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Dear Reader,
Welcome to the 36th issue of BETA-IATEFL bi-monthly e-newsletter!

This special conference issue will probably reach you just in time to remind you of the BETA-IATEFL conference, held in Burgas this June. *Just in time*, because it is already autumn and the new academic year is upon us. Our work is keeping each and every one of us a bit more preoccupied than before and the enthusiasm, motivation, inspiration, and new ideas that surrounded us at the conference might be getting ever more smaller in the distance.

Hopefully, this issue will remind us of some of the wonderful ideas that we came up with and discussed at length with dedicated professionals from all over, who attended the conference and gave insightful talks.

The issue opens with ways to get unstuck by one of our plenaries Marjorie Rosenberg (*Getting Unstuck: Stretching out of our Comfort Zones*). What is particularly interesting about Marjorie’s approach is that all the ideas and nudges she gives us are in the form of a dialogue. She is painfully familiar with all the challenges a teacher faces in their daily tasks and she acknowledges that before letting us know about some ways we can counteract this. She has also debated with colleagues before presenting us with this trove of methods and materials, so her suggestions reach us in a lot more to-the-point and sincere tone.

Hopefully, those of you who attended the conference got to hear this talk because it was great fun, if perhaps a bit bitter sweet to laugh together at all the things teachers are supposed to be (personal favourite *petty cash clerk* and *coat finder*). If
you would like to find out more about Marjorie, here is a link to Tanya Bikova’s interview in issue 31 of the BETA E-Newsletter, in case you missed it.

Kiro Jordanov and Nicholas Blandford start their paper with a reminder of the the global world our students are part of today and turn our attention to the future of education. Among the many options for joint learning (Edmodo, Instagram, Facebook or E-twinning) they make their case for a platform called Belouga. Have a read of *Paint the Town Blue Belouga and the World Stage* to find out more about gamification and Belouga.

How to get students to be proficient at speaking? In *Developing Speaking Skills at University* Milka Hadjikoteva will help you help your students perfect their presentation skills. Through personal involvement, culturally-specific awareness, and preparation, the latter’s importance is highlighted, Milka outlines the steps we need to take to make sure our students become successful presenters.

What is idiomaticity? How many types of idioms are there? How should idioms be taught? Aglika Dobreva explains in *Etymology of Idioms and Their Teaching*. Find out how explaining context and origin can aid memorization and at the same time provide students with linguocultural insights.

Diana Popova is convinced that “[the] new pedagogical ideas are usually based on well-forgotten old ways of teaching” (63). She discusses transformative pedagogical practices and encourages us that we do not have to look far to find solutions to some of the problems we are facing today in education. Find out more about transformative pedagogy and what we mean by translanguaging in this Diana’s paper.
A frequent contributor, Reneta Stoimenova introduces the *half-baked software* Hot Potatoes to inspire us to create our own tailor-made content. In the span of just a couple of pages she will have introduced you to the software, provided you with suggestions, as well as a practical workshop ready for use.

Next, Mariya Neykova talks about problem-based learning in FLT: its dimensions and benefits. The extensive research and bibliography will doubtlessly convince you that this method facilitates autonomous and active learners.

In *Binomials Joined By And Conjunction In Some Fairy Tales* Petranka Ivanova presents her research into binomials in a corpus comprised of some fairy tales. The focus of this paper is the *and* construction and its frequency with noun phrases, verb phrases, adjectives joined by *and*, as well as structures with adverbs and pronouns.

In *Rehearsal time (very young learners)* Zhivka Ilieva and Desislava Terzieva inspire kindergarten teachers to use a ready-made dramatic performance in end-of-the-year festivities. Perhaps a bit demanding on the part of the teacher, their idea promises lots of fun for both kindergarteners and parents alike. It is a tried and tested idea, which in my book is always a plus.

On the behalf of BETA, and its whole teaching community, we would like to express a heartfelt thanks to all our contributors for all the links, highlights, resources, and literature!
There is more! Some contributors opted for getting their presentation published, you will be able to find those on our website shortly. Feel free to get back some of that conference spirit and maybe find a moment to go through those notes you took at the conference, you are certain to make an impression in class.

Happy reading!
Polly Petcova
Issue Editor
Getting Unstuck: Stretching out of our Comfort Zones

Marjorie Rosenberg

Abstract

As daily timetables, preparation, marking papers and administrative duties take up so much time and energy, many educators do not have the time to reflect on ‘what else’ they could be doing. This can result in feeling stuck in one place and not seeing any possibilities for growth. The plenary talk ‘Getting Unstuck’ explored the reasons behind this feeling and provided ideas used by other teachers to stretch out of their comfort zones. After categorizing a number of areas related to the world of English language teaching, information was gathered through the technique of crowdsourcing and more examples were added to demonstrate the concepts. In addition, ideas for self-reflection were suggested and a number of resources provided. The goal of the talk was to help teachers take the first step and try something new in order to gain confidence and continue stretching themselves personally and professionally.

Keywords: professional development, personal development.
Background

When speaking to a group of teachers, it is not unusual to find that some may be fairly new to the profession and others have been teaching for years. But most agree that teaching is often all encompassing job which may isolate us from others making it hard to see beyond the classroom or our own situation at times. Unfortunately, due to the amount of work we have and the pressure we experience to be excellent at our jobs, we sometimes need help to venture out of our own little worlds.

For this reason, feeling stuck is something many teachers experience at various times in their careers. It may just be too difficult to take on anything else, everything we do is routine, and our days repeat themselves over and over. The problem is that finding a way out also presents its own challenges. While crowdsourcing for this talk, several reasons for not trying out new things came up. These include fear of failure, lack of time and or money, lack of opportunities, no support from others and not knowing where to start. In addition, we are often expected to take on roles which go beyond the simple imparting of knowledge. Depending on our individual teaching situations we could be expected to be: ‘surrogate parents, petty cash officers, coat finders, walking encyclopedias, and pencil sharpeners’ to name some of the more humorous examples. However, in reality we are people who ‘live’ our jobs, need to be exceptional listeners, enjoy experimentation, express empathy for our learners, and never stop learning ourselves.
How we can stretch

Considering the challenge of what we can do, it seemed that coming up with areas we can stretch into would be a possible way forward. This is a logical breakdown of areas to investigate:

- using new methods
- teaching new subjects
- implementing new technology
- taking part in CPD (Continual Professional Development)
- stretching out of our preferred learning styles
- collaborating with colleagues
- being part of a PLN (personal learning network)
- moving into new areas of ELT

In order to find out how people around the world were dealing with these areas I started by posing these questions to a group of teachers enrolled in an online course I was involved with. In addition, the questions were posted in various Facebook groups comprised of those in the ELT profession. In the end I had responses from twenty-four colleagues from twenty-two countries. After compiling them I added activities and ideas I have used successfully in the classroom as well. The suggestions from colleagues as well as my own are as follows:

New methods

Suggestions from colleagues

- using a riddle from the Merchant of Venice to help students write
• giving students responsibility for revision rather than pre-planning by the teacher
• using TPR (Total Physical Response) with adults

My suggestions
• using cooperative learning techniques (setting up interdependent groups)
• making use of drama, music and art
• project work
• learner diaries

New subjects

Suggestions from colleagues
• when getting new groups with different focal points, find out what they need
• getting topics from the students and developing the lessons

My suggestions
• using CLIL or ESP ideas to teach subject matter in English
• expanding into another field of expertise
• inviting an expert to class and team teaching
• using articles to discuss specific topics

New technology

Suggestions from colleagues
• using Prezi (an online presentation program) and teaching learners to use it as well as using Vocaroo (an online voice recorder) and MentorMob (a tool which lets you create learning playlists of web content)
• using Bitstrips (designing cartoons) with young learners
• using a wiki with students
• using an iPad for downloading apps, especially for pronunciation

**My suggestions**

• using Moodle or other learning platform
• finding appropriate videos on the internet and sharing them with learners
• using mobile phones for interaction, sharing photos, making recordings, etc.
• holding an online course

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**Continual Professional Development**

**Suggestions from colleagues**

• completing various diploma and certificate courses including CELTA, MA, DELTA, TKT
• being part of Facebook groups, reading methodology books, attending webinars and conferences
• blogging, tweeting, and reading blogs
• taking part in ELT chat
• working on learning other languages

**My suggestions**

• attending conferences and web conferences
• setting up training sessions or ‘swap shops’ with colleagues
• planning courses with colleagues
• going back to university

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**Stretching out of your learning style**
Suggestions from colleagues

- doing more kinaesthetic activities although teacher is visual
- learning to be more hands-on than visual
- trying to use auditory channel which is the least preferred

My suggestions

- trying something you don’t usually do
- adding in more activities from another learner type (with more visuals, more listening, more movement or more emotional)
- using activities which call for details and those which call for overviews

Colleagues

Suggestions from colleagues

- teaching colleagues about concept questions and inductive teaching (where learners come to understanding of rules by looking at examples)
- helping colleagues to learn English
- having colleagues come to classes or vice versa to give each other feedback
- having business breakfast and group events for teaching team

My suggestions

- asking others for ideas that work
- observing others’ classes
- exchanging ideas and materials
- asking teachers of other subjects what they do in class

Professional Learning Network (PLN)
Suggestions from colleagues

- setting up a network of professionals and friends
- exchanging ideas and materials and discussing translations
- use of social networks
- going to conferences

My suggestions

- joining online groups of teachers
- becoming active in a teachers’ association
- staying in touch with colleagues after conferences and workshops

New area of ELT

Suggestions from colleagues

- becoming a DOS (Director of Studies) or course coordinator
- teaching with Skype, Google+ or Hangouts (group video calls, exchange of photos, etc.)
- doing administrative work, teacher training and formal evaluations
- learning to work with learners with special needs
- writing for journals and newsletters, doing translations, interpreting, editing and writing
- organizing exchange programs for students
- setting up a magazine for ELT teachers
- learning to make and edit videos, and creating a video production unit at home

My suggestions

- becoming an examiner
- writing course materials
As we see from these ideas, there are a number of areas that teachers can branch
into including:

- Writing coursebooks, supplementary or online materials
- Editing
- Blogging
- Getting involved in testing and assessment
- Becoming active in a teaching association
- Training other teachers
- Learning to use new technology and incorporate it into the classroom
- Collaborating with colleagues
- Setting up a PLN
- Translating and interpreting

**Writing out a timeline**

We tend to forget how often we have learned something new and how much we
have already accomplished. What is helpful for self-reflection is making a timeline of
events in our lives. This can help us to think about where we began and where we
are now while taking into account the milestones which were part of the journey.

**Specific ideas**

There are a number of free resources that teachers can use, both for their personal
development as well as in the classroom.
**eltchat**

One option is taking part in the eltchat. This is a Twitter-based chat which takes place once a week and focuses on a different topic each time. The chats are moderated by a team and the transcripts and summaries published after the chats. You can get involved by suggesting topics, taking part in the chat and/or writing up the summary. The exciting thing about the chat is not just that it is free peer-oriented feedback, but it is a wonderful way to begin setting up a PLN.

**Eltpics**

This is an initiative which was started by a group of dedicated teachers with the idea of ‘photos by teachers for teachers’ using a Creative Commons license. They began to ask colleagues and friends to take pictures which they upload to a flicker account. There are different categories and the photos are organized so that teachers can easily find them. When you need something for a class or a talk, you can look through the collection and download it to use as long as you acknowledge the source. At the moment there are close to 30,000 photos on the site.

**Map of the Urban Linguistic Landscape**

This Facebook group collects interesting written language from around the world and found in the public sphere. It provides a chance to expand your own language but also to find photos of signs and other written material which you can use in class for a variety of purposes.
EFL Magazine

This free online publication has articles on a variety of topics relevant to ELT practitioners. You can also contribute to it by contacting the editor.

EFL Talks

The concept behind EFL Talks that of teachers teaching teachers. Regular events are set up, often based around a theme, and short presentations are held by teachers from around the globe. The recordings are available and the concept has been growing at a rapid pace. You can learn from watching others but also consider contributing yourself to one of the events.

The No Project

This initiative was set up to spread awareness of human trafficking through a variety of methods. Young people are trained to be ambassadors and create music, drama and art. There are films on the website that can be used and a number of lesson plans for the classroom are in production.

Simple English Videos

As mentioned earlier, Vicki Hollett began her own video production company in her home. She and her husband Jay have been producing short videos on language difficulties that learners often face as well as on social or business-oriented
situations. These are free of charge and designed for use by teachers and students. Many of them also include transcripts and worksheets. Another bonus is that Vicki is British and Jay is American so students have the chance to hear both accents.

**Trying something new – a Facebook page**

Another place to get inspiration is the new Facebook page called ‘Trying something new’. This was started by Theodora Papapanagiotou in Greece and serves as a platform to exchange new ideas with other teachers around the world.

**Matt Cutts: ‘Try something new for 30 days’ a TED Talk**

This inspirational TED talk gives us a number of ideas we can try out and encourages us to just ‘try something new’. Matt Cutts gives examples of what he did and his experiences with making change sustainable.

**Summing up**

This talk can be best summed up by a phrase I learned in my NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) training. It states that ‘If you always do what you have always done, you will always get what you have always gotten.’ Keeping this idea in mind may make a difference in the way you think, in your view of the ELT world and in your
approach to tasks. The goal of this talk is to offer a number of ideas in order to help teachers stretch out of their daily routines and ‘try something new’.

References and links

**EFL Magazine**: https://www.eflmagazine.com

**EFLTalks**: efltalks.com

**Eltchat**: eltchat.org

**Eltpics**: www.eltpics.com

**TED talks**: https://www.ted.com

**TED talk: Matt Cutts**: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnfBXjWm7hc

Transcript to TED talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/matt_cutts_try_something_new_for_30_days/transcript

**The No Project**: www.thenoproject.org

**Vicki Hollett simple English videos**: https://simpleenglishvideos.com

Marjorie Rosenberg

**MFA, research assistant, University of Graz**

Marjorie Rosenberg has been teaching English in Graz, Austria for over 30 years, twenty of them in the tertiary sector. She has published widely in the field of business English for international publishers and written methodology books on learner preferences. Marjorie was IATEFL president from 2015-2017.

e-mail: marjorie.rosenberg@tele2.at
Paint the Town Blue

Belouga and the World Stage

Kiro Jordanov, M-Ed. and Nicholas Blandford

Abstract

The constant change of society is permanently forcing the change in education as well. At this point the process of globalization in the world is more than evident and more and more intense. When the actors in the society are connecting internationally and inter-culturally, education, as a substantial and crucial factor for social development, is here to prepare the youngest contributors for the cultural and social variety in the global village that the world has become by making teaching appropriate for students’ future need to adapt in the 21st century. The globalization of education can be seen with the occurrence of many platforms for joint learning and global education like Edmodo, Instagram, Facebook or E-twinning. Nevertheless, the most recent and most engaging platform for global teaching and learning English as a foreign language is Belouga (www.belouga.org). In this article we will introduce you to the need of using Belouga as well as to its benefits for education.

Keywords: globalization, International education, global village, educational platforms, society.
Introduction

Today’s educational climate is difficult for almost any educator to navigate, especially at the primary level. This modern education environment is populated by a new generation with different learning styles than their predecessors have been used to. Students suffer from an inability to be ‘fully in the moment’ (Ritchel 2010) as a result of having become ‘digital natives,’ otherwise defined by Buckley, Doyle and Doyle as ‘having been exposed to information technology from birth’ (Buckley, Doyle, and Doyle 2017). Ritchel asserts that this multitasking focus results in a ‘rewiring of our brains,’ resulting in increased difficulty focusing and shutting out irrelevant information, as well as increased stress (Ritchel 2010).

Teachers need to find a way to keep students engaged in the modern education environment, as well as to increase their scope of learning and frame it in a more globalized context. Our world is ever-shrinking since the advent of the Internet, and the modern teacher is faced with ever more requirements and questions from their students. Cross-cultural learning is becoming ever-more important as technologies such as YouTube, Twitter, Skype, and Instagram link societies from across the globe. The weakness of these platforms is that they are not inherently educational. Students find themselves increasingly drawn to the nearest distraction, which often lies in their pocket. One possible solution is to utilize the tendencies that Time Magazine noted in its article on the expressive tendencies of young individuals in their electronic media, which mentioned that youths use IMing (instant-messaging) to express something that they express things that they wouldn’t, or perhaps couldn’t, say in person (Time 2007; Farber et al. 2012). What if we were able to harness the addictive abilities of a mobile setting and utilize them to help encourage students to learn about the world’s cultures through the lens of the world’s cultures? What if we could apply the principles of the video games already hiding in
our children’s pockets to the system of education as we know it? What if education and gaming didn’t have to live in separate spheres?

This research paper will seek to define the modern education environment, as well as to propose a potential solution as provided through an in-class test group performed at OOU Slavejko Arsov in Stip, Macedonia. 53 students within the sixth grade were measured over the course of four months, comparing their test scores and quiz results to a baseline test administered before implementation of the online learning platform Belouga into their academic environment. Possible sources of error include the small number of data points (the study is a short-term longitudinal form, data points are incoming). In addition, as of present, student confidence has only been measured by informal assessment and verbal interviews.

**Literature review**

How should a teacher in the modern environment cope with such technological influence, incorporation and stress? The modern teacher is left with two options — either integrate technology into the learning environment or exclude it entirely. Gamification, as defined by Huotari et al, is the application of ‘game-design elements and principles’ into ‘non-game contexts’ (2012). This is something that the modern educator has often tried to begin doing to increase student engagement. If one asks any student whether they would rather be doing Algebra, English, or History, or whether they would like to be playing Clash Royale or another app on their phone, almost every single student would opt for the latter. Gamification allows for the integration of platforms onto the world stage.
Gamification can be used to incorporate powerful emotional responses like joy and curiosity into the learning atmosphere (Kim 2012). Example mechanics that are employed from games include ‘mechanics, aesthetics, and game-based thinking’ in order to motivate students, promote learning and encourage problem-solving (Kapp 2012: 10). These features result in students greatly increasing self-directed research that they ‘wouldn’t have bothered with before (Buckley et al. 2017).’ Rewards include badges and points, and in some instances even leveling systems, and are often measured by progress bars, much like a video game’s level bar (Glover 2013).

Andy Cramp and Catherine Lamond assert that university leaders have ‘an opportunity, even obligation, to shape digital learning landscapes into equitable, human and democratic environments,’ though it is reasonable to extend this assertion to more than just the university setting, and to the setting of education as a whole (2016). With a generation of students growing in our schools who do not so much as open a book in their spare time, but spend hours and hours poring over posts on Instagram and Facebook, it becomes the responsibility of education experts as a community to figure out ways to incorporate these technologies into the learning sphere should they hope to keep students engaged.

In addition, the modern educator is faced with the difficulty of ensuring that students are receiving adequate character education while staying engaged with the course material at hand. Are they being given the chance to discover a joy for learning? Cramp and Lamond state that, in e-learning courses, video conferencing is the most important part of increasing engagement, with students reporting a sense of ‘real belonging,’ though they do cite there was an initial element of self-awareness that prevented students from engaging in conversation (2016). This setting, with informal language and a comfortable atmosphere, helped contribute to a mutual kindness that increased student engagement and involvement within
the activity at hand (Cramp and Lamond 2016). Perhaps this is linked to the “joyful learning, motivation and engagement” mentioned by Ford and Opitz in their article ‘Helping Young Children Discover the Joy of Learning’ (Ford and Opitz 2015). They combine the Oxford dictionary’s definitions of the terms ‘joyful’ and ‘learning’ to create the definition of ‘joyful learning’ as ‘acquiring knowledge or skills in ways that cause pleasure and happiness’ (2015). In their article, they mention that the education system focuses far too much on the ‘acquisition’ aspect of skills, leaving the ‘pleasure and happiness’ part by the wayside, an assertion that can be supported by observation of the average classroom.

However, the attainment of ‘joy’ in the classroom is more difficult than it would appear. Psychologists David McClelland and Henry Murray define the Need for Achievement as ‘an individual’s desire for significant accomplishment, mastering of skills, control, or high standards,’ (Murray 1938; McClelland 1961). In an attempt to maximize acquisition, teachers could utilize the resources inherent in a child’s intrinsic drive to succeed and their inherent curiosity to learn, which as Matthew Murrie asserts in his book, The Book of What If...?, can be as easy as simply letting them know that ‘it’s OK to be curious’ (Murrie and McHugh 2016). Curiosity is a teacher’s secret weapon in the classroom, allowing them to keep a student’s attention and promote out of class extension of activities.

**Synthesis**

Students live in a world filled with bright lights and gacha games, skillfully engineered to capture attention and increase addictive tendencies within the human psyche. This addictive tendency makes it difficult to keep a student’s attention and could weaken student ability to research independently. Concordia
University-Portland cites one advantage of tech being allowed in the classroom is that students have ‘instant answers,’ though a weakness of this becomes dependence on the technology to provide the answers to problems at-hand (Digital Devices 2017). However, in the skilled educator’s hand, these pieces of technology can be harnessed to allow students to utilize their addiction to their phones, their desire to compete with each other, and their exposure to technology to enhance in-classroom experiences and deliver highly engaging activities.

Incorporation of game-like mechanics is vital to keep the modern student engaged, but how would the modern teacher measure engagement? The answer to that lies directly within the very emulation of these game-like features. If one incorporates a point system into their learning environment, there is a built-in mechanism that teachers can correlate student engagement with. Incorporating points and logging student time spent vs. points earned allows teachers to assess student engagement with the material. However, the present systems in place are inadequate to log this. Many do not provide the ability for teachers to log this kind of information. They may log student activity, but not actual time spent to get the activity. They might log student time spent, but have little way to see the actual activities that were performed.

Enter Belouga, a platform developed in October 2016, which boasts the ability to connect students from across the world and enhance their education through cross-cultural experiences. Evin Schwartz, creator of the platform, believes that, through building an international learning community, students can build and achieve learning success through ‘learning about the world, with the world,’ the site’s motto (Belouga 2018). This site aims to increase student learning by applying gamified concepts within the framework of a more globalized educational framework.
Research design

The methods that were employed in this study were rather simple, though the results that will be seen were anything but.

Students were already grouped in three classrooms ($N_1=16$, $N_2=17$, $N_3=17$) and consisted of 22 females and 28 males all aged 11-13.

They were all given a normal English test before starting with Belouga’s social program. Students were allowed free-form interaction in any manner they chose with the site, much like they would be on Facebook or Twitter. As such, interest levels were expected to vary from person to person, allowing for a fuller view of correlation between student use (measured by points earned on their profile) and their corresponding grades. Students were offered extra credit on their tests to correspond with the amount of points that they earned on their Belouga profiles. Those who earned from 0-500 points earned 1 point, 501-1000 earned 2 points, 1001-1500 earned 3, 1501-2000 earned 4, and any more than 2000 earned 5 points.

There were two separate measures made with regard to student performance in class — formal benchmark tests and a small series of weekly 10-minute quizzes administered to students each Monday from January through March 2018. As would be standard for a class, the tests and quizzes measured different levels of material, with the tests covering material covered in the time period being benchmarked. The quizzes, however, were a test of student retention of information and taken directly from the student’s Messages EFL textbook. The tests were of teacher’s own design.
There was a slight expectation of variance with regard to the performance of the three groups, given the different resources the school had afforded the classes in years before, when there was no stationary English classroom. One classroom consistently performed lower than the others when looking at the past year’s benchmarks, and this is likely attributed to a poor-quality chalkboard that hindered students’ learning. However, this lack of acquisition was something that provided the most fertile ground for improvement, given that it was the group that had the most to gain from any new tool’s implementation.

**Results**

Student test results were compiled to gather averages and compare with each other to craft basic assessments of changes. Three students were excluded from the results due to having not been present for both benchmarks.

Graphs 1-3 describe the results of the benchmark 1 test and benchmark test 2. In brief, $N_1$ displayed an average of 5% growth as a class, though when a student displayed improvement, they improved at least 20% from benchmark 1 to benchmark 2. $N_2$’s results are slightly deceitful, as it shows a loss of 4%, but this group also had the highest base testing average. The average improvement in this testing group was 20%, though there are a few notable 40% gains. $N_3$ was the most interesting result. Through high interest and motivation as shown through the quantity of messages sent through their Facebook group chat, they gained the largest percent gains as a class at 7%.

A one-way paired ANOVA test of statistical significance of these findings was run on these results and found to be statistically significant for groups $N_1$ and $N_3$ at $p=0.15$. 
Conclusions

After performing the tests, there was a revelation of statistical significance for groups $N_1$ and $N_3$, meaning that the variances are enough to reject the null hypothesis at confidence level of $p=0.15$. Students are improving more through their use of Belouga than they would have normally per the data. Further testing is advised to ascertain the effectiveness of the data, however, as two data points is not as reliable data as those produced from a long term longitudinal study.

From the results of the experiment run on the three groups, Belouga might provide a valuable resource for students that otherwise would be more inclined to spend their free time on their phones.

This study had two stated goals: to define the modern education environment with regards to technology in the classroom and to propose the solution of implementation of the Belouga platform into schools. The modern educator is faced with students that are centered around the use of their technology due in part to the fact that technology has always been present in their lives. They have learned to think differently, so the techniques that professors have been using for previous generations of students will likely begin to show increasing levels of ineffectiveness, ranging from student inattention to the decline of student grades within the academic setting. In addition, there might be further repercussions such as disruptive or destructive behavior should students not be reached out to on the terms that they are used to.
Belouga is one of several platforms that the modern educator can choose from, though its focus on bringing the international community together is one of the things that make it stand apart the most from the average platform. In addition, it allows the points that students earn to be used in what it terms ‘Impact Campaigns’ – point donation campaigns that are created when schools post that they need any of the various sundries from notebooks to an entire school building rebuilt – which give students agency in changing the world one point at a time. This has been one of the factors that helped increase student engagement with Belouga, since students in Macedonia are used to being the recipients of charity, rather than the benefactors. This change of roles resulted in a fervor of student activity within the school to try to make sure that these other schools that they began interacting with across the globe had at least the same resources that the students did.

These changes, in turn, begin to craft a whole new dynamic into the school environment, where students learn a joy for learning by interacting with a highly-gamified system within Belouga, which allows the points earned there to transcend the “game world” and become part of the real world around them in the form of real social changes. In an interview with Matthew Murrie and Evin Schwartz, two of the leads behind Belouga’s development, they revealed that there are coming plans to implement lesson structures that conform to the UN Sustainable Development Goals for Education in the near future and are open to crossing that implementation to other education systems across the globe. Rather than a static set of lessons, however, teachers from any participating Belouga classroom will be allowed to submit lesson designs through the ‘Deep-Dive Series,’ a group of what Murrie calls ‘accordion lessons’ (Murrie & Schwartz 2018).

Whether the modern educator opts for Belouga or another platform of their preference, it the data from this sample does suggest that there is some significance
to reaching out to students in the manner that they have grown up receiving information. Perhaps the day of the in-class lecture is waning and instead giving way to the day of customized, interest based education that blends the barriers between education and entertainment, specifically in a joy-centric gamified setting that inspires children to think about the world not as it is, but how it could be. As Murrie opines in his book, ‘being curious is a powerful ability to have’ (McHugh and Murrie 2016). The curiosity that students gather from a gamified setting is the engine of our future as a society. It’s going to be how our children build our tomorrow.

Appendix: charts and graphs

Graph 1: Test 1 (control) to Test 2 differences of group N1. Orange indicates raw data, while grey indicates grades after the promised curve.
Graph 2: Test 1 (control) to Test 2 differences of group N₂. Orange indicates raw data while grey indicates grades after the promised curve.

Graph 3: Test 1 (control) to Test 2 differences of group N₃. Orange indicates raw data while grey indicates grades after the promised curve.
Table 1: ANOVA tests carried out for all three sample groups. Note statistical significance in groups N₁ and N₃

References


Kiro Jordanov, M-Ed.
e-mail: kiko_jordanov@yahoo.com

Nicholas Blandford
e-mail: spiritualarrow@gmail.com
Developing Speaking Skills at University

Milka Hadjikoteva

Abstract

Developing speaking skills when teaching a foreign language at university is a challenge both to lecturers and students. Beyond any doubt, the most important characteristics of a successful presentation are to be personally involved in the topic, to be flexible enough to adjust to the culturally-specific requirements that are set when presenting in English and to be aware of the fact that it is the process of preparation which counts most. Practice makes perfect, so thanks to personal involvement, culturally-specific guidelines and preparation university students become successful presenters in a foreign language.

Keywords: EFL, university students, presentations, culturally-specific rhetoric

Developing speaking skills when teaching a foreign language at university is a challenge both to the lecturers and students. It is a long-established tradition to regard studies at university as radically different from secondary education studies. Therefore, many students think that when they start their university studies, they have already been prepared to talk reasonably well in a foreign language. More often than not, majority of students have already studied English as a foreign language for years and they think that they are efficient enough when it comes to communication. However, the expectations at university level are different. The courses taught in English presuppose a high level of command of the foreign
language and some strategies and skills developed in advance in order to become successful.

The basic principles of speaking to an audience have been discussed by many researchers (Lucas 2004; O’Hair, Stewart & Rubinstein 2007; Osborne & Osborne 1997; Verderber 1994, Hadjikoteva 2015, 2017). Nowadays most students come to university being confident enough of their skills and abilities to deliver presentations. Every time, however, the preparation and delivery of a presentation is a challenge itself. Moreover, presentations delivered in a foreign language are even a greater challenge. Beyond any doubt, the most important characteristic of a successful presentation is to be personally involved in the topic. The second feature is to be flexible enough to adjust to the culturally-specific requirements that are set when presenting in English is considered. Last but not the least, it is not the delivery itself, it is the preparation which counts most. Practice makes perfect, so thanks to the process of preparation university students become successful presenters in a foreign language.

Being personally involved is a prerequisite for the success of the whole process. To be able to inspire the audience and spark interest, presenters themselves should display a strong sense of confidence and purpose. To do that, they have to be informed about the subject of their presentations. The more informed they are, the more confident they are whenever they deliver their presentations. Many researchers invariably put confidence and purpose in the first rank. It is even claimed that confidence adds to the sense of purpose, i.e. the more evidence speakers can summon, the more convincing they are. In other words, in order to defend their positions, successful presenters should be as convincing and as confident as possible. To achieve this, they should be aware that presentations are inherently interactive. Although each presentation is generally considered to be a
monologue, it is in fact dialogical in its nature. As a result, presenters should be able to anticipate what questions they might be asked.

Being confident, purposeful and well-prepared are the indispensable prerequisites of successful presenters. These characteristics should be effectively employed in presentations both in the native and foreign language. In order to be confident, purposeful and well-prepared, students should be personally involved in their topics. It is possible when they do their own research, get familiar with the topic, carefully read, summarize and rank their arguments, browse for examples to defend them and be able to prioritize them. Usually the role of the lecturer is of a facilitator and mediator, directing students’ efforts and counseling them. Student should also be aware of the differences between rhetorical organizations of presentations in high and low-context cultures and should view an academic presentation as a process rather than a product.

The culturally-specific requirements are vital when it comes to preparing a presentation in English. Certain organizational structures are associated with different types of presentations (Hadjikoteva 2015, 2017). Sometimes the expectations of the lecturers of English as representatives of the target language culture and the students as representatives of their native non-English cultures clash. If a certain organizational structure is expected but the students’ ideas of an effective structure differ completely, then there are probably culturally-specific reasons to account for. Furthermore, the supporting materials used by the students may not be considered convincing enough. In both cases the underlying reason is a matter of ‘high context’ and ‘low context’ cultures (Connor 2004). High-context cultures are associated with most of the countries in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and South America. Representatives of these cultures are usually defined as intuitive and collectivist, putting emphasis on interpersonal relationships.
Hall (1976) claims that such cultures prefer group harmony to individual achievement. It is believed that people living there are governed mostly by intuition and feelings. To most of them context, gestures and even the atmosphere of a situation are usually more important than words themselves. To communicate effectively in such cultures demands the skills of being indirect and formal. People are thought to use predominantly flowery language as well as elaborate explanations and apologies.

As regards the representatives of the low-context cultures typical of the countries in Western Europe and North America, they are believed to express their views following certain logic, using linear development and highlighting their personal thoughts and ideas. Being logical and direct are considered the most valuable characteristics of a discourse. As a result, in these cultures the ability to take decisions is based on fact rather than intuition. People communicate in a straightforward manner. Their interaction is usually concise and action-packed. They make use of precise words which are intended to be taken literally. This type of communication affects the principles of rhetoric organization.

The skill to use concise and action-packed words starts to be developed in early childhood when children are taught in a culturally-specific way how to understand and organize ideas. Kaplan (1966) explores the rhetoric of essays written by non-native English speaking students and the rhetoric of native speakers’ essays. He analyzes the organization of paragraphs in ESL student essays and identifies five types of paragraph development typical of five nationalities. The ‘English’ line of organization may be presented as a straight one, i.e. the rhetorical organization pattern is direct.
In his research, it is evident that structures typical of the native rhetoric persist in the essays written by non-native English speakers, although the students were instructed to use the typically English one. Nonetheless, these results concern EFL writing, their implications are important when presentations are concerned, since they are regarded as the crossing point between reading, writing, and speaking fluency. It is a good idea to bear in mind that academic presentations are characterized by a strict organizational pattern which resembles the structure of an essay. At the same time, however, they are supposed to be listener-friendly and dialogical.

Bulgarian culture might be described as a high-context culture, with a pattern of thought similar to the Russian organization as presented in Kaplan’s study (1966) on cultural thought patterns in intercultural education. Therefore, it may be claimed that most of the communication in Bulgarian is organized and communicated indirectly and formally.

Exploring the model of low-context cultures, oral and written communication is characterized by transitions and summaries, typical for these cultures. In many
cases, the presence of transitions, summaries and linking phrases may be viewed by
many representatives of high-context cultures as unnecessary. It needs preparation
for a person accustomed to one type of context to start using other patterns.
Students who belong to high-context cultures are supposed to adapt to the
requirements of a low-context culture. To communicate effectively in their cultures
of origin, writers and presenters belonging to high-context cultures include the
information they presume to be relevant and necessary. However, if they are
supposed to communicate in low-context cultures, the same amount of information
may be hard to be understood by their audiences.

Finally, many researchers claim that audiences respond best to extemporaneous
presentations. However, it should be noted that an extemporaneous presentation
does not necessarily imply lack of preparation. Neither does it presuppose that
presenters are supposed to spend no time at all in preparation. On the contrary, in
order for a presentation to seem extemporaneous, extensive experience and
practice in the field of expertise are needed.

Viewing a presentation as a process is based on the concept of process writing, i.e.
the focus is on the various stages of the process (planning stage, composition stage,
and presentation stage) and not on the final product. Tobin (2001) claims that
‘traditional teaching produces canned, dull, lifeless work’ as opposed to ‘lively,
engaging, dynamic, and strongly voiced’ work. Developing the skills needed to
prepare presentations as a process takes place at each of its stages. As a result,
corrective actions are taken early enough to prevent possible misunderstandings
later on. It is vital to set the presentation requirements at the very beginning, so
that students are certain that they are heading in the right direction.
At the planning stage the role of the lecturer is to help students set their goals, choose their main arguments and organize them in the most effective way. It is important to choose a subject, which is defined as the first step when preparing a presentation by many researchers. There are various methods suggested to select a topic (Lucas 2004). Some topics may be preferred because students know a lot about them. They may feel more comfortable speaking about such topics. These students may view previous knowledge as very important and may feel more confident. On the other hand, some students choose topics they want to get familiar with. They may be curious to do some research to learn about them. Another way of selecting a topic involves brainstorming and using various resources. In such cases the goal is to find a topic students are familiar with or would like to know more about. Sprague & Stuart (1996) suggest some steps to narrowing the topic, e.g. determining the number of ideas a student is supposed to cover, selecting main ideas according to the audience, personal strengths and weaknesses, clarifying the purpose of the speech, etc. At this stage the lecturer monitors topic selection, organization pattern, and the effective use of slides.

At the stage of composition, the lecturer helps students to evaluate the rhetorical orders. Some students may tend to experiment with the multitude of methods to organize their topics. They may organize the main points of a topic by following more than one rhetorical order. Thus students may think of various options and decide on the best organization of their topic.

The presentation stage involves the outcome of the whole process. Major principles of communication apprehension, eye contact, body language and answering questions asked by the audience are supposed to be discussed with students, in order to raise their awareness of the different strategies to cope with stress and nervousness typical for most presenters (Hadjikoteva 2015, 2017).
As a whole, the planning, composition and presentation stages are supposed to be developed by the students themselves in collaboration with their lecturers in their role of mediators between the native and target culture expectations and conventions.

In conclusion, students who pursue academic studies have started developing their speaking skills as early as their primary and secondary education. However, they need to continue doing so at university, since the skills to deliver academic presentations need time and effort to develop. Since delivering presentations in a foreign language is a greater challenge than in the native tongue, special emphasis should be put upon the personal involvement in the topic, the culturally-specific requirements set when presenting in English and the importance of the process of preparing a presentation. Practice makes perfect indeed, and perseverance is there to help both the lecturers and students in facing up another challenge on their way to success.

References


**Milka Hadjikoteva**

*Senior Assistant Professor, New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria*

Milka Hadjikoteva, PhD, is a Chief Assistant Professor at New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria, where she teaches courses in Applied Foreign Languages for Administration and Management Programme. Her research interests lie in translation studies and innovative approaches to teaching EFL. She is also active as a translator of fiction and philosophy.

e-mail: mhadjikoteva@nbu.bg
Etymology of Idioms and Their Teaching

Aglika Dobreva

Abstract

Looking into the origin of idiomatic expressions can be a valuable tool for acquisition of expressions whose meaning cannot be deduced from the sum of the meanings of their individual components. Apart from being used as a mnemonic technique etymological information can reveal different linguocultural models in the cases of idiomatic expressions from SL and TL that differ in form. Some tips for teaching such idiomatic expressions to intermediate and advanced students are proposed.

Keywords: etymology, idioms, teaching, linguocultural models, source and target domains of experience

Introduction

Idiomaticity is usually defined as ‘the fact that the meaning of the complex unit does not result from the simple combination of those of its constituents’ (Arnaud & Savignon 1997: 161). It is not a simple phenomenon as there can be ‘degrees of idiomaticity’ (ibid.): weakly idiomatic complex units such as to have the last word and units with more marked idiomatic meaning (take the bull by the horns). The situation can become even more complicated if we take into account the fact that there can still be exceptions to the above definition of idiomaticity as in a given context an idiom may be interpreted literally quite legitimately. (Let’s take for example a situation where the phrase pull one’s leg may refer to a literal fact of
someone pulling somebody’s leg.) So, the role of context is obviously crucial in using, interpreting and teaching an idiom. In the following discussion we argue that a focus on the origin of idiom plus teaching the context of its use can be a valuable tool in teaching and acquiring an idiom.

**Theoretical notes**

Undoubtedly, the acquisition of idiomatic units is important for developing the learners’ FL competence (especially for upper-intermediate and advanced students). The question that we might ask is *how should the teacher present the linguistic material in question in order to facilitate the students’ efficiency in comprehension?*

Idiomatic language and its acquisition has been the topic of many studies (e.g. Deignan, A., Gabrys, D. & Solska, A. 1997; Cooper 1999; Boers et al. 2004). Boers et al. (2004: 53) make the following statement:

> Various paper-and-pencil experiments have shown that L2 learners can be helped to comprehend and remember figurative idioms by raising their awareness of the literal origins or source domains of these expressions. We have called this technique Etymological elaboration. The beneficial effect on comprehension is in accord with cognitive semantic theory, which holds that the meaning of many idiomatic expressions is ‘motivated’ rather than arbitrary. The beneficial effect on retention is in accord with dual coding theory, which holds that storing verbal information as a mental image provides an extra pathway for recall. (Boers et al. 2004: 53).

The idea about the importance of the information concerning the origins of idioms and the fact that such information can be ‘helpful in cementing these language
nuggets in the mind (Oxford-royale.co.uk, n.d.).’ is practically explored in other sources providing data about meaning and etymology of English idioms (e.g. Grammarly.com, n.d.).

The meaning of the idioms cannot be defined as the sum of the meanings of their individual components. However, in a number of cases idioms can convey some historical/cultural information (referring to a particular historical period) i.e. they are culturally motivated (e.g. throw/pick up the gauntlet, cross swords with). Other idioms are related to unusual activities: walk on egg-shells/bite the bullet/cook the books. Such idioms are non-transparent and are based on metaphors that need to be explained to the learner.

For the purposes of the current study a classification, based on the author’s observation of the presence or absence of a literal component in the idioms, shall be used. Unlike the above mentioned non-transparent idioms, some idioms can be semi-transparent i.e. they have a literal component (i.e. a component that can be translated literally in the TL). For example, the idiom raining cats and dogs has a literally interpretable part – raining.

Certain idioms can be called internationalized idioms (easily guessed by L2 learner because there exist similar phrases in their native language). Their pseudo-transparency is due to the fact that equivalents from L1 and L2 are very close structurally and semantically (e.g. throw/pick up the gauntlet/хвърлям ръкавицата, cross swords with/кръстосвам шпаги с) but at the same time they are based on culturally motivated metaphors.
Materials and methods

In the following discussion we shall focus primarily on non-transparent and semi-transparent idioms as they are expected to be more problematic for the L2 learner. The methods of categorization of idioms, etymological analysis and description of the teaching procedure are used. The idioms that will be examined belong to different groups. They might be quite confusing for the FL student while they are non-problematic for native speakers who use them quite fluently without even thinking of their origins. We will examine a number of these interesting idioms (from Oxford-royale.co.uk, n.d.), their origin and their use in context (see Oxford-royale.co.uk, n.d.). I would suggest the following procedure for teaching such expressions: 1) presenting the idiom with its meaning (the first and second column of table 1/ table 2); 2) presenting an example of its contextual use (the third column of table 1/ table 2); 3) giving an explanation of its origin (the fourth column of table 1/table two). We must admit, however, that in a number of cases there can be no single line of origin (depending on differing etymological sources). Despite this fact, the images which each explanation of etymology evokes might be used as a background enabling the learner to acquire the expression more easily.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idiom</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Play it by ear (non-transparent)</td>
<td>Playing something by ear means not to stick to a defined plan, but rather see how the situation develops and decide on a course of action</td>
<td>‘What time shall we go shopping?’ ‘Let’s see how the weather looks and play’</td>
<td>This saying has its origins in music, as ‘playing something by ear’ means to play music without reference to the notes on a page. This sense of the phrase dates back to the 16th century, but the present use only came into being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Turn a blind eye (non-transparent)</strong></td>
<td>Meaning: To ‘turn a blind eye’ to something means to pretend that you have not noticed it.</td>
<td>Example: ‘She took one of the cookies, but I turned a blind eye.’</td>
<td>Origins: Interestingly, this expression is said to have arisen as a result of the famous English naval hero Admiral Horatio Nelson, who, during the Battle of Copenhagen in 1801, is alleged to have deliberately raised his telescope to his blind eye, thus ensuring that he would not see any signal from his superior giving him discretion to withdraw from the battle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Pot calling the kettle black (non-transparent)</strong></td>
<td>Meaning: This expression is used to refer to someone who criticises someone else, for something they themselves are guilty of.</td>
<td>Example: ‘You’re greedy.’ ‘Pot calling the kettle black?’</td>
<td>Origins: First used in the literature of the 1600s – notably Don Quixote by Cervantes – this expression has its origins in the Medieval kitchen, when both pots and kettles were made from sturdy cast iron and both would get black with soot from the open fire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Once in a blue moon (non-transparent)</strong></td>
<td>Meaning: The phrase refers to something that occurs very infrequently.</td>
<td>Example: ‘I only see him once in a blue moon.’</td>
<td>Origins: Confusingly, a blue moon doesn’t refer to the actual colour of the moon; it refers to when we see a full moon twice in one month. This happens every two to three years. It’s thought that the word ‘blue’ may have come from the now obsolete word ‘belewe’, which meant ‘to betray’; the...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Head in the clouds (non-transparent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning: Used to describe someone who is not being realistic, the expression ‘head in the clouds’ suggests that the person isn’t grounded in reality and is prone to flights of fancy. The opposite expression would be something like ‘down to earth’, meaning someone who is practical and realistic.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: ‘He’s not right for this role, he has his head in the clouds.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origins: In use since the mid-1600s, the origins of this expression are unclear beyond the obvious imagery of someone who is a bit of a fantasist (having one’s head in the clouds is clearly impossible – or at least it was in the days before aviation!).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Mad as a hatter (non-transparent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning: ‘Mad as a hatter’ refers to someone who is completely crazy. A similar expression is ‘mad as a March hare’.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: ‘You could ask him, but he’s mad as a hatter.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origins: While ‘hatter’ refers to Lewis Carroll’s Mad Hatter character in Alice in Wonderland, the expression has its origins in the effects of the chronic mercury poisoning commonly experienced by 18th and 19th century hat manufacturers owing to the use of mercurous nitrate in felt hats. ‘Mad as a March hare’ comes from the behaviour of hares during the breeding season, when they run and leap about the fields.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Driving me up the wall (non-transparent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaning: This expression is used when something (or someone) is driving one mad.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example: ‘That constant drilling noise is driving me up the wall.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Origins: The saying evokes someone trying desperately to escape something by climbing up...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transparent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Call it a day (non-transparent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Know the ropes (non-transparent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Larger than life (non-transparent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Extend the olive branch (non-transparent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Barking up the wrong tree (non-transparent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. A red herring (non-transparent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. <strong>Blow one’s own trumpet</strong> (non-transparent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. <strong>In stitches</strong> (non-transparent)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is obvious that the explanations in column 4 from Table 1 are based on images referring to different source domains: history, biblical references, and human activities. The domain of history is a source for idioms 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, giving the learner cultural information; idiom number 11 has a biblical reference. Number 1 and 12 refer to different activities (music and hunting), serving as source domains. Number 13 and 15 refer to metaphor based on real traditions (13) or literary text (14).

Idiom 7 from Table 1 is based on unrealistic image and number 4 resulted from the change of meaning of an old word. We can sum up that the imagery of metaphors underlying the idioms is closely related to the English culture.
## Semi-transparent idioms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Idiom</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Origins</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Raining cats and dogs (semi-transparent)</td>
<td>Meaning: We Brits are known for our obsession with the weather, so we couldn’t omit a rain-related idiom from this list. It’s ‘raining cats and dogs’ when it’s raining particularly heavily.</td>
<td>Example: ‘Listen to that rain!’ ‘It’s raining cats and dogs!’</td>
<td>Origins: The origins of this bizarre phrase are obscure, though it was first recorded in 1651 in the poet Henry Vaughan’s collection Olor Iscanus. Speculation as to its origins ranges from medieval superstition to Norse mythology, but it may even be a reference to dead animals being washed through the streets by floods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Can’t do something to save my life (semi-transparent)</td>
<td>Meaning: ‘Can’t do something to save your life’ is a hyperbolic way of saying that you’re completely inept at something. It’s typically used in a self-deprecating manner or to indicate reluctance to carry out a task requested of one.</td>
<td>Example: ‘Don’t pick me – I can’t draw to save my life.’</td>
<td>Origins: Anthony Trollope first used this expression, in 1848 in Kellys and O’Kellys, writing, ‘If it was to save my life and theirs, I can’t get up small talk for the rector and his curate.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Bite off more than you can chew (semi-transparent)</td>
<td>Meaning: If you ‘bite off more than you can chew’, you have taken on a project or task that is beyond what you are capable of.</td>
<td>Example: ‘I bit off more than I could chew by taking on that extra class.’</td>
<td>Origins: This saying dates back to 1800s America, when people often chewed tobacco. Sometimes the chewer would put into their mouth more than they could fit; it’s quite self-explanatory!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Knight in shining armour</td>
<td>Meaning: A knight in shining armour is a heroic, idealised male</td>
<td>Example: ‘He saved me from humiliation –’</td>
<td>Origins: The phrase harks back to the days of Old England, when popular imagination conjures up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A common feature among the idioms from Table 2 is that they have a key word that can be either literally interpreted (idiom 1 - raining, idiom 2 - do, idiom 3 - more than) or so widely used as a metaphor (e.g. knight) that it makes the whole expression easier to comprehend. All the semi-transparent idioms are based on metaphor.

Results

A test on comprehension of the abovementioned idioms was given to a group of 15 B2-C1 students. The same students were asked to explain the meaning on two separate occasions. First, after being given the information only about the meaning and the context of usage and secondly, two weeks after being taught the etymology of idioms.

The results from the tests show that the participants perform better at tests on comprehension of idiom meaning after the stage of being taught the etymological background (90% correct answers) as compared to the stage before being given the etymological information (73% correct answers).
Conclusion

The above-mentioned teaching procedure is based on the assumption that idioms can be categorized into non-transparent and semi-transparent ones and taught in these two groups. Secondly, an idiom’s meaning can be taught followed by an example of its contextual use plus an explanation of its origin. This teaching procedure proves to be effective for intermediate and advanced students of English, as it is based on meaningful associations which facilitate memorization. Secondly, the link between the sources of the metaphorical images behind the idioms and their meanings is provided and finally, such an approach to teaching idioms adds to acquiring linguocultural information.

References


Notes

i These are the Bulgarian equivalents in Cyrillic.

ii For more details on conceptual domains see Kövecses 2010. ‘The conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain is called source domain, while the conceptual domain that is understood this way is the target domain.’ (Kövecses 2010: 4)

Aglika Dobreva

PhD, senior lecturer of English at Konstantin Preslavski University of Shumen

Aglika Dobreva, PhD, is a senior lecturer of English at Konstantin Preslavski University of Shumen. She graduated from “St Cyril and St Methodius University of Veliko Tarnovo”, Bulgaria. She got her PhD degree from Konstantin Preslavski University of Shumen. She has been teaching English for Academic Purposes,
Practical English, English Lexicology and Semantics. Her academic interests are in the field of English language teaching, translation, English for Specific Purposes, cultural linguistics, semantics.

e-mail: a.dobreva@shu.bg
Transformative Pedagogy For ESOL in a Super Diverse Europe

Diana Popova

Abstract

The super-diversity in Europe these days calls for an update of the pedagogical approaches to teaching/learning ESOL. The paper addresses some recent pedagogical innovations that can help ESOL learners transform themselves into self-reliant and proactive personalities who resort to various resources to enhance their communication capacity. Mother tongue and home culture experiences, translanguaging, and Self-Organised Learning Environments are some recent pedagogical trends that can successfully be employed in ESOL.

Keywords: pedagogy, ESOL, super-diversity, transformative pedagogy, translanguaging.

Rationale

The long hailed multiculturalism failed to become the panacea for all social problems in Europe and today an increasing number of people ‘consider it to be a cause of them’ (Malik 2015). The inability of the states to deal with the challenges of disintegrating societies, and estranged and resentful people has become even
greater in the last two or three decades. After the fall of the Berlin wall and with the free movement of labour in the EU, the classrooms in most European countries no longer look like the classrooms from even 10 years ago. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers no longer have the comfort of teaching mostly homogeneous groups of learners who share a common language and culture. To make the situation even more complicated there came asylum seekers and war refugees. Large masses of people from Africa and Asia started crossing the European borders and settling permanently or en route to their preferred destinations in countries across Europe. The continuing diversification of population caused by the unprecedented in the modern history of the world migration of people has created serious challenges that call for timely and effective measures. While it is interesting to know if today’s diversity is ‘a stable arrangement, or is it simply a stage in the evolution of a new type of homogeneity’ (Waldinger & Bozorgmehr 1996: 23), it is a fact that heterogeneity is expanding.

In this context the education systems in most European countries are faced with a major challenge regarding the schooling of young people from various backgrounds, ethnicities, and religions. The significant changes that have occurred in our societies are so vast and overwhelming that the education systems, which in general are not very flexible, have not been able to address the newly emerged societal needs. Education is a pillar of the nation state and as such, one of its pivotal points is ‘monolingualism’. The diversity of languages and cultural backgrounds ‘is still regarded in many countries as “exceptional”’ (Gogolin 2011: 239). There is a ‘deficit perspective on diversity, namely on linguistic diversity’ (ibid: 242) which implies that teaching ESOL uses methods efficient for learners who share a common language and culture. However, even in the most homogeneous classrooms there is a lot of heterogeneity (temperament, learning preferences, family background, special
needs, gender specificities, etc.) which is often overlooked or deliberately ignored to evade the need to diversify teaching.

**Definition of terms**

The traditional understanding of diversity is rather misleading and shallow because it is mainly tied to ethnicity and country of origin. Vertovec (2007) foresaw the need for a multi-dimensional perspective on diversity and suggested the term ‘super-diversity’ which includes ‘differential immigration statuses and their concomitant entitlements and restrictions of rights, divergent labour market experiences, discrete gender and age profiles, patterns of spatial distribution, and mixed local area responses by service providers and residents’ (2007: 1025). These diversifying factors determine different experiences – family, life, interpersonal and intrapersonal, social, work and community which, in turn, require the use of pedagogies which can attend to as many of these differences as possible in the name of, among other goals, better linguistic performance.

‘The art and science of teaching’, as pedagogy is defined in the online Thesaurus dictionary, should be understood both as the strategy and methods of instruction, and the means of sustainable transformation of people, communities, institutions, states and the global society. Most pedagogies should be regarded as inherently formative as their main goal is to form and to develop the individuals – their skills, competences, worldviews, attitudes and behaviours.

According to Gagne & Medsker (1996), learning is the everlasting change in human capacity or viewpoint that is not ascribed simply to the stages of growth. It can be simple or transformative. Simple learning only expands learner’s existing model,
systems of thinking, emotions, or activities, relative to a topic (Robertson, 1996).

Young children’s learning is mostly formative, i.e. they learn from formal sources and patterns during their initial stages of socialization. Youths’ and adults’ learning is transformative because their beliefs, opinions and feelings may change as a result of a perspective transformation. Mezirow believes that transformative learning involves ‘critical self-reflection, which results in the reformulation of a meaning perspective to allow a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrative understanding of one’s experience’ (Mezirow 1990: xvi). According to Mezirow transformation is the result of a ‘disorienting dilemma’, which is prompted by a life crisis or a significant life transition, although it may also be activated by accumulated transformations of meaning schemes (Mezirow 1991: 167).

Youths from immigrant families have experienced or are experiencing either a major life crisis or a life transition and their active involvement in learning ESOL which employs transformative teaching methods can be seminal in their smooth transition from isolation to inclusion. Citizens of the home country are experiencing crises themselves under the impact of globalization in general and in particular social and economic factors (inflation, lack of employment or loss of jobs, separation, stressful interpersonal competition), political and geopolitical factors (migration, fear of war, constant political struggles), ecological factors (pollution, climate changes). It can be concluded with some degree of certainty that people experience disorienting dilemmas in their lives which trigger transformations. Including these experiential lessons in ESOL learning or creating disorienting dilemmas for ESOL teaching purposes can lead to reflection, experiencing emotions, critical thinking, and developing strategies for resolving them. The retention level of language and its meaningful implementation when all of these are involved is significant. This is because disorienting dilemmas force people to re-evaluate their beliefs so that the
new event or knowledge can fit into the rest of their worldview. This process is usually materialized in the context of dialogue and discussion with other people.

Possible solutions

While the teaching of ESOL has pioneered a lot of innovative approaches and methodologically has been ahead of most other school subjects, it has been caught off guard by the demands of a 21st century super diverse generation of learners. In this context, transformative pedagogy, a philosophy of schooling based on personalized, collaborative and informal learning, is seen as the way of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal in education for 2030 to ‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’ (UNESCO-IBE 2013).

Designing and managing ESOL teaching which involves problem solving and project based learning through negotiation and cooperation, real-world experiences that matter to the learners, community involvement, venues other than the classroom, and ignores the one-size-fits-all pattern, to a large extent ensures that learners will not only develop good communication skills but also higher-order thinking skills. The targeted use of technology, social media, and mobile applications, or in other words, Pedagogy 2.0 and 3.0, facilitate learners’ engagement with other learners, teachers and community members, experts from various fields, and the accumulated and expanding world knowledge and experience.

It is believed that employing transformative pedagogy in ESOL teaching will not only further the process of social, cultural and economic integration of the various
diverse groups in contemporary societies but will empower learners to contribute in a positive and constructive way to the super diverse societies in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

Changes and innovations today are occurring faster and faster. The technical capabilities are accelerating. They transform the educational environment and demand a lot more from people than even a few years ago. ESOL education compatible with the new age cannot be limited to a classroom, but needs to find contexts in the surrounding areas and people. Functional literacy or ‘the acquisition of appropriate verbal, cognitive, and computational skills to accomplish practical ends in culturally specific settings’ (12) should be the goal of foreign language teaching in general. This means that teaching grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation, reading, writing and speaking skills should be set in meaningful contexts.

In the 20\textsuperscript{th} century ESOL learners were considered primarily visual, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, or a combination of these. In the 21\textsuperscript{st} century they should be considered primarily ‘digital’. Internet is their natural habitat. There they thrive – searching for information and entertainment, communicating with people on social media, presenting themselves in the best possible way, etc. Their preferred learning environment is cyberspace. If this phenomenon is appropriately used, it can provide opportunities for transformative education by involving listening, dialogue, action and reflection; by searching and critically evaluating the available information; by using the selected information in significant for them contexts to solve a problem. Good results occur when learners are active and motivated, when they ask critical questions and look for answers in resources not provided by the curriculum. While doing all this they can collaborate and negotiate meaning with other learners, family and community members, and specialists. Thus superficial learning which leads to shallow knowledge and limited functional literacy can be avoided.
Transformative pedagogy

Not too long ago quality foreign language learning was often associated with immersion in the target language and no-mother-tongue talk in the classroom. This linguistically ‘sterile’ environment can produce good results with highly motivated learners whose cultural and social comfort zone is intact and they experience low levels of stress and anxiety. For a long time in EFL and ESOL it was one culture (the home culture) ‘against’ the other (the host culture). We all remember (or have read about) the ‘English only zone/classroom/school’ where learners were supposed to communicate only in English, to have English names, to discuss matters, relating to the host culture, and to participate in simulations of the host culture customs, habits and holidays. This used to leave a slightly bitter taste in the mouth as learners would think of their home culture as inferior and would try (or be made) to distance themselves from it as much as they could. However, this approach to learning English was appropriate in those days as the resources allowing exposure to authentic foreign languages were limited to cassettes, video tapes, undubbed films, books and magazines, and an occasional British Council native speaker in the English language schools. Today the situation and the whole concept of foreign or second language learning has changed under the impact of globalization, technological developments and the interconnectedness of individuals, communities and nations.

Broadly speaking, transformative pedagogy in ESOL today can be understood as involving those communication practices which occur in and outside the classroom whereby multilingual speakers communicate with minimal or no knowledge of a shared language. This phenomenon is known as translanguaging. It is believed to have been coined by Cen Williams as trawsieithu in Welsh in his 1994 unpublished
thesis “An evaluation of teaching and learning methods in the context of bilingual secondary education”. Williams used the term to describe a method whereby students in bilingual Welsh/English classrooms were asked to use both languages to communicate freely. Since then, the term translanguaging has been used in professional literature to designate the flexible language practices employed by bilinguals. It is the author’s belief that this approach can successfully be employed in ESOL for multilingual classroom purposes.

The contemporary interpretation of translanguaging could be a process by which speakers of different languages utilize their mother tongues to communicate alongside a limited knowledge and use of a shared target language or without one. Translanguaging today seems like a more applicable approach for ESOL than in the late 1990s, given that in the late 2010s, more than two decades after the term was coined, globalization and technology have made people’s access to other languages much easier and plenty of foreign words have entered indigenous languages which can facilitate translanguaging. Globalization has helped create a large corpus of international vocabulary which also facilitates this process. Translanguaging can cause a disorienting dilemma for learners as they need to decide how to act and choose a strategy which will enable them to communicate to achieve their goals. This supports the assumption that translanguaging can contribute to making English language learning transformative. Translanguaging can be monitored and, if need be, limited by both the students and the teacher.

Opportunities for critical thinking can be provided by offering learners content that introduces new ideas. Thus students are challenged to critically question their viewpoints and attitudes while exchanging ideas with their peers. When they observe changes in others, they are motivated to change themselves. It is essential that learners have the freedom to pursue their new found beliefs because real
transformation only occurs when people actively begin to accept their new viewpoints.

Transformative pedagogy has a role to play in ESOL teaching as a large number of learners are faced with ‘disorienting dilemmas’ at the start of learning English. ‘Disorienting dilemmas’ are experiences that do not have an analogue in their life, which surprise, shock or make them break out of their comfort zone. *Disorienting dilemmas* can be caused by events, images, news, or information in general affecting learners through various channels – traditional media, social media, work situations, peers’ stories, etc. ‘When faced with a disorienting dilemma, people are forced to reconsider their beliefs in a way that will fit this new experience into the rest of their worldview. This often happens through “critical reflection” in the context of dialogue with other people’ (Howie & Bagnall 2013: 816-836).

Transformative pedagogy is an innovative type of pedagogy despite the fact that the transformative learning theory was developed by Jaci Mezirow starting in 1978. Since then it has acquired new dimensions and has gained new impetus under the impact of social, economic, political, and technological factors. It helps adult learners develop their capacity to act as critical examiners of their values, customs, habits and beliefs, of the contexts and circumstances in which they find themselves, become conscious decision makers, and gain spaces for self-reflection, positive reception of diversity, willingness to play an active role in it. Transformative pedagogy should change people for the better and help them go beyond the mind, and embrace the spiritual connectedness between people. This relates to the prevailing orientation toward freedom, inclusion, democracy, self-expression, respect and peaceful resolution of conflicts.
Transformative pedagogy focuses on the process of learning (i.e. how to learn) rather than on memorizing information. The rationale behind it is the acknowledged fact that learners follow their own path to gaining and systematizing knowledge which is determined by their experience in a particular society and context. This approach places the learner at the center of learning. This may sound trite but it is not when the approach involves self-direction stimulated by the learners’ curiosity. This is where the ESOL teachers play an important role. They are the ones who should develop materials, use techniques, and provide the setting and opportunities that stimulate learners’ curiosity about themselves, about others, about the world, and about new worldviews. Once most of this is achieved, creating connections, establishing relations, sharing responsibilities, setting and achieving common goals become possible. There is no universal formula for doing this as learners and the grouping of learners can differ greatly. A great advantage for an ESOL teacher in a multicultural group of learners is the knowledge and understanding of the individuals’ strengths and an appreciation of the diversity in the group. Thus the best combination of techniques, implementation of materials and use of available resources can be exploited to trigger learners’ curiosity. From there on starts active learning by asking questions, identifying problems and working on resolving them, creating scenarios for potential occurrences, using both the target language and all the languages spoken in the group. By releasing authority teachers engage learners and step aside to observe, assist, offer help, and kindle curiosity in learners.

A good example of curiosity raising is Sugata Mitra’s method described in his most recent publication (among others) ‘Beyond the Hole in the Wall: Discover the Power of Self-Organized Learning’. Sugata Mitra is an educational researcher, a professor of educational technology at Newcastle University, and winner of 2013 TED Prize (Technology, Entertainment and Design). In 1999 he and his colleagues dug a hole in a wall bordering an urban slum in New Delhi. They installed an Internet-connected
PC and left it there, with a hidden camera filming the area. They saw kids from the slum playing with the PC, learning how to use it and teaching each other. After a series of such experiments they concluded that in the absence of supervision and formal teaching children can teach themselves and each other if they are motivated by curiosity. The researchers called this ‘minimally invasive education’. Mitra believes that what he calls ‘self-organized learning’ (SOLE) also known as ‘the school in the cloud’ will shape the future of education. His bold TED Prize wish to ‘build a School in the Cloud where children can explore and learn on their own and teach one another, using resources from the worldwide cloud’ (13). ‘The Granny Cloud’ consists of more than one hundred volunteers, men and women between 24 and 78 years old, from all over the world who engage in Skype sessions with children from far-off countries to chat with them to help them find the answers to their questions. Like loving grannies they offer children unconditional support and they do well in the sheltered learning environment.

**Conclusion**

Educational matters cannot be concluded – today or in the future. In fact, this last section of the paper should be called ‘beginning’ because it is the new beginning of the conversation about how to teach English (and not only) under the extraordinary circumstances of technological expansion, superdiversity in the classroom and society, fast changing job market demands, and shifting digital learners’ priorities. The new pedagogical ideas are usually based on well-forgotten old ways of teaching and learning just like Mitra’s ‘granny cloud’ is based on the grandmother-grandchild learning relationship. The real conclusion is that we do not have to look far to find working solutions to current educational challenges.
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Diana Popova

Assoc. Prof. Diana Popova, Ph.D.

Popova’s academic rank was awarded by the Higher Attestation Commission. She earned her Ph.D. Degree at the University of Surrey, England and her M.A. Degree in English Philology at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. She was a Fulbright senior scholar at UNC Chapel Hill, USA. She has taught EFL and ESP.

e-mail: diana010903@yahoo.co.uk
Hot Potatoes
For Wild Thyme Organic Farm
Reneta Stoimenova

Abstract
HOT POTATOES offers an ingenious way of creating online, tailor-made exercises suitable for every topic and level of learner proficiency in the English language. The workshop tackles the question of how educational technology can contribute to the teaching of global issue topics (or any other topic) through the demonstration of organic farming in Bulgaria as a basis for creating Hot Potatoes exercises.

Keywords: Hot Potatoes, global issues, Palamartsa.

Hot Potatoes
HOT POTATOES (http://www.halfbakedsoftware.com/hot_pot.php) offers an ingenious way of creating online tailor-made exercises suitable for every topic and level of learner proficiency in the language. In this workshop I have tackled the question of how modern educational technology can contribute to the teaching of a topic from the field of global issues. The specific problem I have chosen is sustainable agriculture/organic farming illustrated by a youtube video featuring a British family living in a village in my area in Bulgaria. The man and the woman
alternate in talking about their Wild Thyme Organic Farm, which is also a
guesthouse, in the village of Palamartsa, known for its recent large settlement of
English native speakers from the UK, USA, and New Zealand.

The village was undergoing the same process very common for both Bulgaria and
Spain, that is, depopulation of remote rural areas for lack of sources of livelihood. It
was something like 15 years ago when people from abroad started buying the
abandoned houses and forming a permanent community, which is now nearly half
of the village population. Some of the newcomers took up organic farming, an
activity not completely unknown to the locals, but totally unheard of in the
uncompromising way it is practised by the couple in the video, for instance. So, in
my opinion, it is a good video to demonstrate an appropriate example of a well-
balanced taste for a genuinely authentic reconstruction of an old traditional house
and of progressive ideas for a friendly-to-nature farming management, which as a
concept may have been known elsewhere on the globe, but not quite in this nook of
the world. Similarly, my opinion is that this model of farm-house practices is well-
worth being viewed and discussed by any student everywhere in the world,
regardless of what knowledge they may have about the issue.

This seminar can go two ways. One is to explain the specifics of the Hot Potatoes
software before each exercise if the intention is to educate teachers. The other is to
skip the practical demonstration of the consecutive steps in which the particular
exercise was created in Hot Potatoes and just focus on the exercises.

Of the six applications of the software, I have used the sections related to the
creation of activities in JMatch (vocabulary exercise), JQuiz and JCloze (both
listening comprehension exercises, the former based on the multiple-choice and
short-answer patterns whereas the latter uses a gap-fill.)
All three exercises are grounded on the information provided by a single youtube video, namely *Green Lodge Wild Thyme Organic Farm* at link [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqbQxwsTwnQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqbQxwsTwnQ).

To view and do the exercises, it is first necessary to download them on a computer from Google Drive through the links generated by the Hot Potatoes software.

**The exercises can be approached in the following way:**

1. Pre-teaching/explanation of some specific vocabulary used by the two speakers in the video by means of a drag-and-drop matching exercise created with the respective application of the Hot Potatoes software.

   For the teacher audience of a training seminar the exercise is followed by a practical demonstration of the consecutive steps of its creation in Hot Potatoes, the latter preliminarily downloaded on the presentation computer.

   This is the link to this exercise in Google docs:

   **Vocabulary Wild Thyme Organic Farm**
   [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EEfOJ6CVLrUmFUdm8wSDRFMWM/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EEfOJ6CVLrUmFUdm8wSDRFMWM/view?usp=sharing)

   **N. B. For this and the other Hot-Potatoes related links, it is necessary to download the content in order to view it.**

2. Playing the youtube video *Wild Thyme Organic Farm* to the audience for getting general impression about its content; introducing the audience to the quiz exercise created with the Quiz application of Hot Potatoes and doing it whole class while...
listening to the video for a second time; finally, explaining the mechanism of the exercise in the Hot Potatoes software in case of a teacher training event.

This is the link to this exercise in Google docs:

**Quiz Wild Thyme Organic Farm**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EEfOJ6CVLrWU1KS2Nmd0ZyU0/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EEfOJ6CVLrWU1KS2Nmd0ZyU0/view?usp=sharing)

Link to the video in question on youtube:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqbQxwsTwnQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqbQxwsTwnQ)

3. The conclusive part consists of a listening comprehension exercise – a gap-fill created with the Cloze application of the software. It is based on an excerpt from the video (4:31 – 5:31) in which it is explained how the composting toilet functions in order to produce natural fertilizer for the orchid; what follows is elicitation of the mechanism of the exercise in case of a teacher training event.

This is the link to this exercise in Google docs:

**Listening Comprehension: Gap-Filling Exercise**

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EEfOJ6CVLrNE0xYW11cVBOQXM/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4EEfOJ6CVLrNE0xYW11cVBOQXM/view?usp=sharing)

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**Conclusion**

To conclude, this is my proposal for a very practical workshop about teaching a global issues topic through technology, whose model can successfully be applied to part of the development of any global issues lesson.
Equipment: laptop, projector, speakers, Hot Potatoes download

References

Hot Potatoes Tutorial: [https://hotpot.uvic.ca/wintutor6/tutorial.htm](https://hotpot.uvic.ca/wintutor6/tutorial.htm)

Reneta Stoimenova

Senior Teacher of English language and literature at Ekzarh Yosif Foreign Language School in Razgrad

Reneta Stoimenova has graduated with an MA from the University of Veliko Tarnovo in the parallel study of the English & Bulgarian languages & literatures. She has had a couple of postgraduate studies in EFL teaching methodology in Bulgaria and a number of methodology development trainings in the UK and the USA. She is especially interested in literature and drama teaching and ICT in the foreign language classroom.

e-mail: rainy.en@hotmail.com
Problem-based Learning in FLT

Mariya Neykova

Abstract

Among the myriad FLT methods and forms of work, Problem-based Learning ranks high and its popularity is still growing. The practical application of Problem-based Learning in FLT creates the necessary conditions for the students to become active, autonomous subjects of their own learning. Problem-based Learning is mostly implemented in the context of the traditional in-person form of education but it can function successfully in the context of e-learning as well.

Keywords: action-oriented learning, FLT, Problem-based Learning.

Modern life imposes the need for rapid development in all spheres of human activity. Within the European Union the intensity of the intercultural exchanges is boosted as a result of the free movement of people within the community, the academic mobility, the changing labour market - some of the main areas in which success is often achieved by people fluent in at least two foreign languages. The necessity of mastering more than one foreign language stimulates the development of linguodidactics but, as Vesselinov points out, it also poses a serious challenge to foreign language teachers (2014). The expectations of our society and of the students for high quality language teaching go hand in hand with the teachers’
strive for self-improvement based on the implementation of innovative practices in the learning process.

The development of FLT Methodology has been triggered by the quest for effective ways of teaching and learning a foreign language. Among the myriad methods and forms of work, Problem-based Learning (PBL) ranks high and its popularity is still growing. It originated in the 1960s at McMaster University, Canada, and soon found its supporters in Europe as well. Developed for the purposes of medical education and as a response to the wave of dissatisfaction with lecture-based teaching, Problem-based Learning was soon implemented not only in medical education but also in other spheres of learning (Matheson & Haas 2010). Today, due to its flexibility and adaptability, it is successfully implemented both in the traditional learning environment of the in-person education and in the e-learning environment. The intensive use of information and communications technology in the sphere of education calls for changes of certain characteristics of Problem-based Learning and leads to the development of its new form, namely Problem-based Learning Online. In addition, mobile technologies contribute to the formation of a learning context which stimulates asynchronous self-paced learning.

Problem-based Learning is well-known and easily recognizable. Although researchers’ and methodologists’ estimation of the specific features of this approach might vary, the overall beneficial effect of Problem-based Learning is unquestionable.

Barrows (1996) outlines a model of Problem-based Learning in which he defines the essential characteristic features of this approach in medical education:

- Learning is student centered.
- Learning occurs in small student groups.
Teachers are facilitators or guides. Problems form the organizing focus and stimulus for learning. Problems are a vehicle for the development of clinical problem-solving skills. New information is acquired through self-directed learning.

(Barrows 1996)

Although the above model is developed for the purposes of medical education, it is applicable to foreign language teaching too, the only difference being in the nature of the problems, since they should reflect the subject matter of the corresponding sphere of study.

Shamonina (2008) theorizes that Problem-based Learning should be regarded as an organization of teaching and learning which presupposes the formulation of problem situations under the guidance of the teacher, and active autonomous work on the part of the students to solve them, which results in creative mastering of professional knowledge, habits, skills, and in developing reasoning skills and abilities. Students learn the material not only through listening and perceiving with their senses, but as a result of the emerging need for knowledge, thus becoming active subjects of their own learning (Shamonina 2008).

The above definition points to the following basic characteristics of Problem-based Learning. The focus is on the learners. They are at the heart of the learning process, they are active autonomous learners, they not only master specific material but also reach a new level in their personal development, since Problem-based Learning improves the ability for a deeper understanding of the phenomena and processes. The role of the teacher is to direct, to prepare, to assist and to guide the whole process. In the context of Problem-based Learning, the teacher is not the only
source of knowledge. He creates the necessary conditions for critical analysis, encourages creativity and, if necessary, corrects the direction of the activities. Problem-based learning thrives upon the students’ awareness that they need to learn, that they need to acquire new skills and knowledge. Students are not merely passive recipients of information, they become subjects of their own learning.

The problem situations are planned and developed by the teacher, but it is the students who work actively to find a solution. Step by step the learners acquire the necessary skills to discover and formulate problems, to organize and solve problem situations.

The implementation of Problem-based Learning in foreign language teaching has its specific features. When comparing foreign language teaching with teaching other subjects, Larsson (2001) points out that in language learning the language is not only an instrument or a media of learning but the actual subject of the learning process. This is where the crucial difference in the attitude towards the ratio between learning facts and the degree of understanding stems from. Without questioning the leading role of understanding, it is argued that ‘learning raw facts (e.g. in the form of vocabulary) plays a larger part than in many other subjects’ (Larsson 2001: 3). Consequently, one of the major difficulties in the implementation of Problem-based Learning in language learning is to create adequate context for learning such raw facts.

Among the advantages of Problem-based Learning that Larsson focuses on is the development of the students’ communicative and social interaction skills. Problem-based Learning involves ‘assignments that require students to act, interact and communicate’ (Larsson 2001: 3), which makes it possible to create a near-native context for foreign language learning. Another important positive effect of Problem-
based Learning is that it helps students overcome the harm of superficial learning, e. g. when students cram the vocabulary they need for a concrete exam and then quickly forget these words. The implementation of Problem-based Learning in FLT creates the necessary conditions for a profound understanding and active learning.

Further on, Larsson (2001) analyses a certain number of drawbacks in the practical application of Problem-based Learning, including the difficulties that might occur within the group, as well as the use of the students’ mother tongue instead of the target language. Group work is typical of Problem-based Learning, so the successful interaction within the group, though a real challenge for the teacher, is an indispensable prerequisite for the achievement of good results. The use of the students’ mother tongue should not be tolerated at the higher levels of language competence. Still, if some of the learners have not mastered the target language to the extent that allows them to complete the assignment, the language instructor will have to decide whether to take the risk of seeing them lose motivation because they cannot communicate in the target language fluently, or to accept occasional uses of the students’ mother tongue, thus supporting the learners in their efforts to complete the group task successfully.

Problem-based Learning is successfully implemented both in in-person training and in e-learning. Savin-Baden defines the term Problem-based Learning Online ‘as a generic term since it captures the vast array of ways in which problem-based learning is being used synchronously and asynchronously, on campus or at a distance. Further, it represents the idea that students learn through web-based materials, including text, simulations, videos, demonstrations and resources, chat, whiteboards and environments that have been purpose built for problem-based learning’ (Savin-Baden 2006: 4).
Savin-Baden (2006) analyses some concerns about the introduction of Problem-based Learning Online into the teaching practice at the expense of the face-to-face form of Problem-based Learning. In some cases, Problem-based Learning Online might be directed at solving narrowly defined problems, which does not stimulate self-directed autonomous learning; also, teamwork might not exercise its beneficial effect to the fullest since teamwork skills might not be very well developed in the online form of learning. Still, Savin-Baden (2006) argues that Problem-based Learning Online should only be regarded as a supplement or as a new step in the development of the existing form of Problem-based Learning.

The action-oriented perspective can be observed in a number of teaching methods, including PBL. Stoycheva (2007) points out that action-oriented learning usually involves three phases:

(1) **introductory phase (planning)** – the learners have to deal with a problem, topic, case study, etc. The instructor helps them to activate their background knowledge and skills and to identify the additional information, knowledge and skills they need to solve the problem. The students make a plan and formulate a goal. The necessary language material is processed;

(2) **working phase (implementation)** – the learners search for, sort out and arrange the necessary information, they work on the solution to the problem, they create the product and prepare the presentation;

(3) **presentation and assessment phase (presentation/performance, control, assessment)** – the students present the result/the product/the solution to the problem, they discuss, justify, argue, defend and compare the final product with the preset goal (Stoycheva 2007).
It should be pointed out that in PBL the teacher and the students have to formulate a problem, not a topic (as, for example, in Project work). Consequently, they should try to find a solution to that problem.

The problem should be related to the real world; it should be an authentic one. In FLT students can work on a broad range of problems, not necessarily pure language problems.

*Example:*

*You are the contact person for Peter – a German student visiting Burgas Free University in Bulgaria on an exchange programme (e.g. Erasmus +). Peter has never been to Bulgaria before; he is fluent in English but he only knows a few words in Bulgarian.*

*Last night Peter decided to go to a night club in Sunny Beach, a seaside resort on Bulgaria’s Black Sea coast.*

*It is four o’clock in the morning now and you receive a phone call from Peter. He has lost his wallet; he has no money or documents. He asks you for help.*

*Discussion:*

The problem is a real life one. Student mobility has become an intrinsic part of students’ life today. However, it requires a higher level of responsibility, multicultural awareness and life skills.

The vocabulary that the students need to know is related to giving directions and formal communication with different institutions and officials, e.g. the police, the university authorities, etc.
The activity is suitable for students of different language competence. There is no single correct answer; a variety of suggestions might be acceptable, as long as they are logically structured and offer an adequate solution to the problem.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the practical application of Problem-based Learning creates the necessary conditions for the students to become active, autonomous subjects of their own learning. Problem-based Learning is mostly implemented in the context of the traditional in-person form of education but it can function successfully in the context of e-learning as well. As a result, Problem-based Learning Online strengthens its positions in foreign language teaching today.

References


Mariya Neykova, PhD

Chief Assistant Professor at New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria

Mariya Neykova, PhD, is a chief assistant professor at New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria. She teaches various courses in the area of foreign language teaching methodology. Her current research interest is focused on implementing an action-oriented approach in the context of blended learning.

e-mail: mneikova@nbu.bg
Binomials Joined By *And* Conjunction In Some Fairy Tales

Petranka Ivanova

Abstract

The paper examines binomials in some fairy tales. The focus is on *and* structure. Attention is paid to different categories such as noun phrases, verb phrases. Also, the article examines adjectives joined by *and* conjunction, and structures with adverbs or pronouns. A chart is built to give an idea about each type frequency. Reversibility and irreversibility are other issues considered in the paper. The claim that fixedness helps language acquisition is strongly supported.

**Key words:** binomials, fairy tales, conjunction.

Introduction

According to Oxford Learner’s Dictionary in linguistics binomials are ‘used to describe a pair of nouns joined by a word like *and*, where the order of the nouns is always the same, for example *knife and fork*. Another online dictionary (Cambridge Dictionary) broadens the range defining the term as ‘two words separated by a conjunction that almost always appear in the same order’. Such phrases are ‘known as freezes, irreversible or formulaic binomials, rime pairs, binary phrases, frozen sequences, paired words, phraseological doublets, *and* phrases, rime combinations, set or frozen expressions, parallels, irreversible conjoined phrases, binomial
coordinate compounds and fixed reduplicatives’ (Parker 2003: 362) or just ‘conjoined items’ (Bybee 2010: 60). There are different possibilities for these two words that come in the structure but, as Khatibzadeh and Sameri (2013: 13779) put it, the items are always from the same word class.

This paper considers both constituents being nouns. Although there is a variety of options for the conjunctions, e.g. or, to, by, neither, against, but, after, Khatibzadeh and Sameri (2013: 13779) name and as the one that is most frequently used. Our focus here is namely on this particular case.

Brdar (2016: 377, 383) points out that although the order of the constituents within the binomials is open in general, linguists pay attention to the existence of irreversible ones whose order is ‘as a rule quite fixed’. The order is really important since as Khatibzadeh and Sameri (2013: 13780) put it, ‘[o]ne of the factors that guarantee naturalness is to follow the prescribed word orders’. Therefore their advice (Khatibzadeh and Sameri 2013: 13784) that ‘binomials should be taught as a part of a vocabulary and idiomatic repertoire of [learners]’ is quite reasonable; and makes it sufficient to judge the real importance of examining binomials and insert this type of structure into the English language seminars as a far-reaching benefit for future teachers. Both ‘Primary School Pedagogy And Foreign Language’ students as well as ‘Pre-school Pedagogy And Foreign Language’ students are suitable as a target group to be paid attention to this particular usage, become familiar with it and help them remember as many as possible naturally ordered binomials. This is the underlying reason to take a step in going over binomials. A dozen of fairy tales available online are chosen at random for the purpose.
Binomials in fairy tales

Fairy tales are an amusing way to teach a foreign language and at the same time an appropriate means for the age group of the future trainees’ students from the majors mentioned above. What is examined in terms of binomials in this type of texts is presented in Table 1. Not all eight parts of speech are considered. Only nouns, paying special attention to proper nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and pronouns are in the focus.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>words</th>
<th>number of biomials</th>
<th>v</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>proper n</th>
<th>adj</th>
<th>adv</th>
<th>pron</th>
<th>all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventures Of John Dietrich, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>6231</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty And The Beast (Walter Crane)</td>
<td>5410</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother And Sister, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>2398</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinderella Or, The Little Glass Slipper (Felix Lorioux)</td>
<td>2312</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clever Alice, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fortunatus, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>3870</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graciosa And Percinet, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>3866</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hop-O’-My-Thumb (Felix Lorioux)</td>
<td>3901</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Island, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>3498</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack And The Bean-Stalk, From “The Fairy Book” by Miss Mulock</td>
<td>3631</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazy Jack (Arthur Rackham)</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tale Of Peter Rabbit (Beatrix Potter)</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all</td>
<td>38165</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About 3 percent of the words in the texts are included in binomial structures. Nouns offer a considerable part of them (43.5 % of all binomials). Proper nouns are less than common nouns but yet they present 1/10 of their number. Next on the list are verbs. They present 25% of all the binomials. 18% belong to adjectives in a binomial

B E T A E - N e w s l e t t e r  I s s u e  3 6
85 | P a g e
Nouns

Nouns in binomials offer the possibility to teach different topics, e.g. parts of the body (hands and knees), vegetables and fruit (peas and beans), clothes (the little jacket and the shoes), etc.

The table below offers some noun examples of binomials and the number of their occurrences. The data gathered from our corpus confirm that masculine nouns usually come first and the feminine nouns follow them. If we rely on Ammari’s argument (2015), which leans on the research of Wright et al. (2005) concerning...
gender bias, we should admit that these ‘preferences have to do with different phonological properties as male names have less syllables, more initial and front consonants, exhibit more obstruent final segment and display the likelihood of with a voiced obstruent and a plosive’ (Ammari 2015: 95).

Table 2

Some examples of masculine, followed by feminine nouns in the structure of binomials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>men and women</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boys and girls</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father and mother</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brothers and sisters</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gentlemen and ladies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the king and his huntsmen</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Earl and Countess</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the lords and ladies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shepherds and shepherdesses</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a faggot-maker and his wife</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proper nouns show the same dependency, e.g. John and Elizabeth; Rugen and Pomerania; John and his wife; Percinet and the queen; Orm and his wife. The case with Orm and Aslog does not obey the rule completely since we have it once in reversed order, i.e. Aslog and Orm. Yet three times more often it is the masculine constituent in the first place.
One more regularity is seen in a kind of hierarchical order. First comes older masculine/feminine and then the younger one(s), e.g. the merchant and his three sons; the queen and her two daughters; or wives and children, etc. This type of hierarchy is followed with proper nouns as well, e.g. his brother Andrew, and his sister Trine.

Another issue worth mentioning is the fact that sometimes the two constituents sound quite similar. This makes learning binomials amusing, especially for children. The corpus supplies a nice illustration, e.g. the wind and waves; stature and size; shouting and crying; whizzing and snorting; crushing and crowding, etc.

**Verbs**

Fairy tales are abundant in a variety of verbs that come in a binomial structure. Although one could be inclined to consider this genre of literature as prone to vocabulary repetition (most often due to the plot probably), the present corpus does not provide such often occurring examples. Indeed some binomials like *eat and drink, knocked and cried*, etc. do occur several times but mostly the tales present a variety of combinations, e.g. *love and respect; love and admire*, etc. Whereas the order of the noun constituents within the structure of the binomials is rather fixed, verbs offer more flexibility and allow reversibility. Table 3 presents examples with some of the most common verbs, i.e. *go and come*. Quite often the specificity of their meaning imposes their use in the first place within the structure. Modal verbs seem to obey the same principle, e.g. ‘She dare not,’ replied the lady, ‘but I can and will’ (Jack And The Bean-Stalk).
On the other hand other verbs are possible to be used both ways as *whimpered and howled* and *howl and whimper*, where the change does not affect the overall meaning.

Table 3

*Examples with some ir/reversible binomials of verb constituents and their number of occurrences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irreversible With the verb</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>Irreversible With the verb</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>reversible</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>modals</th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>go and fetch</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>come and help</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>whimpered and howled</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>can and will</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go and dwell</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>come and hold</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>howl and whimper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go back and let me stay in</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>come and show</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go and have a drink</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>come and die</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go and see</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go and look</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>went out and gathered roots</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go down into the cellar and draw some beer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An important thing that Khatibzadeh and Sameri (2013: 13779) point out is that ‘the meaning of a binomial is usually perceived as a whole’. This might be the reason for translation of some English binomials into Bulgarian not word by word but sometimes simply as one word which is enough since translation of both words would sound as tautology. There is a plenty of synonymous adjectives coming into a binomial structure, e.g. sweet-tempered and kind; even and smooth; faint and exhausted; still and quiet, etc.

Adjectives in this corpus occur often in their base form and almost in equal correlation in the comparative. Superlatives appear rarely in these particular fairy tales. Table 4 gives an idea about their occurrence.

Table 4
Examples with adjectives used in their base form, others in comparative or superlative (all of them found in the examined fairy tales).
Adverbs in the comparative are also found but are less frequent compared to those in base form. Table 5 presents some examples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>comparative</th>
<th>number</th>
<th>superlative</th>
<th>number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>old and young</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>more brilliant and fragrant than anything</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>the brightest and clearest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>old and gray</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>more fresh and blooming</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>the proudest and most disagreeable</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deaf and dumb</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>more splendidly attired and beautiful than ever</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>the very thickest and darkest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silver and gold</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>more lovely and loveable than ever</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lively and cheerful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>more handsome and charming than ever</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silver and crystal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>more witty and brave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear and bright</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>better and more complete</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adverbs**

Adverbs in the comparative are also found but are less frequent compared to those in base form. Table 5 presents some examples.
An interesting phenomenon is the occurrence of one and the same adverb in the places of both constituents, e.g. *round and round; often and often; more and more*, etc. Antonymous adverbs also appear in binomial structures in the texts, e.g. *up and down, backwards and forwards; in and out*, etc. Similar binomials ‘with opposites and antonyms’, and ‘with repetition’ are observed by other authors (e.g. Ammmari 2015: 93). Idiomatic expressions such as *by and by* occur relatively often, others such as *now and then* are found only once in the fairy tales corpus.

### Table 5

**Adverbs in binomial structures and their occurrence in the fairy tales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adv</th>
<th>number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>round and round</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>often and often</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stoutly and wisely</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>up and down</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more and more</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by day and by night</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>here and there</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>backwards and forwards</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in and out</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By and by</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gently and submissively</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over and over again</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Now and then</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over and over</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his right and left</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nearer and nearer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>far and wide</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>higher and higher</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>again and again,</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

The short research of binomials used in a dozen of fairy tales reveals that the structure occurs there rarely (about 3% in these particular fairy tales). Nevertheless, its presence is undeniable. Both constituents within the structure are always of the same group but the pair can be with different parts of speech, i.e. noun and noun, verb and verb, etc. The rarest are pronouns occurring only once in one of the fairy tales (i.e. her and you in Jack And The Bean-Stalk).

With the rest of the examined parts of speech a variety of options concerning the constituents are observed. Only adverbs allow one and the same constituent present in both places. For the rest of the cases most of the binomials are irreversible which gives reason to draw the attention of the students to it and regard it as helpful to build more native like vocabulary.

References:


**Online dictionaries:**

[https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/binomial](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/binomial)
[https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/binomial_1?q=binomial](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/binomial_1?q=binomial)

**List of the examined fairy tales**


1. Adventures of John Dietrich, from ‘The Fairy Book’ by Miss Mulock
2. Beauty and The Beast (Walter Crane)
3. Brother and Sister, from ‘The Fairy Book’by Miss Mulock
4. Cinderella or The Little Glass Slipper (Felix Lorioux)
5. Clever Alice, from ‘The Fairy Book’ by Miss Mulock
6. Fortunatus, from ‘The Fairy Book’ by Miss Mulock
7. Graciousa and Perciner, from ‘The Fairy Book’ by Miss Mulock
8. Hop-O’- My- Thumb (Felix Lorioux)
9. House Island, from ‘The Fairy Book’ by Miss Mulock
10. Jack and the Bean-Stalk, from ‘The Fairy Book’ by Miss Mulock
11. Lazy Jack, Arthur Rackham
12. The Tale of Peter Rabbit (Beatrix Potter)
Petranka Ivanova

Senior Assistant, Ph.D. at Shumen University, the College of Dobrich

Petranka Ivanova is a senior assistant, Ph.D. at Shumen University, the College of Dobrich. She has been teaching English since 1997. She has some experience as a teacher at primary school level. She is interested in Linguistics and Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

e-mail: petranka.ivanova@shu.bg
Rehearsal time (very young learners)

Zhivka Ilieva and Desislava Terzieva

Abstract

Drama is part of FLT activities with very young learners. It is usually included in the end of the year festivals prepared by the teachers and the children for the parents. Rehearsal is necessary for achieving good results. During rehearsal time learners remember whole phrases from their own and their mates’ roles. This article shows the stages of rehearsal and learning while preparing for the end of the year festivals.

Key words: very young learners, drama activities, rehearsal

Introduction

Children love performing. Final performance is connected to special audience, dressing up and long preparation. This official performance motivates learners to work hard while having fun in order to show skills and knowledge at the end. Preparation includes drama activities and rehearsal time. During these activities children learn communicative models and various formulae.
Drama activities and rehearsal

In our case drama activities are a kind of preparation, through them key phrases are learned; rehearsal is also part of these activities. In Davies’ (1990: 88) opinion ‘drama includes mime, role-playing, extended role-playing (or improvisation), simulation, interaction activities such as various forms of dialogues, and dramatized story-telling.’ He (Davies 1990: 93) also states that any type of rehearsal is ideal for mastering intonation patterns on account of the repetition involved. Dummett (2018) also thinks that ‘repetition is a tried a tested tool in memorizing’; that drilling and repetition ... ‘is still a very effective tool for teaching pronunciation and for dialogue building’.

Drama activities are a kind of a hidden, modified drill (Ilieva 2015, Lewis 1993). They set context for multiple repetition. This way they aid memorizing the phrases and the whole dialogue while enjoying role play. According to Davies (1990: 96) ‘they involve concentration, listening, memorization, observation, interaction, and interpretation, language games extend the word power of learners, and increase their agility, fluency, and flexibility in the use of English.’ All these lead to the holistic development of the child which is extremely important in the kindergarten. At this age we develop not only language and communicative skills but also memory, imagination, love for languages. This is also the position of Davies: drama ‘draws upon students’ natural abilities to imitate and express themselves, and if well-handled should arouse interest and imagination. Drama encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into context, and by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations it should arm them with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom.’ (Davies 1990: 97).
Drama in language learning can:

- foster creativity and imagination
- encourage learners ‘experiment with language – tone of voice, body language’ (Lavery 2010)
- ‘develop accuracy and fluency of expression’ (Godfrey 2010)
- provide safe context for children to communicate and experiment with language
- improve rhythm and pronunciation
- develop linguistic intelligence, social interactive skills and interpersonal communicative skills (Godfrey 2010)
- animate language classroom (Wilson 2011).

In Donald’s (2003) opinion drama aids:

- ‘Transferring L1 strategies’ (‘rephrasing’ if someone does not understand what they mean)
- ‘Formal / informal language’ distinction (first identify inappropriate language, then try to change it)
- ‘Interactive listening’: listening skills development
- ‘Real interaction patterns’ (initiate, respond, follow-up)
- ‘Preparation and rehearsal’.

Duarte and Gimenes de Araujo (2015) view drama as ‘activities linked to learners’ interests and everyday social contexts’. In their opinion it ensures interdisciplinary approach. Interdisciplinary or cross-curricular approach contributes to higher motivation touching wide range of learners’ interests and to the holistic development of the child.
Rehearsal time unites all these characteristics of the drama activities. During rehearsals children practise language and skills, communicate, play, have fun, develop imagination, creativity, memory, their personality.

Davies (1990: 98) states that ‘Dramatized fairy-tales and children’s plays would be an excellent way of introducing drama to students at an early stage of learning English.’ We offer an adaptation of the popular picture book: Eric Carle’s The Very Hungry Caterpillar.

**Stages in rehearsal**

Various authors (Holden 1982: 14, Byrne 1986 in Davies) offer various stages of drama activities depending on the learners’ age, on the aims of the lesson, etc. The stages we offer are:

1. **Introducing the story** (1st listening, discussion, listening 2)
2. **Drama activities** that aid learning by heart key phrases and acquiring communicative models and formulae (e.g. Hello, X! / Hello, Y! / Let’s play together!)
3. **Distributing the roles** (children like or sometimes do not like their roles and we change the characters e.g. nobody wants to be mango)
4. **Rehearsal 1** is of key importance because the teacher sees if the learners can pronounce or remember the roles as they are planned and sometimes changes the words of the character, shortens or enriches sentences, paraphrases. Children play the roles without costumes (Figure 1.).
5. **Rehearsals.** During the other rehearsals children learn by heart the whole play. Some of the materials are used from the mere beginning (the bags and the butterfly, figures 2 and 3), others (the jackets and the crowns, figure 4) are used during the dress rehearsal and the performances.

6. **Dress rehearsal** brings emotion and fosters expectation for the play in front of audience.

7. **Performance 1.**

---

The performance is the most expected moment learners have prepared for. The first performance is usually in front of the parents to show knowledge and skills learners have acquired. There might be performances in front of the other (sometimes younger) groups in the kindergarten or at a big kindergarten feast.
The original story The Very Hungry Caterpillar does not have a dialogue. There are enumerated the items the caterpillar eats. We use the original idea and the following dialogue:

‘Good morning everybody. I'm a tiny caterpillar. Oh, I'm very hungry, I want to eat something.’
‘Hello, caterpillar!’
‘Hello, apples!’
‘Let's play together!’
‘But I'm hungry, I want to eat you.’
‘Don't eat us, please, don't eat us!’
‘I'll eat you.’

In each episode the caterpillar sleeps, wakes up and says: ‘But I’m still hungry! I want to eat something!’

Then it goes and meets:
- 3 apples
- 3 strawberries
- 3 pears
- 3 grapes
- 3 lolly pops (the characters depend on the ideas of the teachers and the children’s willingness to play one or another item).

The same dialogue is repeated each time.

Finally the caterpillar says to the audience: ‘Look at me! I’m a big caterpillar! I’m not tiny any more! Oh, I’m so sleepy...’
The teacher in the role of the storyteller says ‘And then it sleeps for 14 days’ (count 1-14).
Children wake up and take the butterfly.

‘Oh, I can fly, I can fly
I’m a beautiful butterfly!’

Conclusions

Rehearsal time provides repetition of whole phrases learned by heart that children can use in communication in other situations later on. Rehearsal time is time for fun, enjoyment and holistic development; it provides cross curricular links while preparing for the performance. The mere performance brings sense of achievement and raises learners’ confidence, it is a reward for the teacher and the learners.

References


Zhivka Ilieva

Dobrich College, Shumen University, Bulgaria

Zhivka Ilieva is an associate professor at Dobrich College, Shumen University. She has a PhD in Methodology of English Language Teaching. As part of her research she
Desislava Terzieva has classes at primary schools and at kindergartens. She presents at conferences dedicated to language teaching and teacher training in Bulgaria and abroad.

e-mail: zh.ilieva.bg@gmail.com

Desislava Terzieva
Estiliya Ltd, Bulgaria

Desislava Terzieva is a freelance English language teacher, working primarily with pre-school children.

e-mail: desislavat75@gmail.com
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NEWSLETTER TEAM
Editors: Polly Petcova, Zhivka Ilieva, Sylvia Velikova
Design: Sylvia Velikova
BETA – IATEFL
E-mail: beta.iateflbg@gmail.com

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