery rhymes in the English class may transport our pupils to memories where their dads and especially their mums sang when they were babies.
- Furthermore, several authors have emphasized the relationship between music and memorization. Songs are a great help in memorizing language (Toscano, 2010).
- Other authors explain that singing accompanied by actions and images like the ones we have in stories increases vocabulary acquisition (Medina, 2002).
- There is also some evidence that when people listen to songs in a foreign language this helps improve their oral skills and pronunciation, too.
- Pupils increase their fluency with the use of songs, which help them identify the rhyme and rhythm of the language (Fomina, 2000).
- Another advantage of using songs in the foreign language class is the fact that it also helps improve writing skills if students invent new lyrics for well-known songs.
- Last but not least, singing motivates. Pupils are eager to sing in a foreign language, even if they don't understand all the song words (Toscano, 2010). In this sense, rap music works with rhythm and rhyme, both useful for foreign language learning.

Research study

In our study we analysed if combining the disciplines of Music and English as a Foreign Language in primary school through tasks of writing rap music and lyrics can boost motivation in children aged 11. We chose rap since this music style has become a forceful mechanism that seems to motivate people to learn a language in order to communicate their emotions. Experiences with

similar genres, like *glosa*, in Catalonia (Casals, 2009) or *bertsolari* in the Basque Country have proven them to be tools to be used at school to motivate pupils to be creative.

In order to carry out this project we needed the support of the school staff. The role of the Head Teacher is crucial in these circumstances, because school timetables are of great importance. Both the Music and English teachers are key elements for this project to succeed, and their teaching hours need to be scheduled accordingly.

Our hypothesis is that using rap music to write poems in the English as a foreign language class in 6th year of primary school could be one of the most powerful elements for increasing motivation. That is why we wanted to investigate the questions below:

- What changes in motivation take place when we introduce **interdisciplinary** work between the English and Music subjects to pupils in the 6th year?
- Are the changes in motivation due to the **confidence** the young learners gain through interdisciplinary work?
- Do young learners wish to use English and music to express their **emotions** and is that why they are motivated?
- Will the writing of meaningful texts for rap music increase their **interest** in improving their vocabulary and grammar?
- Is there an increase in **creative** matters when they write rap songs in English?

This didactic unit, which was followed by a research project, was implemented in a Year 6 Primary school group during a term. We did some classroom research following an ecological ethnographic approach (Van Lier, 2004). The ecologic perspective includes the implication of all the members taking part in the research, and the relationship established between them.

According to Van Lier (2004) an ecological approach takes into account the different levels involved in the project, namely the macrosystem, with all the concepts from the curriculum to be developed, the mesosystem, where the rules for the Music and English interdisciplinary project are established, and the microsystem, with the specific classroom sessions. In an ecological approach we need to analyze the microsystem, the mesosystem and the macrosystem, by collecting data from the teacher's, pupil's and researcher's perspective.

We used several instruments to collect data, such as interviews, handouts and especially transcriptions of the video-recorded sessions. We wanted to observe the increase in motivation when interdisciplinary work applies. We based the analysis of some transcription extracts on Dörnyei & Csizér's "Ten Commandments for motivating language learners" (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998), which we adapted for our research to "Twelve functions the learners show when they are motivated", with the twelve functions being the following ones:

F1 They can follow a set model.
F2 They can work in a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere.
F3 They are able to know the objectives and parts of the task.
F4 They can contribute to the development of the teaching-learning activity.
F5 They can receive support and show self-confidence.
F6 They can show interest in learning.
F7 They are able to act autonomously.
F8 They have their own area of action and expression.
F9 They can relate what they learn to the culture and life outside the class.
F10 They are able to identify with the role they are asked to play in the activity.

F11 They can do cooperative work.
F12 They can transmit what they have been taught.
(Adapted from Dörnyei &Csizér, 1998)

Together with the previous functions, we created different categories (Charmaz, 2006) related to motivation, namely creativity, emotion and interest, and we looked for evidence of both the functions and the categories in the different sources of data. After collecting the evidence regarding the categories and functions, we elaborated a grid where we could observe the frequency in which the functions and the categories appeared and which participants were most involved in the project.

Although ethnography follows the qualitative paradigm, we did not want to leave out the opportunity to take some quantitative data. We distributed a pre- and post- motivation questionnaire to the pupils. The survey consisted of 12 questions, related to the Music and English subjects and to the interdisciplinary work. We also gave them a poem with a fill-in-the-gaps exercise at the beginning and at the end of the project to observe the acquisition of rhyme on the students' part.

In order to follow the qualitative analysis, we selected some extracts from the video recordings and we analyzed the transcription according to some macrocategories taken from Dörnyei's Ten Commandments as well as the new microcategories of emotion, interest and creativity. Apart from the video transcription we also analyzed the student's handouts, the interviews with the teachers and with three students and the teachers' planning, using the very same categories. After collecting quantitative and qualitative data we analyzed them and answered the questions to reach some conclusions.

Session planning

This is how we planned the sessions, out of which we collected the data:

MUSIC	**ENGLISH**
Initial session: Rap show in English	
Video session with rap examples	*Alliteration*
Rap rhythm	*Rhyming words*
Percussion	*Nursery rhymes*
Melodies	*Riddles*
Rap composition	*Limericks*

Rap composition in English
Rap composition in English
Rap composition in English
Concert for the whole school

We prepared a set of activities to be done both in the English and the Music class.

English class activities:

- Match images and words for rhyme awareness.
- Make your own rhyming words.
- *I hear with my little ear…*
- Alliteration. Words starting with the same sound.
- Tongue twisters.
- Riddles.
- Nursery rhymes.
- Limericks.

Music class activities:

- Listen to pupils doing body percussion.
- Choose different instruments.
- Play with the *boomwhackers.*
- Compose a melody.
- Create a rhythm.
- Listen to rap performers in English.

Results and discussion

Once the data from the different sources and the different perspectives was analysed, we proceeded to the triangulation of data (Van Lier, 2010). If we could find the different functions and categories from different perspectives, this would validate our research and also could help us answer the research questions.

At the end of the project we realised, first of all, that there was an increase in motivation because the students achieved confidence though the scaffolding technique (Bruner, 1985) that the teachers had used to help pupils create their rap poems. Moreover the students felt more confident because music helps memorize words (Rickard, Bambrick, & Gill, 2012), so the pupils felt confident about using English in a natural way. Another interesting point is that the teachers got involved in the

project as another member of the group and we can state this because the teachers used the plural form.

Secondly, we observed that all the members of the project confirmed that the interdisciplinary work let them express their feelings and emotions through the use of language and music to compose a rap poem. They experienced the statement that *we learn when we do something*. They learnt English by using it (Artigal, 2005) and they learnt music by playing it (Miralpeix, 2012). During the project there were feelings of fear, embarrassment and irritation, and there were arguments among team members, but there was also a shared emotion of happiness, with laughter occurring at different stages in the project.

In the third place we observed that there was an increase in interest, especially because we saw that the pupils asked questions, they used more vocabulary and showed respect for one another. Also the questionnaires revealed that the young learners wished to continue doing this type of interdisciplinary work, and they listened to English songs when they were not at school.

As for creativity, the data showed interesting evidence. At the end of the project the young learners taking part in the project were able to write a poem in English by using some structures they had practised in class. Making sentences by using structures studied in class or in previous years enhanced their creativity. They chose different instruments and created their own rhythm and melodies to present a final product: a rap song. Finally, the triangulation of data shows there's macrosystem, mesosystem and microsystem coherence from all the angles of the triangle in the project.

Rapping: taking it to the street!

Conclusion

The results of this research may contribute to spreading the idea that interdisciplinary work to create raps in English is a great incentive for pupil creativity (Amabile, 1985; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Thorne, 2008): it increases the sense of confidence in students' acquisition (Bruner, 1985; Fonseca-Mora, Toscano-Fuentes, & Wermke, 2011); it generates interest on the part of the pupils (Deci, 1992; Hidi, 2006; Van Lier, 2002); and it helps emotions emerge (Aguado, 2005; Damasio, 2005; Goleman, Kaufman, & Ray, 2009), aspects which are, in fact, essential parts of the key competences in Primary Education.

We realized throughout this project that the pupils followed the "Directed Motivational Current" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014) and took advantage of the time and context to reach the goal of creating and composing an English rap with the help of Music and English interdisciplinary work.

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Biodata

Núria Medina Casanovas has a degree in English Philology and a Ph.D. in Translation, Languages and Literatures. She has been working at UVIC-UCC for 26 years and has co-published English textbooks and a dictionary for Primary students. She is currently doing some research on the impact of music and English interdisciplinary work on young learners' motivation.

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Rap is the only vital form of music introduced since punk rock.
- Kurt Cobain

Sometimes I feel like rap music is almost the key to stopping racism.
- Eminem

Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything.
- Plato

Music is not math. It's science. You keep mixing the stuff up until it blows up on you, or it becomes this incredible potion.
- Bruno Mars

One good thing about music: when it hits you, you feel no pain.
- Bob Marley

Editor's note: *Although the following text is not related to English teaching and has become overshadowed by the refugee crisis in the continuing litany of dire situations that are besetting our fellow human beings, it is related to APAC. It was an e-mail sent just before the July Greek referendum from Luke Prodromou to a number of newspapers and to his friends, including us. We have had a very close, rewarding relationship with Dr Prodromou for many years, and he has given us many memorable moments as a speaker in our ELT Convention. So, we thought that his words should reach all of you members, since he has many unconditional fans among you. And we are sure you will be delighted to know that he is coming to the 2016 Convention with something very special in regard to the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death that we will be commemorating during the event.*

The Greek Crisis

Luke Prodromou

The conflict between Greece and its creditors (the European Union, the IMF and the ECB) could be compared to watching a bully in a playground pummelling the weakling in the school and the other boys standing by, looking on, either because they too are bullies or they're afraid to stand up to the bully. Neoliberal policies of austerity imposed on indebted countries are a kind of global bullying, and the debt is the stick the creditors use to beat their client or victim.

That was a way of putting it — not very satisfactory; because the metaphor may be extended with different implications: what happens if the victim of bullying says "no" and stands up to the bully? What happens if he or she is blamed for the conflict and consequently expelled from school? Or indeed what happens if the victim of bullying decides to leave the school voluntarily? What price is paid for standing up to the bully? On the one hand, if the victim is an important foundation stone of the school, the whole building may come crashing down on both bully and victim.

What's more, what are the chances of success against the bully if the bully has the support of the head of the school? And the school's board of trustees and even important financial benefactors include the bully's parents? So, what choices does the victim have? Does the victim continue to hand over their pocket money, sandwiches and comics?

Let's leave the metaphor for the moment and come back to the real world. On joining the EU, Greece, like other member states, had access to cheap loans and accumulated massive debt over the years. The only thing that made this debt sustainable was the possibility of borrowing more cheap money to pay old debts! A large part of the money borrowed was used to pay back creditors or used to prop up the party political clientele system which has plagued modern Greece since its inception in the 19th century. Very little of this money actually went back to the Greek people as investments in growth, the creation of jobs and a healthy tax-raising state which would be in a better position to pay back its debts.

And so, it went on. Until the tipping point in 2008, when Lehman Brothers, the fifth largest investment bank in the U.S., collapsed. This event played a major role in triggering the global

financial crisis, whose repercussions are still with us and have been instrumental in shaping the development of the Greek crisis.

The supply of loans at a low interest rate came to an end for countries like Greece, whom the markets and nervous banks now saw as potentially the next Lehman. By the time George Papandreou became PM in 2009, the borrowing climate had changed: the days of cheap loans were over, particularly for fiscally irresponsible governments. Thus, when the Papandreou government revealed the true state of its public finances, especially the fact that the deficit was 12.5% and not 3.7% as claimed by the previous conservative government, Greece's borrowing rates hit the roof and its only option seemed to be to request a bailout from its European partners, the ECB and the IMF.

The first memorandum came with stringent conditions of austerity: cuts in public spending, privatisations, reduction of salaries and pensions, in a word the whole gamut of neoliberal economic policies which have become the default position in most European countries today. It was one example of Naomi Klein's "shock doctrine" in action.

The impact of these measures on the Greek economy was to exacerbate the symptoms of recession — massive unemployment — 26% of the adult population and over 60% of young people; thousands of businesses closing, cuts in pay and pensions, restrictions on collective bargaining, shortages in hospitals and schools, the selling of Greek assets on the cheap, etc. This situation has prevailed for the last five years. (The first bailout was agreed upon in 2010).

However, because of the bailout conditions, the Greek economy has increasingly degenerated from recession to depression, and the country's debt reached astronomical levels (currently standing at 350 billion euros). Economists at the IMF and beyond have long admitted that this level of debt is unsustainable. The latest IMF report on Greece (July 2015) confirms the unsustainability of the debt and the need for a deep haircut.

The second memorandum, drawn up in March 2012, has just expired (June 30th), triggering a Greek default on its 1.7 billion-euro debt to the IMF. Thus, we can say the chickens have come home to roost: the first ever European non-payment to the IMF confirms the unsustainability of the debt and the disastrous failure of the two bailout packages.

This is the economic background against which we should see the present clash between Greece's David and the Goliath of market forces, as embodied in the three institutions now trying to persuade Greece to adopt a third package, along the same lines as the previous two failed packages.

The new Greek government, elected in January of that year, led by the left-wing Alexis Tsipras, has had to negotiate a new deal with its creditors, the so-called Troika, re-baptized as 'the Institutions'. It has tried to persuade its interlocutors to recognize the weaknesses of the previous memoranda by including clauses which would limit the damage done to the weakest members of Greek society, such as pensioners, and would encourage growth, at least through tourism, which is the only major industry left to Greece. A flourishing tourist industry is

Greece's best hope of paying back its debt through growth rather than cuts. Mr Tsipras and Mr Varoufakis, since the current negotiations began, have gone a long way to accepting, in the name of political pragmatism, many of the anti-growth policies that they had campaigned against before the elections. The talks came to an impasse because the markets wanted complete capitulation from the left-wing Greek government, which dared to question the neoliberal paradigm, which is the default position in the global economy today. In other words, the disagreement wasn't about relatively small amounts of money, it was about ideological principles: the acceptance or rejection of the neo-liberal world order - or disorder, depending on your point of view.

Therefore, the referendum on Sunday July 5th can be seen as not asking people to decide not one question but three:

1) It is a belated invitation to the Greek people to state their opinion of a possible third memorandum along the lines of the previous two fiascos. Belated, because as soon as Tsipras announced a referendum on the negotiations up *to that point*, the trio of institutions withdrew their 'offer' in order to make nonsense of the referendum and the democratic process of which it is part — however inadequately implemented. The second thing Greece's creditors did to frustrate the smooth implementation of the referendum was to refuse to extend the current bailout agreement for a few days, which would have allowed the Greek public to decide calmly and rationally the best option to take regarding the negotiations — up to the point when the Greek side withdrew and announced it was going to consult its citizens on whether to accept or reject the terms on the table at that time. Instead, financial support to Greek banks was frozen, creating Greece's own *corralito* and the accompanying panic as pensioners were overcome with fear that they would lose their pension, already drastically cut by Troika policies and the whole population manipulated into blaming the Greek government for the inconvenience of queuing for their daily dose of €60. In such conditions, a gun to their heads, our European partners expect people to make a calm, rational judgment on their future.

2) The second question the referendum is deemed to be putting, according to Greece's European partners, is whether Greece wants to remain in the euro or to go back to the drachma. Although the Greek government denies that this is the question, and although there is no procedure in place for any member of the eurozone to leave the club, the misleading dilemma with which voters are confronted is designed to elicit a rejection of the Tsipras' government's position and — in a state of fear, anger and panic — to vote 'yes' to Europe and by implication 'yes' to the terms the creditors wish to reimpose on Greece. The European Union's tactic of manipulating the nature of the vote raises questions about their respect for democracy in Europe and simple honesty.

3) The third question the referendum is implicitly asking (the way events have developed since it was announced) is whether the Greek people are prepared to stand by and watch their elected government be brought down by market forces. Martin Schulz, European Parliament president, has quite blatantly come out in favour of a regime change in Athens. In an interview in the German newspaper *Handelsblatt* (July 2nd), Schulz stated the plan to put an end to the Syriza government and replace it with an imposed government of technocrats, who will arrive at a 'reasonable' agreement with Greece's creditors. This will spell 'the end of the Syriza era'. So much for the European Parliament's spokesperson for representative democracy! To be fair, we should acknowledge that Schulz twitted that the German newspaper's report was a 'gross misinterpretation' of his words.

To conclude, we can restate the relevance of the bullying metaphor in capturing the essence and the complexity of the conflict between Greece and its creditors. But it is important to keep the main issue in sight: the impact of austerity on the weakest members of Greek society: pensioners, the unemployed, the homeless and those who can't even afford to pay their electricity bills. Any visitor to Greece today will immediately notice streets crowded with beggars, many of whom are not your traditional urban beggar but formally middle-class professional people fallen on hard times.

This latter expression recalls works by Dickens which explore the impact of debt on the lives of ordinary people. Here we need mention only one example: *The Old Curiosity Shop*, in which the money lender, Quilp, negotiates with his client, the grandfather of little Nell and owner of the eponymous shop, a deal to lend him money which will enable the old man to secure his grand-daughter's future. A series of unfortunate circumstances — an economic recession, a shop struggling to stay open, a loan with high interest rates and dangerous risk-taking by the grandfather, who has an addiction to gambling — leads to the creditor Quilp negotiating a 'bailout'. The agreement involves Quilp taking over the shop and forcing little Nell to marry him. The grandfather and little Nell reject the deal and escape into the countryside in search of freedom. The tragic ending to *The Old Curiosity Shop* — the death of little Nell — captured the imagination of Victorian England.

The Greek government has no such escape route to an idyllic English countryside. Its integration with Europe, whether formal or informal, is inescapable. A solution must be found. Today's Greek crisis has caught the attention of the media and many citizens within the European Union, who worry about their own pensions and cuts to welfare services. We are not watching just a Greek tragedy. The conflict concerns the future of Europe and what kind of Europe we want: do we want a Europe run by Dickens' Quilp or a Europe where businesses are free to create wealth, where banks facilitate investment and job creation and governments are free to deploy the taxation system to ensure a fair and just society — without fear of falling into the clutches of a Quilp or even a Shylock seeking his pound of flesh.

Biodata

Luke Prodromou is a freelance teacher, teacher trainer, materials writer and actor. He has been a plenary/keynote speaker at many international conferences, from APAC to IATEFL. He worked as a teacher and a teacher trainer for the British Council in Greece from 1977 until 2000, and has trained teachers in over 25 different countries. He has written 20 books, such as *Dealing with Difficulties* with Lindsay Clandfield, which won the Ben Warren Prize for 2006 and the English Speaking Union Award for 2007. He is also a member of a Greek theatre group and half the cast of the English Language Theatre group, *Dave 'n 'Luke*.

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