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COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING & LEARNING REVISITED
What more than three decades of experience have tahght us.

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Under a most thought provoking topic: *Communicative Language Teaching and Learning Revisited. What more than three decades of experience have taught us,* and addressing highly updated issues like *single approaches, eclecticism or post-method era; communication, teaching materials and communicative language teaching and learning; communication-oriented activities and tasks; cultural awareness in the communicative class; discursive practices, diction, lexico-grammar, pragmatics, discourse analysis, text grammar and communicative language teaching; intelligibility and comprehensibility vs. accuracy; the role of ICT in the communicative classroom and evaluation,* this book compiles your invaluable contributions to our profession. The papers we are publishing show a postmodern reflective perspective on foreign language teaching from colleagues who have worked in modern method-oriented times and have moved into a post-method era and teachers who were born in it. Consequently what you will be reading is the result of experience, informed exploration and a desire to grow professionally and create new ways of being in the EFL teaching environment. In other words, these are instances of a postmodern pedagogy - a postmodern approximation to foreign language teaching, or teaching in general, for that matter, which might sound as something of a misnomer, as it implies that we need to start looking at teaching from a less axiomatic, principle-driven standpoint. Gone are the days when our practices were framed by one single approach. In a time of liquefied definitions and borders, we need to act prospectively, capitalise on our experience and come up with new responses to old and new questions. Postmodern thinking is no longer concerned with prescriptions and recipes. It is more a cauldron of diverse ideas meant to interpret and respond to the intricacy, fluidity, open-endedness and uncertainty of the 21st century liquid human condition; ideas that translate as moves towards making contextualised decisions, knowing that these may be wrong, and that if they are right, their adequacy may not last long; ideas that translate as attempts to educate skillful and efficient citizens to conform to the idea of performativity, to use Lyotard's words, a key feature of the Liquid Modernity, characterised by a knowledge economy.

The reflections embodied in these papers denote evolution from our first attempts to accommodate ourselves into what in the 80s struck our profession as an innovative and promising methodology - the Communicative Approach - to more flexible, less stable frameworks. They bring together actions taken on board on the bases of our interpretations of strong dynamic social changes. They are proof of our critical stance towards our professional practices, which allows for self-evaluation and mutation.

The Organizing Committee remains indebted to those who have helped to make this publication possible. May these pages be a source of academic food, a source of motivation for future work and a source for intellectual inspiration.

Prof. Dr. Daniel J. Fernández

FAAPI President

Dear Readers:

It is a great honour and we feel immensely proud that Tucuman hosts the FAAPI Conference for the third time. Our province has had a renowned historical significance for the cultural, social and economic construction of our beloved country. The independence of Argentina was declared in this place and this remarkable feat has enkindled all tucumanos with a daring and brave spirit and resolve to face all challenges that lay ahead. It is with the same spirit and commitment that we have undertaken the enterprise of organizing this year's conference.

The XXXVI FAAPI Conference put forward an inviting theme: "Communicative Language Learning and Teaching Revisited. What more than three decades of experience have taught us". This particular thematic choice focuses on Communicative Language Teaching and Learning in an attempt to review and appraise the main tenets and their current implications in Foreign Language Teaching. Admittedly, CLT has been part of our classroom practices and its influence has been long-lasting. Although other methods and approaches have been put forward and established as more recent pedagogical compasses, perhaps trying to elucidate and respond to contemporary ideas on notions of childhood or adult language learning, CLT has always promoted the adaptation of the foreign language in terms of one of its underlying components: *communication*.

The word communication comes from the Latin word *comunicare*, i.e. "to share" and this etymological reference is more than appropriate to "communicate" our fundamental objective for the conference and this academic publication: to share our knowledge, experience, emotions and joint learning. We live in an era of historical revisionism, but our intended goal of pedagogical revisionism lies in the premise that by reviewing long-established methods of practice or new pedagogical proposals we will be offering our students more enriching learning experiences and this also reveals our commitment to education.

On behalf of APIT, it is my wish that you can find in this book such valuable and shareable contents that it also reflects our zeal for communicating them in a clear and enthusiastic way. I would also like to acknowledge the support from the United States Embassy in Argentina, whose generous contribution made the publication of this book possible.

Silvia Pérez de Mentz
President
APIT

Plenaries y Semiplenaries

Education in the XXI century: challenges and opportunities

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Abstract

This paper characterises the 21st century as an age of change, and discusses the conditions to implement transformative innovation in educational institutions. It concludes that Communicative Language Teaching constitutes a suitable framework for EFL teachers to make the most of the potential of digital technologies and to become creative professional enquirers and leaders of change.

Education in the XXI century: challenges and opportunities

We live in an age of change. Although it is always seen to be underpinned by certain social and economic assumptions, change is inevitable and the future is uncertain. This belief, hammered by the media and official discourse alike, may drive us to panic or paralysis. Yet, all times have been subject to change and world views have been widely modified over the centuries. The only difference is that "change in education may now be thought of as a constant condition, rather than an event" (Fisher et al 5). As educators, we need to understand how our ideas of the future shape our practices and to decide what role we intend to play in the development of projects for personal and social growth.

First, we have to analyse the evidence of stability and of disruptive factors we can find in different aspects of our lives, but most importantly, how much control we see ourselves as having in each reality. Then, we should challenge the inevitability of a certain future and seek to explore our capacity to bring about change. Whereas "no future is either infinitely open or predetermined, no person is either infinitely autonomous or constrained" (Facer et al 22), an awareness of our limitations and potentialities will help us to take action to achieve the future we desire. Once we acknowledge that we live in a state of change, we must develop our own sense of agency to meet the needs of education and bring about transformative innovation.

The European Commission, whose mission is to promote the general interest of the European Union, considers lifelong learning crucial for all citizens in a world of change. It has set out a *European Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*, which identifies and defines "the key competences that citizens require for their personal fulfilment, social inclusion, active citizenship and employability in our knowledge-based society" (European Commission 1). These key competences should be addressed by member states not only in their initial education and training systems, but also in adult education and training – to prevent the sense of alienation that globalization and the digital revolution may bring about – and include communication in the mother tongue and foreign languages, competences in mathematics, science and technology, digital, cultural, social and civic competences, learning to learn and a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) refreshed its *National Educational Technology Standards* in 2007 to "identify several higher-order thinking skills and digital citizenship as critical for students to learn effectively for a lifetime and live productively in our emerging global society". *NETS* include the ability to demonstrate creativity and innovation, communicate and collaborate, conduct research and use information, think critically, solve problems, make decisions and use technology effectively and productively. These aims call for a thorough transformation of educational practices to make the learner the focus of attention. For learners to achieve such

competences, teachers (who should also model lifelong learning) need to facilitate and inspire by designing and developing learning experiences that are powerful, meaningful and relevant. [1]

In the case of TEFL, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) provides a valid framework to cater for the challenges of the 21st century outlined above. From its birth, CLT has emphasised a cooperative approach to learning, in which learners take on responsibility for their own learning and teachers act as facilitators and monitors (Richards 5). Jacobs and Farrell (2001) link the development of CLT to the paradigm shift from positivism to post-positivism, and detail the changes it has brought about, especially in terms of learner autonomy, cooperative learning, curricular integration, focus on meaning, diversity, thinking skills, alternative assessment and the role of teachers as co-learners. They also argue that the non-adoption or partial implementation of CLT is linked to our failure to perceive its links to the changes in education in general as part of one overall paradigm shift.

Unfortunately, innovation in education is often limited to addition: the introduction of modern tools to "beautify", as it were, long established practices and beliefs. But true innovation should challenge the status quo and creatively strive to make a difference to the system. Naturally, innovation requires that educators should stop being thought of as practitioners, who merely apply well-tested recipes regardless of contextual needs, and begin to be considered creative professional enquirers, who analyse needs and initiate change – a shift in perception that should start among teachers themselves. In addition, it should be borne in mind that innovations tend to fail when "they are perceived as not being aligned with the cultural values and beliefs of schools, when they are seen as externally imposed, or when there is a dependence upon external resources (including people) to enable changes to happen" (Sutch et al 9).

In fact, even though many educators have initiated significant transformational experiences, impact has been reduced to their own classrooms, which remain pockets of change. Many barriers have been identified that hinder innovation in schools. On the one hand, there are barriers related to the environment (external barriers) such as a lack of access to resources, a lack of time, a lack of effective training, or technical problems. On the other, there are barriers which depend on the perceptions and attitudes of the people involved (internal barriers), which include a lack of confidence, negative attitudes to the change undertaken and a lack of perceived benefits of the innovation. (Kirkland and Sutch 13)

If we are to overcome such barriers, it is necessary to develop a cyclical culture of innovation in institutions. Starting by identifying problems in a particular school (Insight), we should go on to collaboratively and creatively develop new ideas by resorting to various forms of expertise (Invention), apply new approaches (Application) and share the lessons learned with an effective social and support network (Reflection and communication) before moving on to identify new problems. Just like teachers create in their classroom a safe learning environment conducive to the exploration of new ideas, headteachers should develop an institutional atmosphere that fosters creativity and collaboration. Such an institution should combine clear central management to ensure support, resources and communication channels, and new models of distributed leadership that rely on those who are passionate, knowledgeable and able to influence others to promote change. (Sutch).

Clearly, it is also crucial that education policy should support diversity rather than create a template for a school for the future, and empower educators, researchers and communities "to develop localised or novel responses to socio-technical change – including developing new approaches to curriculum, to assessment, to the workforce and governance, as well as to pedagogy." (Facer 9)

Digital technologies can be a driver for change, but will not necessarily achieve any transformational effect if they are introduced in a supplementary manner, without re-thinking and changing pedagogy. The aim of digital technologies should be to enable and enhance learning, to encourage learners to be more active in their learning, so that they will develop the competences and confidence necessary to take responsibility for their learning (Comrie 5).

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[1] ISTE also provides benchmarks for what teachers and administrators should know and be able to do with technology in education

Social software in particular has great potential to empower the learner to develop 21st century competences. There are endless free tools and applications available online that make it easy to create and share multimedia content in a few minutes. Social bookmarking tools help to assess, classify and share resources. Blogs are a useful vehicle for self-expression and reflection. Wikis are ideal for the collaborative creation and editing of text, and have the added bonus of tracking changes for the benefit of both collaborators and teachers. Social networking sites contribute to the exchange of materials, views and feedback (both among peers and between teacher and student) and the development of communities.

These advantages of social software for learners apply to teachers' Continuing Professional Development as well. Educators can interact with and learn from colleagues all over the world, share materials, doubts, advice, reflections and experiences, and forge bonds, thus creating international communities of practice. In addition, free online journals, webinars and conferences empower teachers to put forward their views in a spirit of support and collaboration, and develop their skills as researchers, writers and public speakers, so that they can become leaders in institutional processes of change.

In conclusion, the main challenge the 21st century poses for educators is the acknowledgement that change is a constant condition and that, as long as we develop our sense of agency overcoming internal and external barriers, we have the opportunity to bring about transformative innovation for personal and social growth. EFL teachers can safely rely on the tenets of CLT to make the most of the potential of digital technologies and to become creative professional enquirers and leaders of change in their institutions. It remains to be desired that administrators and policy makers will also rise to the challenge by supporting diversity and empowering educators, researchers and communities to improve the quality of education and build a better future.

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CONFUSION REIGNS!
COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING REVISITED. WHAT EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT US.

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Two ideas have helped me to write this paper. The first one was the fact that when I was invited to lecture, I was in the middle of writing another paper on Systemic Functional Linguistics. In that work, which is part of a broader research project in the field of Linguistics, I reported on the analysis of different aspects of the process of disciplinary lexical semantisation and suggested that two components were to be added to the componential semantic matrix: one synchronic, which would allow for the contextualisation of the items in question in the disciplinary field, and one diachronic, which would enable us to update the disciplinary meaning of those items as they evolve conceptually. Then it occurred to me that *communicative*, as in *communicative language teaching* (CLT), would be a good example of what I was trying to show with lexical items from other disciplines. It would be interesting, I said to myself, to stop and reflect on the meaning of *communicative*, or rather *communication*, as it was understood in the 80's and is understood today, assuming the fact that we all agree it has mutated.

The second idea that dawned on me and I thought could help as I set pen to paper came from a passage I once read and I now quote below:

> I am not good at mimic and have worked now in many different cultures. I am a very poor speaker of any language, but I always know whose pig is dead, and when I work in a native society, I know what people are talking about and I treat it seriously and I respect them, and this in itself establishes a great deal more rapport, very often , than the correct accent. I have worked with other field workers who were far, far better linguists than I, and the natives kept on saying they couldn't speak the language, although they said I could! Now, if you had a recording it would be proof positive I couldn't, but nobody knew it! You see, we don't need to teach people to speak like natives; you need to make the other people believe they can, so they can talk to them, and then they learn. (*Margaret mead, 1964:82*)

Amongst other things, Mead's words speak of one way of looking at *Communicative Competence* (Co. Co.). They also speak of one way of understanding the process of foreign language learning – by doing - and they trigger off one very important question: is Co. Co. teachable? I began wondering then why so many different positions towards CLT and so many sometimes contradictory ideas around the more popular *Communicative Approach* (CA) had emerged and still circulate in our milieu. Confusion reigns, I thought, because of the polysemy of the concept *communication.*

To understand the intricacy of the issue, it is good to remember when and how it all started and the concept of language the CA took on board in those days and CLT embraces today. It all began when a socio-pragmatic notion of language was being recovered against meaningless and decontextualised formalisations; when the idea of language as a social phenomenon (LSP) was being construed and when the main theoretical contributions to the field of linguistic research came from Sociolinguistics - the Ethnography of Communication - to be more precise, and Philosophy, with the ideas put forward by the Philosophers of Everyday Language, who brought in the notion of language as action.

This multiplicity of perspectives on language helped to elaborate an intricate multidisciplinary matrix in Linguistics which naturally resulted in a multidisciplinary matrix in Language Teaching Practices. In the same way LSP meant a reaction against the idea of language as a formal object, CLT became, in Savignon's words (1980, 1983), 'a symbol of what audiolingualism could not be'. In fact, when it was born in Britain in the 60s, CLT came as replacement for the earlier structural Situational Language Teaching method. Gone were the days of somewhat clear cut approaches and methodologies. Gone were the days of precise axioms underlying pedagogical practices. CLT, which in the 60s got materialised in the CA, marked the beginning of a post-method era in language teaching pedagogy and the beginning of a new paradigm in Applied Linguistics. However, the CA did not live long. It passed away, as initially construed, before the end of the C20, but, as Roberts (2004: 27) puts it 'we may legitimately pronounce: The King is dead! Long live the King!' because the CA inaugurated the era of CLT and gave birth to a plethora of procedures that aimed to teach language for communication that was later followed by an 'apotheosis of syllabus design' proposals (Roberts 2004: 16). It is worth

mentioning that the 60s also witnessed a somehow simultaneous paradigmatic change in education - a shift from product-oriented to process-oriented schemes was on the go; a shift that soon would be pushed back to what we have today, again a product-oriented process in which educating teachers means producing skillful and efficient professionals that can meet the demand of new social utilitarian goals. Convoluted times, indeed!

But let's look back – not in anger - on the early days. In the mid 60s, descriptions of language started growing more and more complex. Many disciplines and context-based studies - Socio-semiotics, Pragmalinguistics, Sociolinguistics, amongst others - contributed to the enhancement of the new perspective of LSP. Naturally, theories in Sociolinguistics and Pragmatics evolved and so did the concept they had helped to construct. New ways of looking at language joined the spectrum. Take say The Ethnography of Communication, Conversation Analysis, Speech Act Theory, to name some, and all this, in turn, impacted upon language teaching methodologies. Thus what Hymes (1966, 1971) had originally defined as Co. Co., that is, linguistic knowledge and the ability to use it, or the coexistence of systemic potential + adequacy + feasibility + frequency of occurrence, developed into a complex and ever-expanding notion which included other strategic and cultural aspects of discursive practices. From the beginning, however, we knew that Co. Co. was dynamic, interpersonal, context specific and relative. These features were opening many doors, and the complexity of the concept got instantiated in foreign language teaching methodology in what also developed as an intricate classification of language skills and communicative abilities: interpreting, talking, corresponding, speaking, saying, hearing, listening, comprehending, reading, composing and writing (Widdowson, 1978). A stravaganza that in Applied Linguistics surfaced as an extremely sophisticated and revolutionary categorisation that impacted profoundly in foreign language teaching methodology at all levels of our educational system and which also informed the development of teaching materials.

To talk about the evolution of the notion of communication and CLT, it is good to bring back to memory what the tenets of the CA were when it came to life. Put succinctly, it was postulated that:

1. Language use was creative;
2. Language use consisted of many abilities in a broad communicative framework;
3. Foreign language learning began with the needs and interests of the learner;
4. Language teaching materials were to be developed on a careful analysis of learners' needs;
5. When communicating people exchanged texts;
6. Communicative contexts were varied.

Canale and Swain (1980) transferred the notion of Co. Co to the field of Applied Linguistics and described it as consisting of four sub-competences (See Fig. 1)

Co. Co.			
Sociolinguistic Competence			
Grammatical Competence	Sociocultural Competence	Discourse Competence	Strategic Competence
knowledge of phonology, lexico-grammar and semantics;	knowledge of the relation of language use to its context;	knowledge of texture;	verbal and non-verbal communicative compensation strategies that do for lack of sufficient competence.

Fig. 1. Communicative Competence – Canale and Swain (1980).

Canale and Swain's idea of strategic competence has remained rather stable as an attainable goal in CLT. What needs to be highlighted, however, is the fact that strategic competence is a discursive notion. Its core component is language understood as meaning potential. It does incorporate the concepts of diversity, culture and identity, so dear to most of us these days, but the core element is language[2]. Thus defined, CLT appeared relatively simple, even commonsensical. But social and professional practices generated new representations. These in turn, as it usually happens, gave way to new practices which got consolidated as new theories, all under the umbrella term of CA, which little by little became a kind of ragbag of all approaches that took on board the notion of language as a social tool and all methodologies which aim to teach language for communication.

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[2] It is interesting to see how the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) addresses this issue (http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre_en.asp)

One further issue that adds to this natural state of confusion is the fact that communication - meaning negotiation - has also been explained in many different ways. To refer to this issue, I find it useful to bring back to light a brief description of what in Linguistics and Communication Sciences has been put forward as 'communication models'. According to Schiffrin (1994), there is one crucial concept underlying all these models: intersubjectivity. This implies the sharing of knowledge and experience between interlocutors. Intersubjectivity allows communication and is achieved by communication. As we all know, participants in the communication process have received different labels at different times. They have been called communicator, signal and recipient in some descriptions; sender, message, medium and receiver in others; sign, vehicle and designatum in more classic, pragmatic approaches, or the most popular speaker and hearer, depending on the standpoint from which communication is studied. In a code model, for example, the most important participant is the sender. The code model is 'entrenched in Western culture' (Sperber and Wilson, 1986) and underlies many linguistic theories and product-oriented pedagogical perspectives which see communication as a process of coding and decoding. In an inferential model, however, the role of the addressee is simpler in some ways and very complex in others. This model reflects the impact produced by Gricean Pragmatics and Speech Act Theory and the relevance of intersubjectivity and shared knowledge in communication. There is a third angle from which the process can be looked at. This assumes that what underlies communication is behavior. It shows the impact of other linguistic theories, namely Conversation Analysis, Interactional Sociolinguistics and The Ethnography of Communication. The role of intersubjectivity is not so relevant here, precisely because responsibility for communication from the speaker is passed on to the hearer who witnesses and interprets information. This is the interactional model. A quick search on the Internet also shows a huge cascade of diagrams that try to explain how communication occurs and the roles participants assume in the process. (See, for example, Fig. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6).
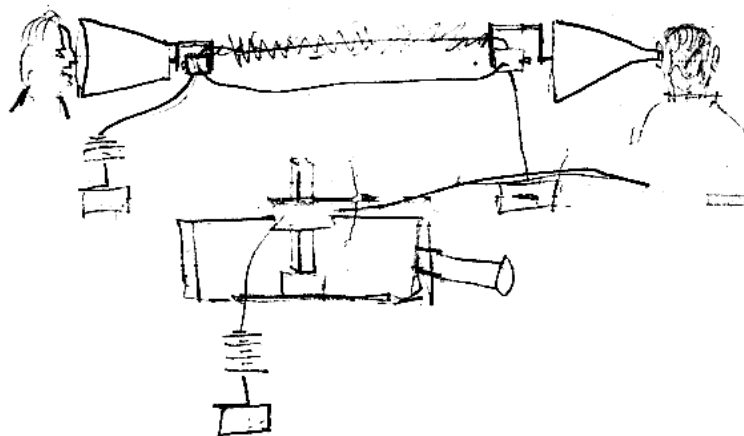

Fig.2. Bell's drawing of the workings of a telephone, from his original sketches (source: Bell Family Papers; Library of Congress; http://memory.loc.gov/mss/mcc/004/0001.jpg).
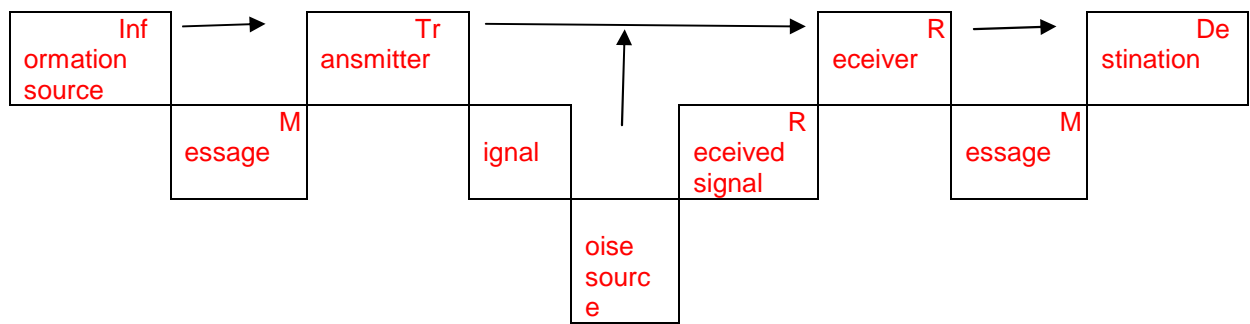
Fig. 3. Information source → Transmitter (Message) → (Signal) → Received signal → Receiver (Message) → Destination

Noise source

Fig. 3. Shannon's (1948) Model of the communication process[3].

Speaker → Gatekeeper → Audience
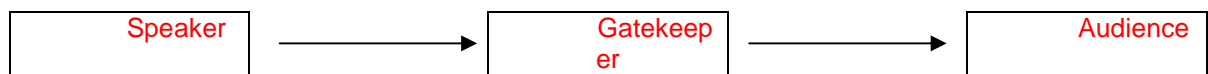
Fig. 4. An Intermediary Model.

Information source → Transmitter (Message) → (Signal) → Received signal → Receiver (Message) → Destination

Noise source

Fig. 5. An Interactive Model.

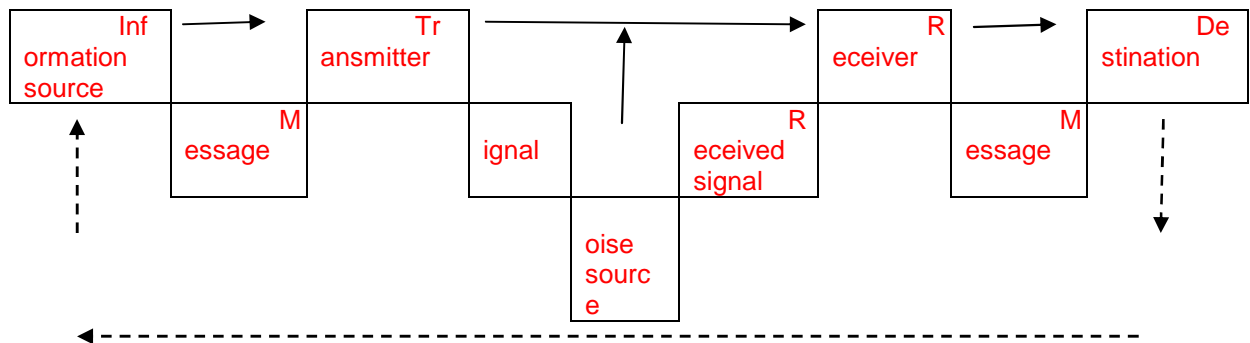Communicator A — Encode with language → Message medium → Receive and interpret — Communicator B — Encode with language → Message medium → Receive and interpret
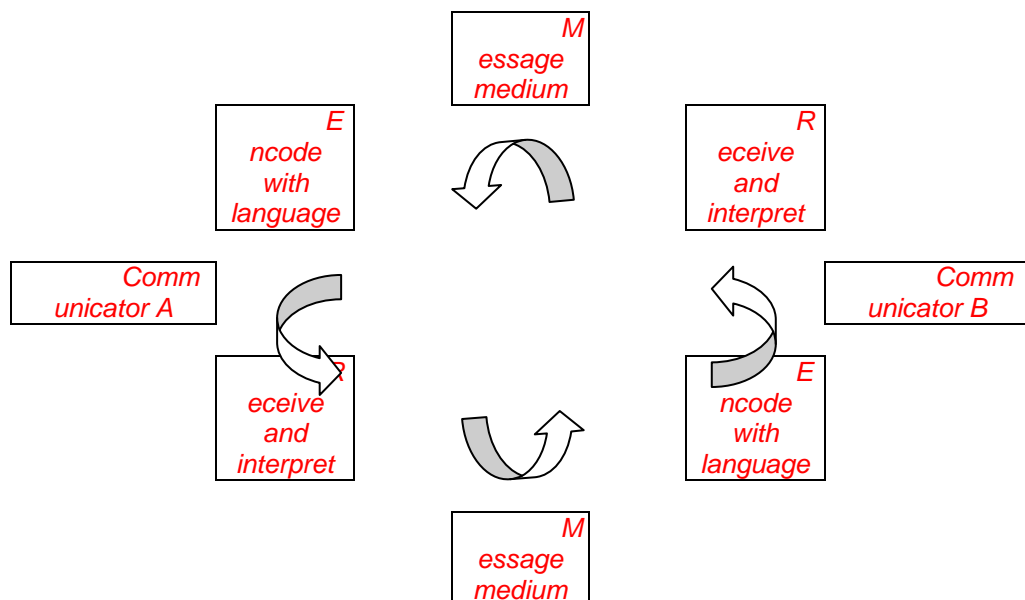
Fig. 6. A Transactional Model.

[3] All figures have been adapted from Foulger, 2004

To summarise, one could say that communication can be understood as thought, as intention or as behavior. This is highly relevant. The idea of communication as behavior leads us straightforwardly to a post-modern notion which I consider crucial in foreign language teacher education today if we are to educate teachers for the Liquid Modernity. I am referring to Lyotard's (1984) concepts of *performativity* (A highly utilitarian principle) and *parology* (That is, creativity, the search for new meanings in old language games, following Wittgenstein's line). This takes us back to the new post-modern product-oriented educational paradigm. Today, Lyotard explains, what legitimates knowledge in a Cybernetic Society is how well knowledge performs or enables an individual to perform in different roles. The idea is that knowledge has to be effective and that it has to minimise required efforts and maximise expected outcomes. Knowledge and decision-making are, for the most part, no longer based on abstract principles, but on effectiveness and efficiency. A third idea in Lyotard's Report that I find relevant is the notion of *information* as no longer being of much value. Information, Lyotard affirms, is around us, we swim in a sea of information. What counts as a commodity today is *attention to new information*, the possibility of identifying worthy information. This idea has already impacted upon language pedagogy and has given birth to critical and information literacy.

To recover our line of thought, let's speculate on a tentative explanation to our title: Why does confusion reign? The answer seems simple. It is because of a case of fluctuating polysemy that can be summarised as follows:

(a) Co. Co. got productively conflated with the CA, and CA, in turn, got productively fused with CLT. In other words, what was initially thought of as an approach pioneered by the British School of Applied Linguistics (Wilkins, 1974a, b, 1976; Widdowson, 1972; Brumfit and Johnson, 1979; Canale and Swain, 1980, amongst some others) grew into a paradigm. Today CLT applies to all partial or integrated competence-oriented methodologies that teach for communication.

(b) LSP grew into a wider, more functional and inclusive notion: Language as Social Semiotic;

(c) New approaches and methodologies have emerged and operate under the umbrella term CLT: CLIL is CLT, CALLA is CLT, Genre-based language teaching is CLT, intercomprehension models are CLT, multiple-literacy models are CLT, critical literacy is CLT, and we could go on building up a longer list;

(d) Postmodern language pedagogies focus on discursive practices. They address new ways of communicating in our Cybernetic Society. We need to direct our attention to new literacies, multiliteracies, multimodal literacies, e-literacies, academic literacies, critical literacies, information literacies.

Foulger (*op cit*) rejects the injection and transaction models of communication mentioned above and proposes a new description of the process which focuses on language and pays attention to cultural diversity – which may be said to relate to Lyotard's pluralistic view of social groups. The author calls his proposal ecological model and explains that communication occurs between creators and consumers and that it is mediated by messages (texts) created using language within media (See Fig. 7).
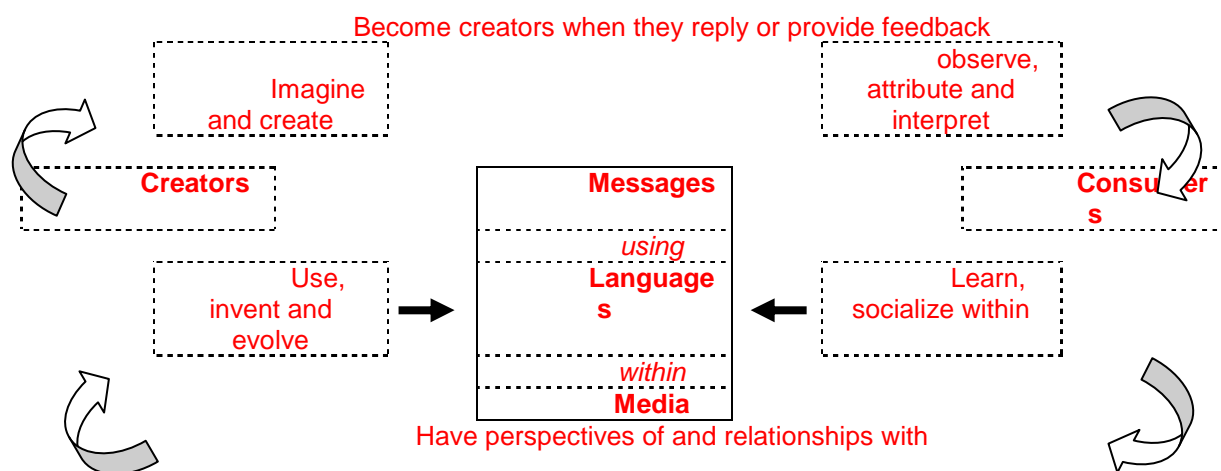

Figure 7: An Ecological Model of the Communication Process.

The ecological model integrates previous schemes and explains *who says what in which channel to whom and with what effect*. Then, the roles of participants change and so do communication patterns and structures. The key concepts this new model includes are:

(a) Language is used to create and consume messages;
(b) Message construction and consumption happens in the context of media;
(c) The roles of creator and consumer are exchangeable as required by discourse accommodation in the communication process;
(d) Messages are imperfect semiotic representations of reality;
(e) Messages are source and feedback for the creation of new messages;
(f) Creators and consumers are multiliterate;
(g) Languages evolve in and through multiliterate interactions.

So why does confusion reign? What have thirty years of experience taught us?
Kelly (1969) wrote:
In language teaching three broad aims can be distinguished: the social, the artistic (or literary), and the philosophical. The first aim demands that language should be regarded as a form of social behavior and a type of communication. The artistic aim treats language as a vehicle for creativity, demanding both appreciation of creative activity and creative activity itself…The philosophical aim demands training in analytic techniques and often confuses linguistics with language teaching (p.396)

Although in natural communication, the three aims coexist, one could say that one aim becomes dominant over the others in certain contexts. CLT focuses on the social goal and aims to raise consciousness of how language is used to carry out meaningful communicative verbal transactions. Many years of experience have taught us that:
(a) Equating CA with a communication model and with CLT helps to construe an epistemological fallacy. It is like believing that when Saussure, Chomsky, Bloomfield, Austin or Halliday spoke of parole, performance, communicative competence, use and wording they meant exactly the same. The morphosemantic relation that exists between *communication* and *communicative* as in CA does not hold in this context. On the other hand, teaching language for communication relates only partially to the CA, even though the sociolinguistic bases of the CA have been triggered off by Hymes's (1971) definition of Co. Co.
(b) Learning a language is learning how to mean in it;
(c) Learners want to learn languages because they know what languages do and what they can do with languages;
(d) The language system is learnt through mastering its use, and one expands language use by learning more of the system. As Halliday put it 'the two go together in general, in the language learning process' (1968:96).
(e) Communication is multisemiotic, multicultural and multimodal;
(f) Learning a language implies learning how language is structured to mean;
(g) To learn a language we negotiate texts;
(h) The texts we construct are necessarily imperfect representations of the meaning we imagine;
(i) When we communicate, we grammaticalise meaning and consequently the most appropriate grammar to help learners to learn the foreign language and to mean in it is a grammar of meaning.

To conclude
Last year, in my first speech as President of FAAPI, I spoke about the Liquid Modernity we are all immersed in and looked at the role of foreign language teaching in postmodern times. Foreign languages have an important role to play in the development of regional, national, and international education. Partial competence-oriented teaching may need to be revised if future professionals are expected to communicate in a post modern plurilingual and diverse world. More research should be carried out in the field of multimodal communication, critical literacy and information literacy so as to enable our students become functional communicators in at least one foreign language. Undoubtedly the notions of communication and Co. Co. need to be updated accordingly. Communicating in the mid sixties has very little if anything to do with communicating in the Liquid Modernity. The interactional communication structures set up by the ICTs (They could not be absent) have evolved, and if we go back to the three models of communication suggested by Schiffrin (1994), we see that a tremendous shift has taken place and is still moving towards a new kind of what I would call 'interaction in isolation', though this might sound contradictory. Communication is becoming more and more marked by isolation, segregation, asymmetry and asynchronicity, which in the past were features of non-communication. These new perspectives need further analysis. The popular categorisation of

communicative skills and abilities put forward by Widdowson, 1978, Littlewood, 1981 and others are to be updated and redefined.

This raises a challenge that all teachers need to take on board and explore so as to make adequate pedagogical decisions. If our role is to prepare students to become professionals in the Liquid Modernity, monomodal, monolingual partial strategy teaching needs to be evaluated. The notion of contextualisation also needs updating. We cannot go on working with models that operated adequately 20 years ago. It is simply not fair for our students.

Education is becoming more and more transnational and pluricultural. The world is becoming more and more plurilingual. NAFSA and Going Global, to mention two paramount foreign language teacher encounters, are living proof of it.

We are experiencing a socio-cultural turn and are responsible for educating multiliterate individuals – creators and consumers of messages – that can find their way in it. Under the title Languages Matter! The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization promotes linguistic diversity and multilingualism and states:

> Languages, with their complex implications for identity, communication, social integration, education and development, are of strategic importance for people and the planet. There is growing awareness that languages play a vital role in development, in ensuring cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, but also in attaining quality education for all and strengthening cooperation, in building inclusive knowledge societies and preserving cultural heritage, and in mobilizing political will for applying the benefits of science and technology to sustainable development[4]

> The organisation defines literacy as
> [T]he ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.[5]

and this is the challenge we need to meet. Undoubtedly experiential knowledge can help, but take time to question experience. When faced with the challenge we need to

(a) Check for self-interested biases (Is there any institutional or political explanation for what I am doing?);
(b) Check for the affect heuristic (Have I fallen in love with my practices?);
(c) Check for peer-think (Do my colleagues see things the same way I do?);
(d) Check for saliency bias (Could my diagnosis be overly influenced by analogy to a memorable success?);
(e) Check for confirmation bias (Am I considering possible alternatives?);
(f) Check for availability bias (If I had to make this decision again in a year's time, what data would I like to have?);
(g) Check for halo effect (Am I assuming success when I decide to use this or that technique?);
(h) Check for sunk-cost fallacy, endowment effect (Am I not overly attached to a history of past success and decisions?);
(i) Check for overconfidence, planning fallacy, optimistic biases;
(j) Check for disaster neglect (Is the worst case bad enough?);
(k) Check for loss aversion (Am I not being overly cautious?); and above all,
(l) Check for quality control.[6]

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[4] UNESCO at http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/languages-and-multilingualism/
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From Grammar Translation to CLT: A retrospective view of coursebooks produced in Argentina

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1. Introduction: historical sketch

The teaching of English in the Argentine secondary school context has a long tradition and so does the production of EFL textbooks for school use. The year 1863 is taken as a starting point as it marks the beginning of the organization of secondary education with the decree that creates the *Colegio Nacional* of Buenos Aires and the establishment of a curriculum for the new school and the two already existing schools, *Colegio de Monserrat* in Córdoba and the *Colegio del Uruguay* in Entre Ríos (Memoria 1864:x). Since then the number of *Colegios Nacionales* grew steadily and other types of secondary schools were created. All these schools were administered by the national state, a situation that changed in 1992 when the national Ministry of Education handed over the administration of the entire secondary school system to the provinces[7].

Between the years 1863 and 2000 secondary school curricula underwent different changes, many of which had a strong impact on the teaching of English. These, in turn, were reflected on the design of the textbooks conceived for secondary school use as these had to conform to the curriculum. This meant that existing textbooks were reformed to keep pace with curriculum changes, or that new coursebooks were published in answer to new demands.

For half a century foreign language teaching was mainly based on the Grammar-Translation Method commonly used in the teaching of the classical languages Latin and Greek. The debates over what is considered good practice in foreign language teaching of past times do not differ much from those of today: two of the main issues were and still are a) the view of the foreign language as a formal system or as a means of communication, and b) the kinds of skills and abilities that can be developed in the school context. During the second half of the 20th Century, changes in the field of Linguistics, now established as a scientific discipline, and in Educational Science had a strong impact on the teaching of foreign languages that translated into new methods and approaches. The influence of these variables is recognized as having a major impact on the design of instructional materials as

> [t]hey draw on a wide variety of theoretical foundations, since they reflect particular assumptions about the nature of language, of second language learning, and of second language teaching. They should hence be informed by research and current knowledge drawn from relevant domains of applied linguistics, including corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, genre analysis, pragmatics, and sociocultural theory. (Richards, 2010:ix-x[8])

Taking a historical perspective, this paper addresses the development of EFL textbooks for school use in Argentina published between 1886 and 2000. To this end, reference is made to milestones that marked shifts in linguistic and foreign language teaching paradigms, including the underlying conception of language, the relevance of macroskills, and the types of activities in which these principles are embodied. Through the analysis of these factors we trace the evolution from Grammar-Translation methodology to Communicative Language Teaching in locally produced textbooks which are representative of various historical periods.

Locally produced foreign language coursebooks have not been the object of much research to date. In previous contributions we have compared pairs of local and international coursebooks for the languages English, French, German and Italian produced in the same decade in order to single out their distinguishing features as regards their approach (underlying theory of language and language

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[7] Ley 24.049 Transferencia de Servicios Educativos
[8] Series editor preface to Harwood (2010).

learning theory), and some aspects of their design such as the types of texts used, the types of activities contained, and the degree of conformity of the coursebook with the school curriculum (López Barrios et al., 2002), whereas the treatment of the target culture in the same pairs of coursebooks is analyzed in more detail in López Barrios et al. (2003).

Two early contributions that need to be mentioned are Raufet (1963), who first traced the development in English Language Teaching in Argentina from 1810 to the 1950s reviewing some of the books used at the turn of the century, and Madueño (1947), who refers to aspects related to the approval of textbooks for the teaching of foreign languages in secondary schools by the Argentine Ministry of Education. Additionally, the PhD Thesis of Vila (2009), which analyzes the relationship between foreign language teaching and the construction of a national identity, reviews foreign language curricula, syllabuses and French and English coursebooks published between 1875 and 1899.

2. Methods and approaches in foreign language teaching: Changing perspectives

To carry out our analysis we followed Richards and Rodgers´s (2001) definition of *approach*, *design* and *procedure*. The authors expanded Anthony's (1963 as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001) original model of *approach, method and technique* to make it more comprehensive. In Richards and Rodgers´s view, *approach* comprises linguistic and psycholinguistics aspects, i.e., theories of learning and language. The authors replaced the term method by *design*, a level of method analysis that encompasses objectives, syllabus model, types of activities and the role of learners, teachers and materials. Lastly, for the implementation level, instead of technique the authors proposed the term *procedure* to refer to three dimensions: "the way a method handles the presentation, practice, and feedback phases of teaching" (p.31). In this study, we focus on aspects of the approach (underlying theory of language), and some aspects of the design (syllabus model - mainly the relevance of the macroskills - and the dominant activity types) in the coursebooks analysed.

3. English language coursebooks produced in Argentina

The coursebook is defined as "a textbook which provides the core materials for a course" that "includes work on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, functions and the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking". (Tomlinson, 1998:ix). Coursebooks do not constitute a closed category but can be classified according to different criteria. In previous publications we have developed a typology whereby we classify coursebooks as international, localized and local (López Barrios, Villanueva & Tavella, 2008; López Barrios & Villanueva, 2006). The first are centrally produced in English-speaking countries, notably the UK and the USA, and used worldwide whereas the last are specifically designed and produced for use in a particular country or region. By the second type we mean adapted versions of international or local coursebooks produced for a major market such as Spain or Brazil so that they adjust to the school curriculum of a specific country or to special learner characteristics and needs. The coursebooks we discuss in this paper are all examples of local coursebooks, designed to serve the purpose of teaching English in Argentine secondary schools. All the coursebooks analyzed here show some degree of contextualization, meaning that they conform to the curriculum requirements, contain references to the local culture, and take some consideration to the students' L1, Spanish. To date, coursebook selection is largely in the hands of the teachers, thus marking a sharp contrast to the times when the educational authorities exercised tighter control over the use of instructional materials.

As early as 1887 and apparently until the 1960s textbook approval committees were summoned by the national Ministry of Education to inspect the degree of harmony of the coursebooks with the curriculum in force (Sprengelburd & Linares, n.d.). A circular of the Ministry of Education dated 1896 appoints a coursebook approval committee and stipulates that "Los textos definitivamente aceptados deberán llevar en sus carátulas, el precio de venta convenido y la siguiente leyenda: 'Aprobado por el Ministerio de instrucción Pública'" (Memoria 1897, 49). Nevertheless, this regulative function of the state regarding the approval of textbooks was subjected to changes during the eighty-year period covered in this paper, as some administrations lifted the restriction and granted freedom of choice regarding the selection of textbooks, but delegated the supervision to the school directors (Memoria

1899[9]). Additionally, a legend printed on the inside cover of coursebooks published in these years stating that it was designed in accordance with the current syllabus bears witness to the willingness of authors and publishers to reassure potential users as regards its suitability for a specific school type (López Barrios et al, 2004). The convenience of agreeing on a single coursebook for use in a given school so as to ensure uniformity is expressed in the following remark made in the syllabus for Commercial Schools of 1936:

El uso de un texto único en cada curso de un mismo colegio, ha de contribuir a dar una mayor uniformidad a la enseñanza; es conveniente, pues, que en cada colegio los profesores de inglés o una comisión especial de los mismos, decida sobre el texto o los textos que habrán de adoptarse para la enseñanza en todos los cursos (Programa 1936, 19)

For this analysis we have chosen six local coursebooks that we consider to be representative of different foreign language teaching and learning paradigms. The selection focuses on coursebooks for secondary school use, specifically those that met the syllabus requirements of National Schools (until the early 1990s) and one designed to fit the demands set by the Federal Law of Education passed in 1993. In the case of multi-volume courses, only the first book of the series has been analyzed:

Authors	Title	First published	Edition consulted	In accordance with the curriculum of
Pressinger & Munro	*Gramática Inglesa* (One volume)	1886	13th ed., 1937	1884
Drot de Gourville	*The Modern Handbook of English* (Parts I, II and III)	1925	7th ed., 1931	1913
Shakespear de Bignon & Bignon Cadours	*English Lessons* (Books I, II and III)	1954	7th ed., 1961	1949; 1956
Genijovich et al.	*English Alive* (Books A, B and C)	1972	1972	1968
Cancela & Ramasco	*Performance* (1, 2 and 3)	1991	1991	1968
García Cahuzac & Tiberio	*Explorer* (Starter, 1, 2 and 3)	1999	1999	1998 (CBCs)

Table 1: Coursebooks analyzed

The earliest coursebook we analyze in this paper is a typical exponent of Grammar-Translation methodology: Pressinger and Munro's *Gramática Inglesa* (1886). The textbook, written by two teachers of the *Colegio Nacional* de Buenos Aires, was widely used and, according to our findings, appeared for the last time in its 16th edition in 1948. In their yearly reports to the Ministry of Education, some *Colegios Nacionales* mention this book as the adopted one (Memoria 1895), and the syllabuses of 1901 and 1902 base the contents for second and third year on it ("*Lecciones Pressinger-Munro*") and mention Robertson (*Lecciones prácticas de idioma inglés según el sistema de Robertson,* Jackson, 1898a, 1898b, 1898c) as an alternative (Programas 1901, 1902). When *Gramática Inglesa* first appeared, the curriculum of 1884 was in force (Plan de estudios 1884), but the last syllabus published by the Ministry was that of 1874 which listed the contents of the first and second years in reference to Ollendorff's grammar[10]. We assume that the curriculum of 1884 also referred to the contents contained in the syllabus of 1874.

The second coursebook analyzed is a representative of the Direct Method, which introduced innovative changes in foreign language teaching. This method, based on the view of language as means of communication rather than as a formal system, was adopted by the curriculum of 1913, in force when Drot de Gourville's *The Modern Handbook of English* first appeared in 1925. The book was also shortlisted by the coursebook approval committee in the same year (Memoria 1926) and was last printed in its 19th edition in 1954[11]. Apart from the explicit endorsement of the principles of the Direct

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[9] A further reference to this matter is made by Powell (1990:31, note 3).
[10] Probably Palenzuela and Carreño (1851) or Vingut (1868).
[11] According to the information available.

Method, a highlight of the course is the inclusion of the first 12 lessons in phonetic script, a requirement for textbooks that was first expressed in the instructions accompanying the syllabus of 1936 (Drot de Gourville 1931:xvi; Powell, 1990). Spanish is only used in a grammar appendix at the end of the book which is meant to be used by the learners for individual study.

Shakespear de Bignon and Bignon Cadours' *English Lessons* (1961) also adhere to the tenets of the Direct Method. This extensively used coursebook first appeared in 1954 and was reprinted 8 times in the edition analyzed[12] . A "revised edition" printed in full colour was released in 1963. The course, drawn up "in strict accordance with the syllabus in use at present in the first cycle of the secondary schools" (1961: 5), conforms to the syllabus of 1956. Like in *The Modern Handbook of English*, the authors include the first six lessons – half of those present in Drot de Gourville's book – in phonetic spelling and present pronunciation hints at the end of every second lesson. Unlike Drot de Gourville's book, *English Lessons* makes use of illustrations that convey a distinctly Argentine setting, revealed in the looks of the school (p. 99), the classroom and school objects (p. 52), marching soldiers on an Argentine national holiday (p. 114) among others. Some illustrations aid the understanding of grammatical concepts, such as a horse-drawn chariot with the label "adjective" printed on the horse and "noun" on the chariot, pointing out the syntactic difference in noun clauses with respect to Spanish (p. 62). The inclusion of brief and easy poems by English-speaking poets should also be mentioned[13].

The syllabus of 1968 lists as the first of the general objectives of English as a school subject the acquisition of the fundamental structures of the foreign language as an instrument for effective communication (Programa 1968). The change of linguistic paradigm that makes a structural description of language the organizing principle of coursebooks is clearly shown in Genijovich et al´s *English Alive* (1972). This local exponent of The Oral Approach, that conceives language as "a social phenomenon, a learned and social behaviour" (Genijovich et al., 1972c:6) constitutes a further development of a course the same team of authors published in 1964: *A New Approach to English* (Genijovich et al., 1964). The preliminary notes to the Teacher's Guide stress the distinctly oral approach chosen both as a teaching approach and as the authors' conception of language as primarily spoken: "speech is more important and previous to written communication", "the spoken form is the backbone of the learning process", "written language as the representation of the spoken form of the language" (Genijovich et al., 1972c:7). Behaviourism as the language teaching theory on which the course is based is made explicit: "If, …, the mechanism of language is a set of habits (phonological, morphological, syntactic) then, learning a new language consists of learning these habits." (Genijovich et al., 1972c:7) Oral and written drills, question and answer and dramatization of dialogues, supported by the extensive use of visual aids, are suggested in the Preliminary notes to the Teacher's Guide. This also includes hints on planning and evaluation, two crucial aspects that had not been included in the coursebooks analyzed so far and that are considered as indispensable to aid the work of secondary school teachers. Hence the popularity of the course, which was replaced ten years later by a new series, *Satellite* (Genijovich et al., 1982). The less positive aspects of the course, which may have had in turn negative consequences in the classes where the materials were implemented as sole teaching resources, are related to the overemphasis on language structure to the detriment of the contents conveyed by the target language. This poverty of content reaffirmed the negative tendency to place the language systems, notably grammar, at the heart of the learning process.

The decades between the 1940s and the end of the 1970s registered the highest number of Argentine ELT textbooks. By the beginning of the 1990s the production of local coursebooks plummeted to significant levels, due basically to a) the ready access to international coursebooks that were deemed to be of superior quality and that could only compete with local ones in terms of price, and b) the widespread use of photocopying.

New paradigm changes were also present in foreign language teaching when Cancela and Ramasco published the coursebook series *Performance* (1991). The emergence of pragmatics, the concept of communicative competence, Notional-functional approaches to syllabus design and the breakthrough produced by Communicative Language Teaching were the characteristic signs of foreign language teaching at the turn of the century. In this sense, *Performance* constitutes an attempt to interpret CLT for the local context. The subtitle "a functional-grammar approach" indicates that a new dimension of

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[12] Interestingly, the reprints are named "editions" by the editors.
[13] For a deeper analysis of different aspects of this course, see López Barrios et al. (2002, 2003).

language is added and that the principles of item-learning and systems-learning are taken into account by the authors:

> El contacto diario con las expectativas, las preferencias, las inquietudes, las motivaciones, pero también con las dudas, los temores y las inseguridades de nuestros alumnos, nos ha conducido a la búsqueda de una metodología que contemple un punto de equilibrio entre la lengua como función expresiva y comunicativa y el soporte estructural de la gramática de la lengua como sistema. Las últimas teorías lingüísticas sostienen que hay algunas estructuras factibles de adquisición, en tanto que otras, necesitan de un aprendizaje sistemático. (Cancela & Ramasco, 1991:V)

The noteworthy concern expressed in relation to affective factors is also new in Argentine coursebooks. This also constitutes a paradigm shift, in that the learner is placed at the heart of the educational process. The shift is also expressed in terms of an interdisciplinary view of education and the recognition of the need to develop both receptive and productive skills, which is reflected in the unit layout divided into skills – starting with listening, speaking and reading – and language study sections before proceeding on to the writing skill. Additionally, the course attempts to appeal to the learner by the inclusion of full-colour illustrations and the use of graphic devices, although one might question the rather crammed layout. The contents play a more substantial role in this coursebook, and some exponents of the local culture – albeit mainly that of Buenos Aires – are present, as well as some references to the USA: geography, the setting of a weather report, show business personalities, and brief excerpts from Benjamin Franklin, Emily Dickinson and Ernest Hemingway. This inclusion is worthy of mention, as local coursebooks for secondary schools had so far only marginally portrayed aspects of the target culture. When they did, these were mainly aspects of British culture, especially in the initial book of a series.

The last coursebook analyzed was produced at a time when the centralized national system of secondary schools had ended and the provinces took charge of all middle schools, save for those run by the Universities. New curriculum guidelines, the *Contenidos Básicos Comunes* or CBCs, were drawn up and agreed on by the Ministries of Education of all the provinces. These formed the bases for the curriculum designs each province produced. The CBCs defined a number of achievement targets related to the receptive and the productive skills (*Bloques* 1 y 2) as well as a set of specifications regarding literary discourse (*Bloque* 3), a set of procedures regarding the comprehension and production of oral and written texts (*Bloque* 4) and a set of goals regarding attitudes related to the comprehension and production of oral and written texts (*Bloque* 5). Additionally, minimal achievement targets expressed as aims for different levels of development characterized as "*situaciones*" were framed as conceptual and procedural contents and as aims regarding degrees of awareness related to *Bloques* 1, 2 and 3.

García Cahuzac and Tiberio's *Explorer* (1999) "is a series for students of English at 3rd cycle EGB [Educación General Básica] written following the Contenidos Básicos Comunes." (ibid, back cover). The course offers two first level books, a starter level – the one analyzed here – for complete beginners and book 1 for false beginners. A blend of structural and functional contents is noticeable from the contents page, as well as an attempt at a content-driven organization of the syllabus whereby the language contents are subordinate to the topical contents. A further feature is the inclusion of a task in each unit, thus incorporating a task-based element to the course. The layout of the book is appealing to adolescents, portraying characters learners can easily identify with as well as references to local and global culture relevant to the learners of the beginning of the new millennium. A mixture of fictional and factual in the texts provides varied and interesting input. Occasional phonological contrasts between the target language and Spanish are included, and a discovery approach to grammar is favoured through activities in the "Think it over" section.

4. Analysis

4.1. The view of language

In this long history of English language teaching in Argentina, the locally produced books show two main trends as regards the underlying view on language: a) as a formal system or b) as a means of communication. The former is influenced by two main linguistic theories. First, what is commonly referred to as Traditional Grammar, which focuses on prescriptive grammar rules, parts of speech,

declensions and verb conjugations. The study of foreign languages is based on Latin, thus transferring the Latin categories and structures to the other languages. This is evident in the book *Gramática Inglesa* published in 1886. It corresponds to the traditional way of teaching foreign languages molded on the teaching of Latin and Greek. Structuralist theories, on the other hand, view language as a system of structurally related elements of several subsystems (phonological, morphological, etc). Language is described synchronically rather than diachronically and there is an emphasis on spoken (oral) rather than written language. However, the textbooks analysed show that the transition from Traditional Grammar towards structuralism was gradual. For example, *English Lessons* (1961), a book that combines characteristics of the Direct Method and Situational Language Teaching, still includes a rather deductive approach towards grammar, including verb conjugation paradigms and other features, such as a focus on parts of speech, more compatible with Traditional Grammar (see Table 2). This may also be explained by the affinity with the official syllabus for Spanish, reflecting thus an adaptation to the local educational context (López Barrios et al., 2002).

The other view on language evident in the books studied is language as an instrument for the expression of functional meaning. The focus lies mainly on the semantic and communicative dimensions of language. In Argentina, localized books start to reflect the influence of this new approach towards language in the 1990s. We have taken *Performance 1 - A functional grammar approach* (1991) as a milestone that marked a shift in this respect. The change of focus is evident in the table of contents that lists communicative functions (give orders, ask where buildings are) rather than grammar structures. This shift took place in spite of the fact that the official syllabus in force at the time of publication was still that of 1968. It shows that textbooks, to a great extent, are "the visible heart of any ELT programme" (Sheldon (1988:237) and play a central role in defining content and the nature of the teaching process (Villanueva de Debat, et. al., in press). *Explorer Starter* (1999) proposes a more contemporary approach to ELT reflecting an *interactional* view on language, one that "sees language as a vehicle for the realization of interpersonal relations and for the performance of social transactions" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001:21). By carrying out tasks, students are encouraged to perform social transactions. This concept of interactivity has also been transferred to reading and writing as a double interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes as well as between writer and reader (Carrell, Devine & Eskey, 1988)

ear of publ.	Textbook	Method	View on language	Contents (e.g.)	syllabus
886	*Gramática Inglesa*	Grammar-Translation	Formal Traditional Grammar	Plural de los Nombres El caso posesivo	1 884
925	*The Modern Handbook of English I*	Direct Method	Formal. Gram. Focus on pronunciation	What boys and girls do at school Grammar appendix in Spanish	1 913
954	*English Lessons I*	DM + SLT	Traditional Grammar. Structuralism	The colours Grammar hints Conjugations	1 956
972	*English Alive A*	Situational Lang. Teaching	Structuralism	This is a… Is this a….?	1 968
991	*Performance 1*	Communicative Approach	Functional	Give orders Ask where buildings are	1 968
	Explorer	Post-	Functional	Saying	1

ear of publ.	Textbook	Method	View on language	Contents (e.g.)	syllabus
999	*Starter*	communicative Tasks		hello Fictional families	998

Table 2: View of language

4.2. Relevance of the macroskills

The degree of development of the different microskills will be analyzed in relation to the curriculum requirements of the times when the coursebooks were in use, and according to their presence in the coursebooks. Macroskills will be rated according to the following criteria: a) as *an end* (++), when the activity purposefully develops the skill in question, for example, when speaking aims at communicating something, b) as *subsidiary* (+), when the activity does not primarily aim at developing the skill in question, for example when by answering questions on a text learners use the medium of speaking to carry out the task, and c) as *absent* (-), when the skill in question is not developed. Table 3 shows the relative weight of the macroskills:

Syllabus	Course	Reading	Listening	Speaking	Writing
1884	*Gramática Inglesa*	+	-	-	+
1913	*Modern Handbook I*	+	+	+	+
1956	*English lessons I*	+	+	+	+
1968	*English alive A*	+	+	+	+
1968	*Performance 1*	+	+	+	+
1998	*Explorer Starter*	++	++	++	+
					+

Table 3: Macroskills

In general, it is not easy to analyze the development of skills in a foreign language in coursebooks from past times without falling into the temptation of judging them according to our present knowledge of psycholinguistic and second language acquisition processes, discourse and genre studies, and other contemporary developments in applied linguistics. If we defined the development of receptive skills in a foreign language as the application of specific strategies to extract information from an oral or written source in order to fulfil some purpose related to a pedagogic activity, then we could probably only consider the activities contained in the newest coursebook (*Explorer Starter*) as the only one that conforms to the definition. At this point it is clarifying to make a distinction between linguistic skills and communicative abilities, as they are defined in the *Contenidos Básicos Comunes*:

> Básicamente hay dos maneras de abordar la escucha, como *destreza lingüística* y como *habilidad comunicativa*. La primera implica la decodificación de aspectos lingüísticos aislados. La escucha como habilidad comunicativa requiere un análisis global, que incluye los aspectos comunicativos del contexto, y también integra los lingüísticos específicos en relación con el contexto total. Este último enfoque es el deseable ya que el primero no contribuye a la formación de oyentes hábiles en situaciones de comunicación habitual. (CBC 1998, italics are ours)

In this light, the coursebooks analyzed develop linguistic skills to different degrees, but most of them fail to develop communicative ability. This does not imply that learners exposed to those materials did not acquire – to some extent – English as a foreign language, the point is the degree to which less able students successfully developed communicative ability on their own account.

The consideration of the syllabus requirements for the activity in question – the idea of skills is also a newer one – will help us analyze if different modes of communication are developed. Besides, the formulation of objectives is also a relatively new feature in syllabus design. The syllabus of 1956 is the first in which these are formulated as general attainment targets for the three courses, whereas the syllabus of 1968 distinguished between general and specific performance objectives for the three courses. Previously, syllabuses consisted of lists of contents to be covered and activities to be done,

the latter typically worded as "reading, translation and grammatical analysis of easy English texts" (Programa 1888, our translation) or in a similar fashion. As said before, sometimes the contents were not spelled out but specified in relation to a particular textbook: "Segunda y tercera parte lecciones *Pressinger-Munro* hasta modos imperativo y subjuntivo, inclusive" (Programa 1901).

4.2.1. Receptive skills

All the coursebooks contain activities that require reading. In *Gramática Inglesa*, reading is not an end but serves the subsidiary aim of setting the basis for the translation tasks. In the coursebooks designed after the Direct Method, *The Modern Handbook of English* and *English Lessons*, the syllabuses indicate "lectura sencilla en prosa y verso" (Programa 1913) in the first case and "ser capaz de leer textos fáciles con provecho" and "ser capaz de leer con provecho textos más difíciles, literarios o científicos, con ayuda del diccionario" (Programa 1956) in the second, so that reading also serves a subsidiary purpose, namely that of providing a content for the question and answer activities typical of the Direct Method and expressed as "ejercicios orales y escritos" (Programa 1913) and "ejercitación oral y escrita" (Programa 1956). In *English Alive A*, reading activities in which students answer questions is, surprisingly, not a frequent feature. Only 9 lessons out of 40 include activities of this type. This would not suffice to attain the related specific objective stated in the Syllabus of 1968: "Leer prosa sencilla referida a temas que permitan captar el significado lingüístico de lo que se lee y que no requieran capacidad especial para su interpretación." In *Performance 1*, the reading activities in Section C of every lesson, labelled "Reading", do not specifically train reading strategies but tend to test reading comprehension, and some of the activities of this section do not require extracting information from the texts. One particular drawback of these activities is the fact that instead of gist reading many of these activities demand reading for details. In brief, the aim of reading activities is considered to be mainly subsidiary. *Explorer Starter* contains reading activities that purposefully direct the learner to extract information from the reading texts. These focus particularly on the microskills of skimming and scanning.

Listening as a skill is a relatively new feature in ELT coursebooks. As expected, this is completely absent in *Gramática Inglesa*, and in the coursebooks of the Direct Method listening is closely associated with the acquisition of phonology, a special concern of this method. The syllabus of 1913 indicates "Adquisición de una pronunciación correcta" as its first aim, whereas in that of 1956 the guidelines for first year state "ejercicios prácticos para facilitar la correcta audición y emisión de los sonidos" and both involve oral practice including conversation and question and answer activities, which necessarily require the listening skill. These activities might contribute to the attainment of the objective "entender la lengua estudiada al ser hablada claramente en sus formas sencillas sobre temas conocidos", included in the Syllabus of 1956. Since the training of listening strategies is not included in these two coursebooks, listening as a skill has a subsidiary status. The same applies to *English Alive A*: the objective "Entender a ritmo normal de conversación a los que hablan inglés, … , en situaciones similares a las vividas como experiencias de aprendizaje" (Programa 1968) might be attainable provided that the learners are exposed to rich, comprehensible L2 input, i.e. given certain favourable conditions in the learning environment, not because the coursebook proposes special comprehension activities. *Performance 1* evinces a weak treatment of the listening skill. The listening texts (narratives and dialogues) are printed in the book and the activities set either demand quite detailed comprehension or do not depend on information accessed through listening so that they could be solved by reading the passages. In this coursebook, again, listening tends to have a subsidiary function. The *Contenidos Básicos Comunes* of 1998 indicate for both receptive skills the following attainment targets: "comprender textos orales / escritos de desarrollo proposicional lineal, con carga lexical manejable e inferible del contexto", "Leer activamente en la LE". Additionally, *Bloque* 4 of the CBCs specifies the procedures related to the comprehension of oral and written texts, stating the necessary conditions for the development of communicative ability. As such, reading and listening means more than the mere decoding of linguistic signs. What is more, comprehending, as said above, entails an interaction between the reader's schemata and the text. For this, activities that prepare the learner for reading or listening, as well as linking the text to activities that make the learner extract information from it are essential. These can be found in *Explorer Starter*. The presentation dialogues are preceded by activities ("Getting started") that activate the learner's prior knowledge. A possible limitation to the development of listening is the fact that the presentation texts appear in the coursebook and that there are fewer listening than reading activities ("Focus on listening") where

students have to extract information from the spoken text. Despite this restriction, in this coursebook, listening is an end in itself.

4.2.2. Productive skills

Neither speaking nor writing are specified in the only programme that existed at the time when *Gramática Inglesa* appeared (Programa 1874). Only in the third course could writing be said to play a role, as students had to translate brief passages into English. Writing, then, has a subsidiary function.

The production of oral and written output is expressed in the following way in the syllabus of 1913: "abundantes ejercicios orales y escritos. Frases, descripciones, conversaciones y ejercicios de lenguaje aprendidos. Máximas, poesías y trozos cortos, copiados y memorizados. Dictado y traducción." The main type of text present in *The Modern Handbook of English* is the dialogue between the teacher and the pupils, which had the function of presenting the new language points. Some of the dialogues are interspersed with brief descriptions. As mentioned in relation with reading, the questionnaires may have been solved orally, and also probably in writing, same as the rest of the exercises proposed. Translation exercises were not included in the coursebook. In *English lessons I*, similar activities are included, what complies with the syllabus objective "poder expresarse, aún cuando sea con alguna vacilación y cometiendo algunos errores leves, sobre asuntos de la vida diaria, oralmente o por escrito" (Programa 1956). Because the activities proposed in both coursebooks serve mainly the purpose of practicing the language items instead of providing opportunities for self, albeit simple, expression in the L2, the skills of speaking and writing are considered subsidiary. The syllabus of 1968 states, in relation with speaking and writing, "mantener diálogos sencillos en lengua inglesa con cierta fluidez, pronunciación correcta y ritmo y entonación adecuados" and "verter por escrito y con corrección las estructuras y el léxico aprendidos". Since these are the attainment targets for the end of the three-year cycle, it is not possible to hypothesize whether these could be met on the basis of the materials proposed by *English alive A.* It is rather the activities listed under "ejercitación" in the 1968 syllabus that are mainly covered in the textbook: question and answer drills, substitution and transformation drills, simple dialogues where students substitute some elements. Again, speaking and writing are subsidiary skills. The "Speaking" section in *Performance 1* consists of controlled and guided activities under the label of "practice" where the grammatical patterns and exponents of functions are consolidated. The activities are rather mechanical and decontextualized, and no other more personalized speaking activities are included. The activities in the "Writing" section are labelled "exercises" and consist of sentence production, completion and transformation. Unlike the speaking section, some text production activities are contained such as dialogue writing, letter writing, description, "composition", all guided using different kinds of visual and verbal prompts. Interestingly, in contrast with the speaking activities, some of the written productions require self expression. Additionally, the writing section also includes some language analysis activities. In sum, speaking is a subsidiary skill whereas writing is in some cases an end that allows communicative ability to emerge. Regarding the productive skills, the CBCs of 1998 state attainment targets that reflect a qualitatively different view of communication: "producir textos orales / escritos cortos de estructura simple en respuesta a consignas que no contengan más de una instrucción, y que impliquen la resolución de una tarea comunicativa de un paso". The concept of communicative task implies speaking or writing as an end, not only as a means to practice the new language, and the idea that the L2 is a vehicle to express meaningful contents. *Explorer Starter* includes simple tasks at the end of every unit that require learners to perform a series of activities such as planning, designing, collecting information, creating a text and presenting the results. These generate a response on the part of the class, for example comparing, guessing, reaching a consensus, expressing opinion, and the like. Both speaking and writing are systematically developed and there is a noticeable balance between speaking and writing as an end and as a means to practice and consolidate the new language, whereby the development of communicative ability purposefully lies at the heart of these activities.

4.3. Types of activities

In this section we go back to the conception of language as a formal system or as a means of communication that sets the foundation of the methods and approaches and the way these are translated into the coursebooks analyzed. This view of language is made evident in the kinds of activities included so that a broad difference can be established between those that focus on the language system and those that focus on communication. The first are activities whose aim is for

learners to verify a grammar rule. The learner contribution in these activities is limited a) to the completion of missing forms in sentences, either by selecting these forms from a list of options (for example, "complete with some or any") or by providing them on the basis of their knowledge of the language ("fill in the blanks"), b) to the derivation of forms from a base form ("write the verbs in the correct form"), c) to the transformation of a form into another ("turn into the passive voice"), d) to the arrangement of given elements into a sentence ("build sentences using these words"). Other possibilities such as comparison with the L1 or translation into L1 are less frequent, save for the latter in the case of the grammar-translation course *Gramática Inglesa*. In sum, all these activities focus on the student's development of *explicit knowledge*. On the other hand, activities that focus on communication prompt learners to produce output, a process that may be more or less guided through verbal or visual prompts. These activities help learners incorporate the newly acquired rules so as to enhance their accuracy. Through them learners develop the *implicit knowledge* that is essential for fluent communication. Activities of this type may involve the creation of a single sentence or the production of connected speech (skills development activities).

The following chart shows the percentage of both types of activities in the coursebooks analyzed:
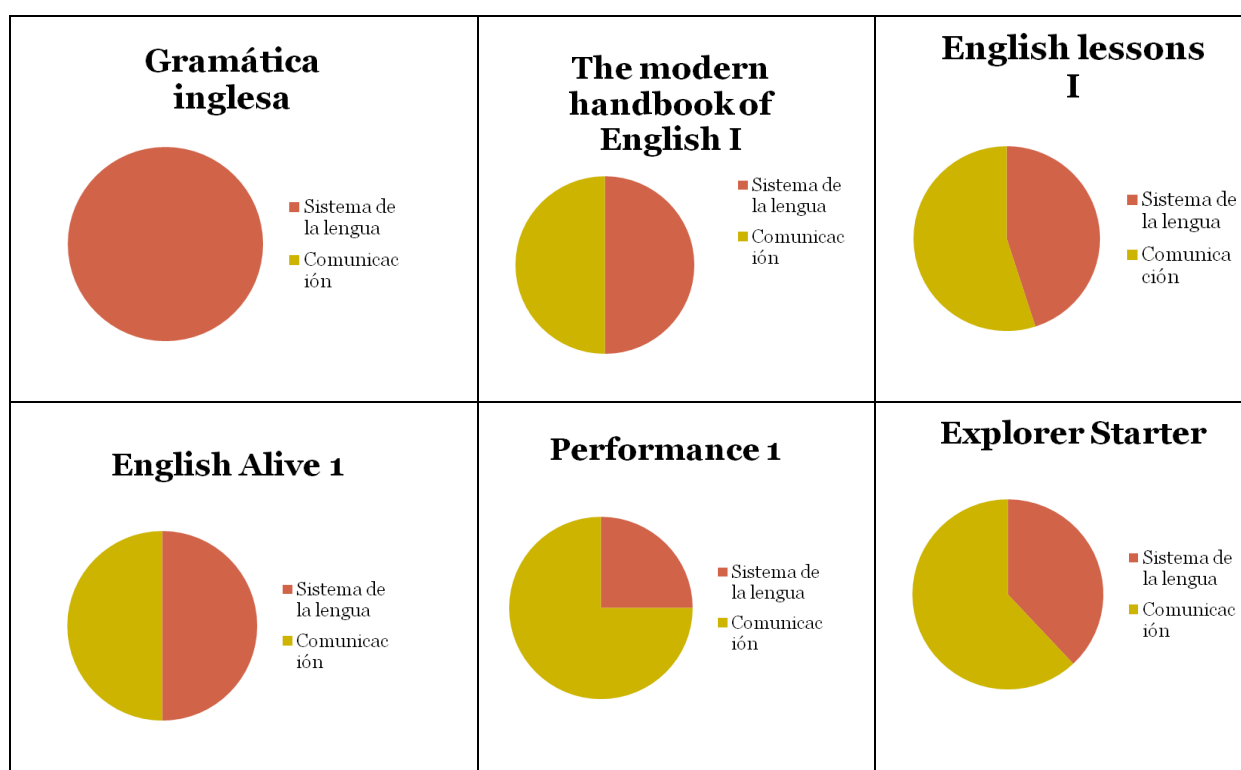

Chart 1: Activity types

The coursebooks represent different methods and approaches in English language teaching and five different secondary school syllabuses based on them. In the Grammar-Translation course, *Gramática Inglesa*, the target language as a means of communication does not play a role. Instead, learners are expected to learn the system of the L2 and to apply it to the translation of decontextualized sentences. This is in line with the tenets of the method and with the syllabus requirements.

The coursebooks that represent the Direct Method, *The Modern Handbook of English I* and *English Lessons I*, reveal a balance between activities that develop the language systems and those that focus on communication, with a slightly higher number of communication-based activities in *English Lessons I*. The activities of this second type in both coursebooks are represented mainly by the question and answer exercises centred on the content of the reading passage, including some personal questions such as "Can you paint? Are you fond of painting? Is your teacher pleased with you?" (Drot de Gourville, 1931:49). This practice reflects one of the principles of the Direct Method as described by Richards & Rodgers: "Oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in

small, intensive classes." (2001:12). Even though secondary school classes in public education are seldom small and the three or four hours a week devoted to English are definitely not characteristics of intensive classes, this kind of activity was very widespread in the Argentine EFL coursebooks published between the 1920s and the 1960s.

Based on a different methodological basis, namely the Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching, *English Alive A* also displays the same percentage of activities of both kinds. The activities that focus on communication, in contrast to those in the Direct Method courses, do not involve any personal expression – save for two activities with questions such as "Who are you? What are you? How old are you?" among others (Genijovich et al., 1972b:38), or "Can you dance? Where can you run and jump?" (ibid, 71). It could be concluded, then, that the course did not constitute a move forward as regards the inclusion of procedures and activities contributing to the expression of personal meaning. The observation by Richards & Rodgers that in the Oral Approach "the skills are approached through structure" (2001:41) may account for the heavy emphasis placed on the acquisition of structures, as their accurate use was considered a prerequisite of speaking and writing. The different conception of error that was actively discussed in the 1960s, leading to the notion of interlanguage, is not yet reflected in this course.

The authors of *Performance 1* make it clear in the subtitle of the series that theirs is a functional-grammar approach. The alignment of the course with Communicative Language Teaching is also made evident in the foreword: "Contempla de manera equilibrada las cuatro habilidades lingüísticas: dos **receptivas** (audición y lectura) y dos **productivas** (habla y escritura)." (Ramasco & Cancela, 1991:V, emphasis in the original). Quantitatively, three quarters of the activities focus on communication whereas one fourth of them deal with the language system. Although the numbers suggest a positive trend towards communication, a qualitative analysis reveals that a large number of these consist of controlled and guided output practice activities where learners make oral and written statements on the basis of verbal or visual prompts. These are included both in Section B "Speaking" (labelled as "practice") and in Section E "Writing" ("exercises"). Noticeably, learners are offered more opportunities to produce written discourse (dialogues, description, letters, etc.) than spoken discourse, thus revealing a concern with this skill. Nevertheless, the "functional" element is not always present in these activities, as they are seldom framed in a context and a particular text type: "Look at the dialogue ... and write a composition about 'Ramón's daily routine'" (ibid, 186); "Write a composition about your favorite school subject". (ibid, 210)

Explorer Starter, as a contemporary representative of Communicative Language Teaching, shows a larger proportion of communication-focused activities, though in number one finds a larger amount of form-focused activities in comparison to *Performance 1*. This is justified in the light of trends in Second Language Acquisition of the last decade which assign a significant role to the development of language awareness (cf. López Barrios, Villanueva de Debat & Helale, 2009). Form-focused activities are a part of the "Reflecting on grammar" section whose aim is to make the learners self-discover the properties of the new grammar items presented in each unit. In this way, a purpose for the inclusion of form-focused activities is established. This was not evident in EFL coursebooks of former times where grammar activities were considered springboards to communication. The characteristics of communication activities in this coursebook have already been described above in relation to skills development.

5. Conclusion

Our retrospective study of coursebooks produced in Argentina revealed several interesting facts about the teaching of English as a foreign language in our country during the long path from the Grammar Translation Method to Communicative Language Teaching. First of all, there has been a considerable production of textbooks in Argentina boosted first by the requirement that school textbooks needed to conform to the official curriculum and be approved by the Ministry of Education, and more recently by the influence of Humanistic Approaches advocating the need to take into consideration the particular needs of particular students, in this case the target users. Although this production diminished during certain periods in our history, it has regained momentum due to the need to adapt textbooks to the local context. Secondly, local coursebooks have always, in one way or another reflected the new global trends in educational, linguistic and learning theories. Shifts in the conception of language as a formal system to that of language as a vehicle for communication, however, have been gradual and,

as a result, a more eclectic criterion has been evident both in the types of activities and in the focus on macroskills, one that combined the traditional grammar with other views such as structuralism and/or functionalism, depending on the year of publication of the textbooks (López Barrios et al., 2002). Finally, books produced locally have always attempted, to different degrees, to adapt the general approach and the content of the coursebooks to the needs and characteristics of the local context. We hope that this brief survey will serve as a modest contribution to the understanding of the teaching of foreign languages in our country. We believe that "Through studying the history of language teaching we can gain perspective on present-day thought and trends and find directions for future growth" (Stern 1983:76).

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Papers

EVALUATION OF AN EAP COMMUNICATIVE READING COURSE AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL: A REFLECTION
Subtheme: Evaluation in the context of the communicative teaching and learning

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Abstract

This piece of work provides an evaluation of an EAP reading course throughout sixteen years of practice at University level. The current course is the outcome of subsequent needs analyses which include redesigning goals and syllabuses, followed by innovations to optimize a two-year course reduced to a hundred-hour one. The aim is to share our reflection on teaching and learning academic content in English in a meaningful context for specific fields of study.

Key words: evaluation – reflection – innovation – communicative – reading

Context

The present work tries to provide a reflection on sixteen years of practice as a team in the English chair at the *Universidad Nacional de Misiones (UNaM)*. As from 1995 on, two teachers of English began working as assistants. Their inclusion meant "a breath of fresh air". Subsequently, other teaching assistants joined and made the team mellow with time. Eventually, a colleague from a Teacher Education Institution gave the research team its present conformation.

The different courses we have been teaching, which were added with the passing of time are: Chemical Engineering, Biochemistry, Pharmacy, Biology, Mathematics and Physics Teacher Education, Bachelor in Genetics, Food Engineering, Bachelor in Chemical and Bromatological Analyses, in forty-student groups.

This research work is considered an evaluation of product. According to Nunan (1992) any investigation which contains questions, data and their interpretation is regarded as research. He follows: "... (T)he measurement of students performance is the key to programme evaluation. As assessment data are key elements in an evaluation, careful consideration should be given to three factors: 1) the nature of the evidence to be used; 2) the relationship between the evaluation and the programme goals and 3) the appropriate measurement instruments to be used." (Hudson 1989 in Nunan 1992).

The English course is geared at Reading Comprehension as the result of an "unwritten" needs analysis at the onset of the courses 50 years ago. The subject then comprised two years of English study. During the 1990s, there was a national process of shortening undergraduate courses, giving way to the need of postgraduate studies, for which fees are paid. Majors were reduced from annual to one-semester subjects and our two-year English course to a one-year course. This led to another needs analysis in terms of present and target situation (Dudley Evans and St John 1998) to redesign our goals and syllabus (Hyland 2006).

We term it "unwritten" in consonance with Songhori (2008:03), who posits that formal needs analysis - a corner stone in ESP teaching and learning- is relatively new in language teaching,whereas informal ones have been carried out by teachers "who have intended to meet the needs of their students during their learning" to finish expounding, "once learners specialized needs and special language registers are identified, then relevant teaching materials can be used to teach the course more effectively."

We were able to persuade Course Coordinators and subject teachers that students need some background in content areas, before we teach them the different topics in English, which is now being taught in the second or third year of studies, after students comply with some required content subjects. This allows us to work with texts, in paper or from the web from the very first day. This way they see the text as a whole.

Though goal statements are related to needs analyses, both teachers' and students' views concerning language and learning cannot be left aside. Thus, it is mostly the teachers who decide which skills and abilities are to be pursued and achieved in the course. Having this as a basis, we decided to include such goals as the following: "The English course at the School of Exact Sciences aims at helping students improve their reading strategies for processing academic texts."

Objectives were also redesigned and redirected to describe those behaviours we perceived as "achievable" taking into account the shortened teaching time mentioned above. As an example derived from the skills we decided to focus on, one of our new objectives is: "To read a text and be able to transfer information in the form of a bar chart, line graph, etc.", thus, giving evidence of an appropriate communicative interaction with it.

Among the EAP types of syllabuses, we decided on a process syllabus, within the Analytic type. This decision is rooted in the fact these syllabuses not only represent the way things are done but also put emphasis on learning procedures; thus the learner's role in reinterpreting and making decisions is vital. This type of syllabuses, as Hyland (2007) poses, "provides a decision making framework for student-teacher collaboration in the purposes, content and ways of working in a course and offer students a voice in the management of their learning."

The decision of adopting mostly a process syllabus for our course also brought about the inclusion of a scaffolded learning approach to the teaching and learning processes. Our students are actively and constantly supported, strategies are taught and guidance is provided so as to give meaningful and relevant contexts for using these strategies (Hyland 2007).

In order for students to become strategic readers, the strategies taught should develop from the learner´s own particular context. The following strategies have been found consistent to affect comprehension, so they can form the basis for selection of strategies in instruction: 1. Clarifying the purpose of reading in order to determine the appropriate strategy to use; 2. Activating relevant background knowledge and linking it to the text; 3. Allocating attention to important pieces of information in the text; 4. Evaluating content for internal consistency and compatibility with prior knowledge; 5. Self-monitoring and self-regulation of comprehension; and 6. Drawing and testing inferences regarding the text message (Hudson 2007).

State of the Art

We consider the reading process is affected by the following variables: grapheme recognition, phonological representation, syntactic structure, background knowledge, processing strategies, text structure understanding, vocabulary and context of the reading act. It involves the interaction of processes and knowledge, from basic decoding skills, higher-level cognitive skills and interactional skills (Hudson 2007). It is an interactive process (Bernhardt 1991) and, at the same time, compensatory (Stanovich 1980 in Hudson, 2007).

Bernhardt (1991) expresses that in her model, the text is characterized by its linguistic elements (semantics and syntax), its structure, pragmatic nature, its intentionality, its content and its topic, which interact with the reader in process. She posits readers "see" different things in texts. They make individual decisions about what is important in texts. Then, they "reconstruct" it according to those decisions. The input text and the output text are, in Bermhardt's integrated view, different entities.

The compensatory processing interactive model proposed by Stanovich (1980 in Hudson 2007) incorporates orthographic rules, syntax knowledge, semantic knowledge, and context of lexical ítems. This approach expresses that a deficit in one of the component subskills of reading may cause a compensatory reliance on another skill that is present. A lack of ablility in a lower level can be compensated for by higher-level skills.

Following the belief that "hypotheses are adventures of the mind" (Medawar 1963 in Nunan 1992:01), we set out to the concretion of our belief that our evaluation of product would lead to the ultimate transformation of our EGAP to an EAP course.

Reflection on Innovations

This work tries to provide a reflection on our effort to cope with the institutional decision of shortening the course load of English. At this juncture, we were thrown into making changes to optimize the teaching of the subject "*Inglés Instrumental*". Statistical and interpretive instruments were used to evaluate our practice and students' performance, some already existing in the English chair and others especially devised.

Innovations comprise, among others: the writing of in-house material designed to meet the needs of the different disciplines, which are revised and updated every two years. We choose texts we consider relevant to tasks the learners must be able to perform in their academic work. In 1998 we wrote the first Practical Work Guidebook, validated through an action research project.

Another innovation was the First Day Questionnaire, which tries to get information about prior knowledge (characteristics of previous English courses attended, if any), expectations, opinion about language of delivery and previous need of bibliography in English. This questionnaire is shown below.

Apellido y Nombre: . . . . **Carrera:** . . . .

A.

1. ¿Le gustan los idiomas? ¿Y específicamente el inglés? ¿Le resulta fácil? SI – NO - Justifique

2. Experiencia previa en inglés (primaria / secundaria / privado). Especifique número de años y modalidad.

3. Tipos de actividades realizadas:
- Oral: diálogos / descripciones / narraciones
- Lectura: silenciosa / en voz alta / lenta / rápida
- Escucha: diálogos / canciones / lectura de textos / otros.
- Escritura: oraciones / diálogos / cartas (formales – informales – e-mails) / descripciones / narraciones.
- Práctica de gramática: mucho / poco
- Traducciones o interpretación de textos (tipos de textos)
- Uso del diccionario: monolingüe / bilingüe. Indicar frecuencia de uso

4. Material didáctico: libro de texto / fotocopias del libro de texto / material auténtico (diarios, revistas, folletos, etc.)

5. Metodología: trabajo individual / en pares / en grupos.

B.

1. ¿Por y para qué cree que se dicta Inglés en su carrera?
2. En base a su respuesta anterior, ¿qué actividades cree que tenemos que realizar?
3. En su opinión, ¿la clase debe dictarse en inglés o en español?
4. El uso del diccionario es: a) conveniente   b) necesario   c) indispensable
5. ¿Qué expectativas tiene de este curso de inglés?
6. ¿Utilizó o utiliza material en inglés en alguna Asignatura? Especifique.

Observaciones: . . . .

The End of Term Survey was devised for students to evaluate their own learning and the organization of the course. For this reflection we narrowed it down to some of its items, to validate our practice and gauge students' perceptions of their achievement when finishing the course. See the survey below.

End of Year Survey (2009)

2009	COMISION A 16 Estudiantes	COMISION B 16 Estudiantes	COMISION C 17 Estudiantes	COMISION D 13 Estudiantes	* COMISION E 4 Estudiantes
a. ¿Qué fue lo que más le sirvió del curso? a) Ejercicios de lectocomprensión b) La ejercitación	5 4	3 5	6 3	5 7	2 2
b. ¿Qué fue lo que menos te sirvió del curso? a) Nada	15	15	16	13	4
c. ¿Qué cree fue lo que mejor aprendió? a) Traducción	5	3	5	6	1

b) Bloques N-V	3	6	5	4	2
c) Tiempos Verbales	4	2	7	4	1
d. ¿Qué cree fue lo que menos aprendió? a) Vocabulario b) Bloque Verbal c) Identificación del núcleo en BN	8 5 1	2 4 2	5 6 6	- - 3	1 2 1
e. ¿Cómo leía al principio del curso? a) Palabra por palabra b) Lectura global c)Palabras sueltas	8 3 4	5 3 4	7 2 -	1 8 4	1 2 1

- The number of surveys is low, as it was administered after the final Half Term Exam. Students usually do not attend classes after it, as they need to study for half-term exams of content subjects.

We were stirred up by the opinion of the peers of CONEAU on our subject on occasion of the Accreditation of Chemical Engineering. – UNaM in 2005 who wrote: "… It is worth noting that the methodology adopted by the teachers of the subject is highly positive as well as the teaching strategies and teaching materials selected for the classes… " (Res.117/05, CONEAU).

A Final Reflection

Language in the EAP course is used for teaching and learning academic content in a meaningful context, giving priority to linguistic needs for specific content areas to develop thinking skills and learning strategies. "ESP is not simply a matter of getting students to learn specific features of English that typically occur in different kinds of text (specialist terminology, or commonly occurring grammatical structures) but of socializing them into different discourses: the socio-cultural modes of thought and behaviour that characterize a community." (Howatt with Widdowson 2004:356). These characteristics pave the way for our syllabus to be communicative. In what respects? We agree with Littlewood (1981 in Jordan 1997) who discusses the purposes of communicative activities and their contribution to language learning, citing for example, that "they provide 'whole-task practice', i.e. the total skill; they improve motivation; they allow natural learning", among others.

Since our intention was to evaluate the work carried out to optimize the teaching of the subject, we could conclude that the innovations implemented have had a positive impact both on the teaching and learning processes.

Perhaps we can finish our reflection with what we consider is the overarching outcome of our plight to enhance teaching and learning. As it can be gathered from what was previously explained, we were teaching English for General Academic Purposes (common core) as seen by Jordan (1997). In general, it comprised the global language skills (study skills) with what the different discourse communities have in common. As the result of this ongoing process of redirecting our practice, we decided to group students to teach them EAP for Allied Sciences, so that their specific needs (specific language) are catered for (Biochemistry and Pharmacy; Chemical Engineering and Food Engineering and Chemical and Bromatological Analyses; Biology and Genetics; Mathematics and Physics). The innovations have demanded great commitment, especially in materials writing, but our students are worth the effort. This stimulating experience is for us part of a never-ending process: Lifelong Professional Development, in which we firmly believe.

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Microblogging for Language Learning:
a Review of Options and their Potential.

Subtheme: The role of TICs in the communicative classroom
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Abstract
Microblogging can help develop written and oral fluency; students can learn to express themselves more precisely; teachers can reinforce what they have introduced in their classrooms. Three microblogging tools will be introduced: Twitter, Plurk and Edmodo will be analyzed and compared to ascertain how much they allow teachers to boost task-based learning, interactivity and collaborative learning safely, and to encourage students to achieve common learning goals by working together.

Introduction
With the advent of technology many new tools have entered our classrooms. Blogs have proliferated widely, since they provide collaborative environments to foster autonomy and learning strategies and to facilitate tutoring, independent learning and class work. Yet, other so-called Web 3.0 technologies, such as Microblogging, are replacing blogs, as they can be more interactive and quick, imposing the necessity to abbreviate to fit in ideas within 140 characters, thus promoting an interesting use of the language, in snippets of information.

What is Microblogging?
As an exponent of a "snack culture" Microblogging privileges text brevity, users´ mobility and virtual networks as social environments. It answers one question, originally, "what are you doing?", which some programmes have chosen to change for "what's in your mind?", to widen the concept and give way to a more academic, or intellectualized answer than a simple "polishing my shoes".
It fulfils a need of being fast and getting instant feedback, as well as of getting more connections, thus helping shape your own community, around your own interests. It's YOU who will be choosing who to follow, and YOU who will be moulding your network by providing interesting information which will catch your followers' attention. How will you get to know about other people who share your interests? By tagging, the concept which helps build up a network as you label each of your postings with a word you choose, which will describe it as closely as possible. Thus, all members in the big community will be sharing tags with others, and getting together to talk about their interests and enlarge their knowledge or get updated on their hobbies.

What do people use Microblogging for…?
Users of Microblogging will find it unmatchable to ask for and provide help, to quickly spread a piece of news, to share ideas, get advice, make recommendations, announce events. And for the dissemination of publications and materials, to make product recommendations, profiting from serendipitous improvements and discoveries or from following celebrities.
People also tweet to just follow conversations, follow those who post interesting snippets or to participate in a community made up of people who share common interests.

What is Twitter http://twitter.com/ ?
 ..."a free social networking and micro-blogging service that allows users to send updates…" Wikipedia
..."the most popular of the genre of 'microblogging' tools that emulate SMS messaging but fall short of blogging…" V. Stevens
..."one of the largest platforms in the world for sharing real-time data" Douglas A. McIntyre, in TIME
Twitter was born in 2006 and in a couple of years became a world-wide tool as a different, easier, faster way of communicating with people from all corners, find others sharing your views, exchange bits of information, and build up your own community with people you share interests with.
Similar to a Discussion Forum, in that thoughts and ideas are shared with other users, Twitter does not organize threads but links ideas which members "like" by re-tweeting them or by "replying" to tweets, even to specific recipients.

Features
This microblogging tool par excellence combines features of SMS text messages and blogs using up to 140-characters-long text-based posts. Updates are instantly delivered via instant messaging, SMS, RSS, email under restrictions users can choose from, depending on their aims.

Why the interest?
Because of its quickness and its distinct, conversational style, it is chosen by millions of members every day to house the dissemination of publications and materials, product recommendations, serendipitous improvements and discoveries, and to locate original sources of ideas, quotes, and information. Many others tweet to follow conversations or participate in a community.

Why should educators integrate Microblogging into their teaching…?
Because by imposing the necessity to abbreviate to fit in ideas, it develops skills for word selection, fulfilling a need of being fast and of getting instant feedback and more connections. Thus, it encourages autonomous learning and helps users shape their own community using tags to build up a network whose members share real time data.

What are Microblogging benefits as a classroom tool?
- it offers opportunities to practice specific language skills
- students learn how to focus on what they say better
- class chatter: conversations continue inside and outside of class
- it develops a classroom community
- it helps students get a sense of the world
- it increases parental awareness
- users can track a word
- users can track a conference
- it helps send instant feedback
- users can choose to follow a professional/ famous person
- it favours storytelling
- it allows for the correction of tweets
- it integrates note-passing into a lesson
- users can collaborate in twitterature, a good place for those who are fond of literature, and who get together to share different authors and their work.

Basically, Microblogging is all about conversation; therefore, it keeps students in contact, leads to more interactive and swift discussions, emphasizes fluency in communication and focuses on conciseness and accuracy, thus being well suited to task-based language learning.

There is some advice users could bear in mind when "tweeting":
- answer "What has your attention?" and not "What are you doing", to show what your interests are and thus help other users get to know you to start sharing
- promote a blog post, if you have read one which may be of public interest
- ask for opinions on different issues
- follow interesting people –those who provide interesting bits of information
- direct student's attention to good things, by finding people who post relevantly to their own interests
- caution: be wary of always promoting your stuff, or else you will sound too egocentric
- talk about non-education stuff too and show your followers you are a human being too!

Twibes: adds to Twitter www.twibes.com/
Many additional tools have populated the Microblogging world to add more capabilities to this already worldwide-known platform. Twibes is one of them. It helps find Twitter people interested in similar topics enabling them to meet and participate in conversations; it gathers likeminded members around key words, organizes tweets, and encourages community formation allowing users to find and join any group.

Plurk http://www.plurk.com/
Plurk is another microblogging platform which has gained many users along its way. It boasts some differences when compared to Twitter, such as:
- the ability to embed video from YouTube and images

- a horizontal time line: users can scroll back through time lines
- threads are easier to follow, since they are visually linked
- there is a distinction between friends and fans, which adds to its "social" features
- the possibility of accumulating 'karma' by responding quickly and by inviting friends to join you
- it allows for the use of emoticons
- there is a manageable flow of information
- it offers a safer environment
- there is a good choice of verbs for the message: think, feel, think, give, share and some more, which helps development of vocabulary and usage in context
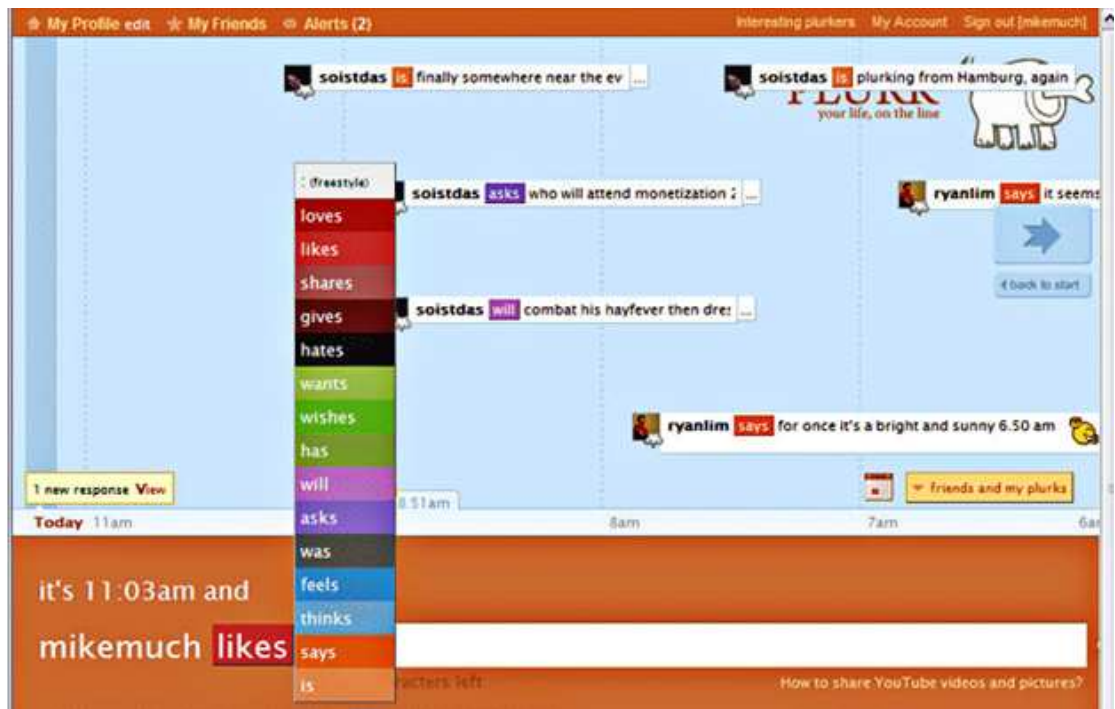
Plurk vs Twitter

If we compare Twitter with Plurk, we will see the former gives members access to a huge knowledge base, which can also be a downside, as it makes it the target of hype, spam merchants and hackers – not the case of Plurk, where there are no hackers, spam or reputation builders, thus offering a safer environment, with a manageable flow of information.

On Plurk threads are easier to follow, since all items appear in a timeline and threads are packaged in the item, making it a good tool for collaboration. Besides, Plurk allows the use of emoticons, offers a widget to embed in your personal blog as well as YouTube videos and images.

There is an interesting feature in Plurk, which allows users to choose from different verbs to use in their postings: think, love, share, among others; and the possibility of accumulating "karma" can be a challenge, though it might also prove demoralizing, since to have a "high karma" it is necessary to post every day, get more fans and friends or receive more comments to your own.

Twitter, on the other hand, makes a good tool for conversational purposes and encourages brevity, though to find likeminded people you will need to resort to "tagging", since its environment is totally linear. In contrast, you can scroll back through a horizontal time line in Plurk, which helps find similar ideas.

There are many third party tools in Twitter, and no third party developers in Plurk. And while Twitter encourages brevity, Plurk encourages wordiness and is good for collaboration.

How to use Plurk in the classroom..?
- to share resources and links
- to correct sentences
- to build up collaborative stories, benefitting from "clustered" messages
- to speak about everyday lives and share
- to put up images to comment on/describe
- to create a learner diary

- to post sentences using one verb every day
- to send reminders of events, deadlines, meetings
- to ask questions and get answers, all in the same "cluster"

Edmodo *http://www.edmodo.com/*
Among the other various Microblogging platforms there is one which meets valuable pedagogical needs, called Edmodo. It is a private communication platform built for teachers and students, a blend of social networking and online classes.

What are Edmodo´s features?
- It is NOT open
- It is NOT a wiki (only teachers can edit)
- It is NOT a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)

But it is a safe, quiet space online to get you and your students wired, an extension of your f2f class for communication purposes, a simple way to exchange and share opinions, files, homework, links, and audio.

Both Edmodo and Twitter…
- are web 2.0 apps
- allow for networking and working with groups
- let users post short messages to group members
- offer direct messaging and "public timeline"
- require creating accounts
- open a personal account page for every user
- allow for uploading/choosing users´ pictures or avatars
- offer archiving
- work on tagging

However, unlike Twitter, Edmodo
- is like an online class platform
- has the capability of uploading and storing files
- creates threaded discussions: not last on top
- has different types of main account pages
- opens teacher pages which have a great deal of control
- allows users to create different groups
- grants different privileges to users´ "friends"
- lets members post assignments, announcements and reminders
- offers file-sharing: students turn in assignments for teachers to evaluate
- offers video embedding, uploading Multimedia files and using a poll.

Moreover, to join Edmodo users do not need an email address, the platform cannot be reached from mobile phones, there are no @ or # nomenclature, students cannot directly communicate with each other, and there is a group-generated coding which identifies each group and which is needed to join one.

All these features make Edmodo a safer platform to use with students of all ages.

In short, what are the advantages of using Edmodo..?
- it uses no paper
- communication is fast
- there is scaffolding, which aids learning
- users can participate from home
- users can join different groups
- teachers can open as many groups as they want
- privacy is an asset
- teacher decides which posts are public
- it is a very userfriendly platform
- the code protection feature makes it a safe environment to use with learners of all ages

How can we use Edmodo with learners…?

To…
- post homework online
- return homework online
- communicate with experts
- share useful websites –links, games, polls
- send reminders: class events/ dates
- work on a calendar

Yet, Edmodo has a few Twitter-esque uses outside the classroom. It can prove an easy communication tool for a school club: to share files, post links, exchange information; as a professional development tool, to open a different group to share with colleagues; as a project management tool for teams in educational settings; as a family communication tool we can use to schedule meetings with close relatives and friends; as a daily to-do list.

Edmodo, therefore, may help develop digital pride to those students who are technologically skilful; digital safety to all users; digital responsibility, once members understand and comply with the rules of the game; digital respect, a valuable "skill" needed as an online participant; social skills, to relate efficiently and appropriately online; the rules of netiquette, which teachers should point out to in preparation for the experience.

"With Twitter and other microblogging platforms, teachers from elementary schools to universities are setting up what is known as a "backchannel" in their classes. The real-time digital streams allow students to comment, pose questions (answered either by one another or the teacher) and shed inhibitions about voicing opinions. Perhaps most importantly, if they are texting on-task, they are less likely to be texting about something else."(1)

Each teacher will analyze and compare different microblogging tools like Twitter, Plurk and Edmodo to decide which platform meets the needs of their students and which group of learners will be in need of having task-based learning, interactivity and collaborative learning boosted safely. It will be the teachers´ role to encourage their students to achieve common learning goals by working together.

The renewed contacts between the students and the teacher through microblogging can also boost their respective trust, lead to increased motivation and trigger conversation, keeping students in contact and emphasizing and fostering communication –the ultimate aim of all language educators.

(1)TRIP GABRIEL Speaking Up in Class, Silently, Using Social Media
Published: May 12, 2011 http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/13/education/13social.html

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An Experience: Developing EFL Materials Locally

Subtheme: Teaching Materials and Communicative Language Teaching and Learning

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Abstract

This paper describes an experience in developing EFL materials for state-run primary schools in Córdoba carried out by a group of EFL teacher-designers. The presentation will deal with issues such as: needs analysis, the role of English on the primary school curriculum and production of pedagogic materials. Description of the organizational work structure for the design, piloting and production of the materials will be provided.

Introduction

The idea of developing EFL materials locally starts as a result of a needs analysis carried out by a group of young teachers who visited state-run primary schools where English had been included as part of a government project called "Jornada Extendida" in Córdoba, Argentina. This project involves students staying in school two more hours per day to cover a number of disciplines recently added to the curriculum such as Drama, Information Technology, Literature and foreign languages. As a first step, it has been applied in schools located in under-privileged areas of the province.
Through lesson observations and informal talks with teachers, a number of problems were detected: a) materials produced abroad for a different educational context; b) no integration of EFL with other school subjects and c) students' limitations with L1 affected communication in general. Having identified these three issues we thought that one way of solving the drawbacks was the design and elaboration of teaching materials.

As Tomlinson (2003) clearly states, "EFL teachers are more trained in how to exploit materials rather than in developing materials." So our first move was to read about materials design. Richards (2005) maintains that before initiating the process of materials development it is necessary to consider the linguistic framework and situational constrains that will act as guiding principles during the creative stage. We tried to maximize students' linguistic production while minimizing potential situations in which students may feel uncomfortable. We did not try to provide students with authentic material, since we share Widdowson's argument that materials are helpful for learning "when the (learning) processes they activate are authentic" (Widdowson 1987 in Richards 2005). There is not much literature about practical experiences concerning material design, there is much more on the theoretical bases to be taken into consideration. McDonough and Shaw (1993) state that course planning, syllabus design, the appropriateness of methods as well as the development and selection of materials and resources will be affected by the role of English in the country and the role of English in schools. An important point to make in this respect is that English has been included in the Argentinean elementary school curriculum without taking into account a clear profile of teachers and job specifications for the context. It is a fact that most of the teachers responsible for "Jornada Extendida" are not EFL professionals. Considering this reality, we agreed on developing teaching materials that would benefit not only the students but also the non-professional teachers by providing them with a basic insight on the planning and actual delivery of the course.

Starting Off

We had clearly established the context of use of the material: the type of schools, the learners´ profile and the number of hours devoted to English on a weekly basis. We decided to evaluate books in the market that somehow fit that description, especially the age of the students who are eleven years old. Teachers have always evaluated textbooks to adopt them or adapt them. In fact, a brief review of the literature on materials development reveals the focus has been on evaluation (Cunningworth, 1984; Rea Dickins and Germaine, 1992; Tock, 2010).

This evaluation fostered many questions concerning language theory and language use as well as about language learning theory that would illuminate the task of design. So, we decided to adopt a communicative approach orientation and hands-on activities. We also considered of prime importance to include special sections devoted to instilling values such as respect for oneself and others, people acceptance, collaborative work and respect for the environment among others.

Given that we believe students would feel identified with the characters as they got to know them, and having in mind the idea of promoting diversity and the acceptance of others, we thought of the characters that would be appropriate protagonists of all the units in the materials. In that light, a skilled soccer player, an exchange student, a girl with special needs and a foreign girl with an un-common name came to life in our project. Since a number of activities revolve around the characters of a handout, we tried to make sure sufficient amount of time was devoted to characterization.

Writing Materials

We elaborated a tentative syllabus in accordance with ministerial documents (objectives, age, and expected achievement) that contained topics, grammar points, functions and values to promote. We divided the syllabus into units; each containing a theme, a linguistic component, the procedures and a final section on a particular value. The following chart illustrates the organization of the syllabus for part of unit one:

UNIT	THEME	LINGUISTIC COMPONENT	PROCEDURES
ONE: My classmates and I	Greetings	Hello! Hi! Good… (morning, etc.) Good bye. Bye	Greeting and addressing people

Then, in groups we started thinking and planning the two first units, while we contacted a graphic designer to actually make the characters "come to existence". As we mentioned, we considered that the characters in the materials should reflect the fact that in real life we are all different: different in abilities, preferences, appearances and backgrounds. Moreover, we are equally special and unique. In this way, Leo is a tall and thin 11-year-old boy who loves playing soccer and is very good at it. Deborah (Debby) is a 10-year-old girl that enjoys music, plays the guitar and has a gift for singing. She cannot walk, so she uses a wheelchair. Emilio (Emi) is an 11-year-old cultural exchange boy from Peru who has a wonderful ability to create with his hands. Another character is Nkechi; although she is not a protagonist, this 10-year-old Nigerian girl shares her culture and her family with the students. Every theme in each unit was approached through these characters' view of themselves and of the world around them.

Peer Monitoring

Although we had difficulty in finding a suitable time to gather frequently, we agreed on constant monitoring and feedback on our individual ideas and production through e-mail. That is how we worked, checked and edited every section of the units in the material. We took advantage of meetings we had at the beginning of the process to sketch and outline the approach, presentation, practice and revision of topics as well as the inclusion and reinforcement of values. What was crucial in our way of working was peer consulting and assessment; that is, everyone in the team monitored and provided their own feedback on the units devised.

Revision of Materials

We devised criteria for revision. Once the elaboration of the units was finished, we started the task of revising trying to focus on one aspect each member of the team. One proof-read a unit to check grammar, while another checked the balance of language skills; another concentrated on spelling and a fourth one on graphic design. This proved to be a very efficient way of quality control within the objectives established. The underlying learning principles in all aspects of the materials revision were based on Thorndike's *Law of Readiness, Law of Exercise, and Law of Effect* (1999). *Readiness* has to do with getting students ready to learn, creating interest by showing the value of the learning task. That is why we checked that every unit would include an appealing and "catching" start, so students would be engaged in the subject matter from the very beginning. Considering *Exercise*, which states that students learn best and retain information longer when having meaningful practice and repetition, we monitored that all the new topics were followed by good practice, and that later on, such a practice could be applied to the learners' own context. Then we assured that *Effect*, which is learning strengthened when accompanied by a [pleasant or satisfying feeling](#), would be achieved by closing activities that would create an enjoyable atmosphere.

The topics and subtopics developed in the material were evaluated in the light of their suitability to the age of the students and the overall school syllabus. Besides, we also took into consideration the values taught and their agreement with the ones held by the community. In additions, we checked whether the amount of vocabulary and the complexity of topics and grammar were suitable to both the dynamics of classroom and the time allotted for the subject. It is important to mention that the students' unaffordability of books prompted our decision to elaborate black and white sets of materials in order to offer cheap and photocopiable sets.

As regards the sequencing of teaching points, we considered whether they were arranged according to the level of difficulty they presented to the students: moving from less challenging activities to more challenging ones. We ensured that the activities were graded following the criteria of presentation, oral practice, guided practice, freer guided practice, and production. The number of exercises was also considered to check if students were getting enough practice. Concerning the macro abilities in language, we tried to focus mainly on reading, basic oral production (speaking) and writing. Listening was de-emphasized due to the lack of resources at school; however suggestions to carry out listening practice using the teacher´s voice are included.

The activities, their instructions and layout presentation were evaluated. The activities were analyzed in terms of suitability for the ratio of teacher per student, the space in each classroom, time allotted for the English class and the resources needed to accomplish the task. Considering that students are sixth graders who would probably be exposed to the foreign language for the first time, we evaluated instructions in terms of clarity and straightforwardness. We made an inventory of verbs necessary to understand the instructions and used them all along the handbook. The layout of the activities was thought over to make it appealing to students. Drawings were carefully crafted for the edition of the handout taking into account that students would get a black and white copy. All pages contained enough blank spaces, with reader-friendly font type. There was an attempt to create a balance between pictures and writing. Finally, we checked that the *Teachers' Notes* handout contained simple notes and suggestions on class management and on material adjustment to variations in contexts; teachers' instructions were meant to be as flexible as possible. We evaluated the *Teachers' Notes* in terms of suitability for both English teachers and non-language professionals.

Piloting and Feedback

The units were distributed to six teachers working in six different schools. While and after using the material, they were asked to report on the use of the material. It was easy to find teachers who were willing to try the material but it was not a simple task to get feedback from them. We wanted to facilitate the feedback task but at the same time we wanted to avoid the "I like / don´t like" judgment because it says nothing about the value and efficiency of the material. We made a list of priorities on aspects of feedback we needed and sent questions addressing discrete points to consider. For example, when we introduced the characters we asked, "Do the learners accept the characters spontaneously?; Do they identify with them?; Do you think the characters are suitable?". As teachers answered these questions they sometimes volunteered comments on other aspects.

Conclusion

After one-year trial, we plan to make adjustments and changes since we want to offer it to a greater number of teachers. Currently in EFL literature, teachers are encouraged to go beyond methods and develop awareness. If something is valuable about this experience and the material designed is what Kumaravadivelu (2006) called the particularity principle. The particularity principle has to do with a context sensitive pedagogy based on an understanding of the local setting. We see our experience as a logical consequence of the particularity principle, in the sense that we are presenting teachers with alternative materials that take into account our context and reality of our schools.

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TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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Abstract

This presentation deals with the systematic teaching of English Grammar at university level and some of the most common problems faced by students in their learning process. It focuses on the integration of the learners' declarative and procedural knowledge of grammar through authentic texts. The presenters share their classroom experience and discuss strategies to promote metacognitive insights into the language system. Samples of classroom activities and examples of texts from magazines and newspapers are shown.

Introduction

The value of grammar instruction has been widely discussed by theorists and practitioners who have claimed to be either for or against the teaching of grammar. Although Krashen (1981) downplayed the role of grammar teaching in second language (L2) acquisition, other researchers like Ellis (2002a) have provided evidence that grammar instruction is beneficial and facilitates development of both explicit and implicit knowledge.

As instructors of future teachers, we support Ellis' opinion and consider that the systematic teaching of English grammar is fundamental to the curriculum at the English Department at the Universidad Nacional de Tucumán (UNT).

In the present paper we will first briefly discuss the role of a structural syllabus and describe the grammar syllabi currently in use at the UNT. Subsequently, we will explain the rationale for consciousness-raising tasks (CRT) and the advantages of using authentic material in class. After giving an overview of the most common difficulties students experience in their learning process, we will present samples of CRT, i.e. activities that encourage learners to notice particular features of the language and to draw their own conclusions about how language works.

Structural syllabus

The systematic teaching of grammar at the UNT is presently based upon structural syllabi. A structural syllabus comprises a list of grammatical items that are organized in the order in which they will be taught (Ellis, 1993). Such syllabus can serve as a basis for the creation of problem-solving tasks designed to develop learners' explicit knowledge of grammatical features. The underlying principle for the use of a structural syllabus is that explicit knowledge may help learners become aware of grammatical features in the input that they might otherwise ignore, and it may help them notice the gap between the input and their own production.

However, a structural syllabus needs to be used alongside a meaning-based syllabus designed to supply learners with the opportunities to communicate in the L2. Therefore, in our class we work within the three-dimensional grammar framework proposed by Larsen-Freeman (1991). The author believes that teaching grammar entails drawing attention to form (i.e. how a structure is formed), meaning (i.e. how a particular grammatical form signals a particular meaning) and pragmatics (i.e. what constitutes appropriate use of the forms in context).

The curriculum at the UNT comprises three types of grammar courses: a practical grammar course and two descriptive grammar courses. In addition, students can opt for an English-Spanish contrastive grammar course.

In the first course students become acquainted with the basic concepts in the field of Morphology and Semantics and then they are introduced to various phenomena in the field of Syntax. The main topics in this course are word classes, and their properties, functions and meanings. The second course syllabus comprises sentence and clause types, sentence constituents, syntactic functions and grammatical categories such as mood, modality, aspect and tense. In the third course the discussion of syntactic phenomena is deepened by analysing linguistic units from a semantic and pragmatic viewpoint. The main topics include semantic roles, sentence types and discourse functions, negation, coordination and subordination, different types of complex sentences and thematic variation in the clause.

Grammar instruction at the UNT comprises both theory and practice sessions. The theory classes provide students principally with the theoretical foundation of descriptive grammar whereas the practice sessions aim mainly at developing the learners' awareness of grammatical forms as well as fostering their ability to discuss and explain grammatical issues.

Consciousness-raising tasks (CRT)

Ellis (1993) argues that grammar instruction should be aimed at consciousness-raising (CR) rather than practice of accurate production. He makes a distinction between CR and practice. Consciousness-raising is "an attempt on the part of the teacher to make the learner aware of specific features of the L2" (p.108). On the other hand, practice involves an attempt to provide learners with opportunities to produce targeted grammatical forms in controlled and free language use in order to develop proceduralised implicit knowledge.

Unlike Ellis, who minimizes the importance of practice activities in language teaching, we think that learners can benefit from both practice and CR. Consequently, grammar instruction in our classes consists of grammar explanations and a combination of practice and CR. We give learners different types of practice: mechanical practice, contextualized practice and CRT.

We can help learners integrate theory and practice by engaging them in CRT. Thornbury (2001) defines CRT as "activities designed to make students aware of features of the language – to notice them" (p.36).

As Ellis (2003) points out, consciousness-raising involves an endeavour to encourage an understanding of the formal and functional properties of the specific features of the L2 by helping the learners develop a cognitive representation of them. In a previous publication (2002), Ellis characterizes CR activities as follows:

1. There is an attempt to isolate a specific linguistic feature for focused attention.
2. The learners are exposed to data which illustrate the targeted feature and they may also be given an explicit rule describing or explaining the feature.
3. The learners are expected to utilize intellectual effort to understand the targeted feature.
4. Misunderstanding or incomplete understanding of the grammatical structure by the learners leads to clarification in the form of further data and description or explanation.
5. Learners may be optionally required to articulate the rule describing the grammatical structure (p. 168).

Awareness of grammatical forms and meanings is believed to facilitate indirectly subsequent second language acquisition. In order to achieve mastery of the L2 system learners need to build up both explicit and implicit knowledge. Ellis (2008) states that explicit knowledge is conscious knowledge of grammatical rules learned through formal classroom instruction, whereas implicit knowledge is automatic and subconscious knowledge acquired without effort. While explicit knowledge is declarative and can be verbalized, implicit knowledge is procedural and can be verbalized only if it is made explicit.

The rationale behind CRT is that they facilitate the development of explicit knowledge of grammar which in the long term can develop into implicit knowledge. In other words, CR does not result in immediate acquisition but may have a delayed effect (Ellis, 2002). The same author (1993, 2006), who supports the *weak interface position*, claims that explicit knowledge can convert into implicit knowledge if the learner is developmentally ready to acquire the targeted feature. Since implicit knowledge underlies communicative competence, this type of knowledge should be the ultimate goal of any instructional programme.

Authentic material in the grammar class

Textbooks generally present grammar out of context and follow a linear approach to language learning, i.e. they are based on the principle that learners acquire one grammatical structure at a time. They typically include exercises that involve repetition, manipulation and grammatical transformation to practise a discrete form. These exercises provide students with declarative knowledge but do not help them develop procedural skills (Nunan, 1998). Therefore, we reinforce the practice by supplying learners with other types of tasks, CRT, which may help them accomplish mastery of the language system.

Textbooks usually contain simplified texts, i.e. non-authentic texts especially designed for pedagogic purposes. By contrast, an authentic text is a real-life text originally produced to fulfil some social purpose in the language community for which it was intended (Peacock, 1997 as cited in Berardo, 2006).

Many teachers think that authentic texts are lexically and syntactically too complex for L2 learners and also conceptually and culturally too dense for successful understanding. However, we consider that university-level students can benefit enormously from working with authentic texts. As Nunan (1998) states: "authentic language shows how grammatical forms operate in the real world, rather than in the mind of a textbook writer; it allows learners to encounter target language items in interaction with other closely related grammatical and discoursal elements" (p.105).

Hence, we prefer using authentic texts from magazines and newspapers to design consciousness-raising activities that provide learners with opportunities "to experience language as it is used beyond the classroom" (Nunan, 1999, p.79) and that help them develop their own understanding of the language system. Furthermore, when working with authentic materials learners find a great variety of structures and can focus on those we want them to analyse.

However, since it is not always easy to find an authentic text with all the grammatical structures we want learners to analyse, we sometimes have to employ language analysis activities that are especially designed to focus explicitly on particular language forms and their use, a procedure that has also been suggested by Willis (1996). By means of these activities students can identify linguistic structures and see how different forms affect meaning. So learners are exposed to language data either in the form of a set of examples or a single text and are required to perform certain operations on these language samples.

Learners' difficulties in language learning

We have observed throughout our teaching experience that some students tend to learn theory and rules but that they encounter difficulties in internalising grammatical features so that they can use them accurately, meaningfully and appropriately. Among the most common problems students experience we can mention the following:

- The *boundary problem*, e.g. the difficulty in understanding where the border of the semantic territory of one verb tense ends and where the border of the semantic domain of another verb tense starts (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman 1999).
- Problems involving article usage, i.e. understanding the specific and generic reference dichotomy.
- Problems with subject-verb number agreement. For example when a form is syntactically singular but notionally plural or vice versa.
- Word order problems, e.g. the wrong position of a syntactic element.

Taking into account these difficulties, we have designed activities that provide learners with opportunities to discuss grammatical issues and to visualise how the different grammatical structures interrelate in authentic contexts. Azar (2007) states that grasping how a structure works "helps many students formulate how to say what they mean and helps lead to successful communication experiences" (p. 7).

<u>Samples of CRT activities used in class</u>

- **Task 1. Comparing and contrasting different patterns**. This type of task encourages learners to differentiate between the features they already know and the new linguistic forms. It also leads learners to a deeper understanding of meaning and use.

Discuss the differences in meaning between the following pairs of sentences.	
1. a) Teachers' salaries can be raised. b) Teachers' salaries may be raised. 2. a) He is going to retire next year. b) He is retiring next year.	3. a) I prefer staying at home at weekends. b) I'd prefer to stay at home tonight. 4. a) Your new perfume smells really well. b) Smell my perfume. You'll like it.

- **Task 2. Discussing ambiguities.** Activities like the following enable learners to understand how the same utterance may change meaning according to the context of situation.

Are the following sentences ambiguous? If so, justify your answer and explain the ambiguity by paraphrasing them.	
1. He was killed by a metal pole. 2. They served blueberry and cranberry pancakes for dessert.	3. All the arguments for euthanasia aren't acceptable. 4. I found him an efficient assistant

- **Task 3. Error correction.** Error correction exercises help students notice inappropriate application of the grammatical rule. Besides ungrammatical sentences, the exercise below contains also grammatical constructions to make the activity more challenging.

Some of the following sentences are ungrammatical. Spot the errors and justify your correction.	
1. I don't like boxing in no way.	3. Is she seeming unhappy?
2. Either the CPU or the router needs checking.	4. Japanese and Greek fish are much cheaper than Argentinian fish.

- **Task 4. Integrative Text Analysis.** This task offers learners an overview of the interrelationship between different grammatical features. At the same time, it engages learners in hypothesising about the data and emphasises discovery learning by solving grammar problems.

1. Find in the text below[14] instances of:
   a. A simple and a complex sentence. Give the syntactic patterns.
   b. Two non-finite participial clauses in post-modifying function.
   c. A process agency adjunct.
   d. A contingency condition adjunct.
   e. Three space adjuncts: position, source, goal.
   f. Two time duration adjuncts: position and backward span duration.
2. In the complex sentence you found, identify and classify subordinate clauses in terms of their type, form and function.
3. Classify the underlined verbs syntactically and semantically.
4. Analyse the adjectival relative clause in line 4. Can the relative pronoun be omitted? Justify your answer.
5. Compare and contrast the use of the indefinite and the definite article in the NPs "a pet passport" (line 6) and "the passport" (line 10).
6. What complementation does the verb "get" (line 9) take? Can this verb take another type of complementation? If so, provide examples.
7. Is the verb "pay for" (line 13) a prepositional verb or a phrasal verb? Give syntactic evidence to justify your answer.
8. Classify the genitive in the title according to its structure and meaning. Then explain the meaning by means of a paraphrase.
9. Identify the meanings of the circled modal verbs and explain them by means of an appropriate paraphrase.
10. Compare and contrast the highlighted verb tenses:
    a. Do the present verbs forms express the same meanings and uses?
    b. Do the past verb forms exemplify uses of the event past, habitual past or state past?

TECHNOLOGY

A Dog's Life Improves

For a century the United Kingdom imposed a six-month quarantine on all pets entering the country. Now some, like Frodo Baggins (above), who sailed on a ferry from Calais, France, to Dover, can immediately clear British customs if a pet passport issued by a vet declares them r_ free. In the pilot program dogs and cats arriv_ on specified routes from 22 European nation_ get rabies shots abroad. A microchip embedd_ the vet confirms identity. The passport must show the pet clear of ticks and tapeworms wi_ 48 hours of entry. In the first month the own_ of around 600 pets paid for the $450 procedu_

Conclusion

Grammar plays a key role in language learning and grammar teaching should emphasise not only form but also the meanings and uses of different grammatical structures.

The acquisition of the L2 system constitutes a very complex process. Our experience suggests that learners are often unable to internalise new structures in a manner that enables them to use language accurately, meaningfully and appropriately in communication. We think that a structural syllabus

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[14] Source: *National Geographic, September 2000*

complemented with a meaning-based syllabus is the best option for our students at the UNT and that this combination can help us guide learners to establish the relationship between form, meaning and use. Furthermore, it is essential that learners be exposed to authentic samples of language so that they can encounter grammatical items in a variety of linguistic and experiential contexts.

We believe that CR constitutes a valuable approach to grammar teaching and that CRT are useful tools to develop explicit knowledge which, in the long term, can contribute to the development of implicit knowledge, the ultimate pedagogical goal in language teaching. It is fundamental to guide learners to actively explore grammatical forms so that they can acquire the autonomy and independence that future teachers need to achieve.

CLIL: A REWARDING EXPERIENCE
Methodological implications. Communication oriented activities and tasks

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Abstract

This presentation will state how a CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) oriented syllabus can provide fruitful outcomes in secondary school classrooms. The new educational law introduced in Buenos Aires presented CLIL in its design as an innovative approach. CLIL integrates content and language together and students feel they learn topics of their interest and are able to accomplish tasks successfully–even students with little knowledge of English feel they can fulfill their own language expectations.

Introduction
The aim of this paper is to state how a CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) oriented syllabus can provide fruitful outcomes in secondary school classrooms. This approach integrates content and language together and students feel they learn topics of their interest and are able to accomplish tasks successfully. Moreover, even students with little knowledge of English feel they can fulfil their own language expectations.

CLIL/ AICLE: An innovative approach.
The recent reforms in the curriculum designs in Buenos Aires province organises secondary school education in three years for Lower Secondary School (Educación Secundaria Básica) and three years for Upper Secondary School (Educación Secundaria Ciclo Superior). The curriculum design for the last three upper years (4th, 5th and 6th) is thought of in relation to the disciplines the institutions have chosen. The division in specializations centres on the different areas of learning.
English as a foreign language is taught in every year and is intended to develop critical thinking in students.
The innovative approach proposed in the curriculum design of English as a foreign language for 4th, 5th and 6th year at Upper Secondary School is CLIL–AICLE (in Spanish, Aprendizaje Integrado de Contenido y Lengua Extranjera). This approach complements and improves the Communicative-Task Based Approach used during the first years of secondary instruction (Educación Secundaria Básica).
In order to understand the rationale behind the design of the new curriculum, it is necessary to define AICLE as:
 "El Aprendizaje Integrado de Lenguas Extranjeras y otros Contenidos Curriculares implica estudiar asignaturas como la historia o las ciencias naturales en una lengua distinta a la propia. AICLE resulta muy beneficioso tanto para el aprendizaje de otras lenguas (francés, inglés,…)como para las asignaturas impartidas en dichas lenguas. -El énfasis de AICLE en la "resolución de problemas" y "saber hacer cosas" hace que los estudiantes se sientan motivados al poder resolver problemas y hacer cosas incluso en otras lenguas." (Navés & Muñoz, 2000).
The term CLIL plays an important role here. According to Mehisto et al. (2008) the term CLIL was coined in 1994 in Europe .The CLIL strategy involves using a language that is not a student's native language as a medium of instruction and learning for primary, secondary and/or vocational-level subjects such as maths, science , art or business.
CLIL is a tool for the teaching and learning of content and language. The essence of CLIL is integration and it is supported on three pillars. In the first place, language learning is included in content classes (e. g., maths, science, etc). This means repackaging information in a manner that facilitates understanding. The use of charts, diagrams, drawings, hands-on experiments and the drawing out of key concepts and terminology are all common CLIL strategies. Secondly, content from subjects is used in language learning classes. The language teacher working together with teachers of other subjects incorporates the vocabulary, terminology and texts from those subjects into his or her classes. Students learn the language and discourse patterns they need to understand and use the content. Thirdly, the development of learning skills supports the achievement of content and language goals.

CLIL is an umbrella term which covers a number of educational approaches (e. g. immersion, language showers, one or more subjects, etc). What is new here is the flexibility that CLIL provides to apply the knowledge learnt from these various approaches. CLIL also allows for low- to high-intensity exposure to teaching/learning through a foreign language.

Although this approach is highly beneficial for the learning of other languages (English, French, Portuguese, etc) as well as the subjects taught in those languages, it wouldn't be feasible in an educational system similar to the Argentine one –which is not a bilingual one. That is why AICLE was developed as a version of the many CLIL faces. Emphasis is put in solving problems and learning how to do things, which will make students feel motivated at being able to solve those problems and do things in another language. Thus, the English class provides a more natural context for learning. Teaching grammar, however, is not neglected but embedded in the new contents the students acquire.

Quoting Litwin, (2008, 89, it is agreed that:

"La enseñanza requiere que provoquemos a nuestros estudiantes para que realicen diferentes actividades con el objeto de aprender, dada nuestra certeza de que los alumnos aprenden más y mejor cuando participan activamente en la organización y búsqueda de relaciones entre la información nueva y la ya conocida, y no sólo cuando reciben nueva información."

What is proposed in the new curriculum in Buenos Aires province, through AICLE is a natural environment for the development of the foreign language, which is built on students' prior knowledge. As a result, students feel freer and more motivated towards instruction in another language - English in this case.

First, it will be necessary to explore the principles to be taken into account in the design of an AICLE/CLIL oriented syllabus. These principles (Mehisto, et al., op. cit) are:

Cognition: This principle has to do with students' existing knowledge.
- Content, language and learning skills outcomes are articulated in co-operation with students
- Learning builds on a student's existing knowledge, skills, altitudes, interests and experience
- Students analyse achievement of learning outcomes independently, with other students and with the teacher, and work to set new outcomes
- Students synthesize, evaluate and apply knowledge and skills acquired in several subjects.

Content is closely related to motivation in the sense that as students learn new concepts, they feel capable of producing pieces of work of their own.
- Content is clearly linked to the community within and outside the classroom
- Students apply new content and develop related skills through experiential activities
- Content from various subjects is integrated
- Cultural content is integrated into all subjects

Community promotes cooperation and help.
- Students feel that being members of a learning community is enriching
- Students have the self confidence and skills to work in a group and the local community, balancing personal interests with those of others
- Teachers, students (and parents, employers , etc.) are partners in education
- Students can define their role within the classroom and the global context

Communication is possible in a natural environment where students and teachers work together.
- Students actively use the right to participate in activities and communication, in classroom and in the community
- Desk placement, displays on classrooms walls and other available resources support learning and communication
- Students and teachers co-construct and negotiate meaning
- Language/communication skills are developed in all subjects.

As well as considering these four principles, it is necessary to understand the central aspects of the internal structure of a classroom based project which are the 6ts (Stoller and Grabe, 1977). These planning principles support the preparation of a CLIL/AICLE based syllabus.

With the Six-T's Approach, as with any curricular approach, it is also assumed that first consideration must be given to an array of student needs, student goals, institutional expectations, available resources, teacher abilities, and expected final performance outcomes. When these criteria are specified, informed decisions can be made about the six curricular components which define the Six-T's Approach: *Themes, Texts, Topics, Threads, Tasks and Transitions.*

– *Themes* are the central ideas that organize major curricular units; they are chosen to meet students' needs and interests, institutional expectations, syllabus resources, and teacher abilities and interests. Normally a class explores more than one theme in a given term or semester. (Sample themes could be: insects, the environment, geographic regions, demography, etc.).

– *Texts* are content resources (written and aural) which drive the basic planning of theme units. Text selection will depend on a number of criteria. Students' interest, relevance, and instructional appropriateness provide a first set of guidelines for determining text selection; format appeal, length, coherence, connection to other materials, accessibility, and cost represent secondary criteria. There are four basic types of texts: Instructor-compiled content resources(readings of various genres, videos, audiotapes, maps , tables, graphs, software); instructor-generated content resources (lectures, worksheets, graphic representations, bulletin boards displays .) ; task-generated content resources (students' free writings, discussions, problem - solving activities, graphics representations, library searches, debates, surveys/ questionnaires.); external content resources (guest speakers, field trips.).

– *Topics* are the subunits of content which explore more specific aspects of theme. They are selected to complement student interests, content resources, teacher preferences, and larger curricular objectives. In general, topics should be organized to generate maximum coherence in the theme unit and to provide opportunities to explore both content and language. For example, a teacher could choose to develop a unit on the environment by exploring a person's own environment, recycling, alternative sources of energy, pollution, how pollution affects a person's health, etc. These examples illustrate how theme units can be developed in different ways, depending on the topics designated (or negotiated) for exploration.

– *Threads* are linkages across themes which create greater curricular coherence. They are, in general, not directly tied to the central idea. Rather, they are relatively abstract concepts (e. g., responsibility, ethics, contrasts, power) that provide natural means for linking themes, for reviewing and recycling important content and language across themes, and for revisiting selected learning strategies. Threads can bridge themes that appear quite disparate on the surface, therefore fostering a more cohesive curriculum. Taking the previous topic of the environment, a possible thread that links the units could be responsibility: for example responsibility to separate rubbish in different containers to facilitate recycling.

– *Tasks* are the basic units of instruction through which the Six-T's Approach is realized day-to-day. They are instructional activities and techniques utilized for content, language, and strategy instruction in language classrooms (e. g., activities for teaching vocabulary). In the Six-T's Approach the tasks are planned in response to the texts being used. When selecting tasks, teachers should scaffold the level of complexity required to solve each task. Thus, tasks can move from requiring lower order skills to more complex ones. Tasks should be devised in a way that leads students to a major final task or project – one which incorporates the learning from various tasks in the theme unit. Students develop the skills they will need in regular content - area courses and are provided with a sense of successful completion, which is very rewarding for them and for their teachers.

– *Transitions* are explicitly planned actions which provide coherence across topics in a theme unit and across tasks within topics. Transitions create links across topics and provide constructive entrees for new tasks and topics. Topical transitions and tasks transitions are particularly effective. For example: a deliberate shift in emphasis from waste disposal and pollution to separating rubbish to help recycling and reduce pollution constitutes a topical transition. Asking students to interpret a line graph depicting the recycling of home rubbish in other countries, then creating a similar graph with raw data obtained from a classroom survey, are examples of task transitions.

The Six-T's Approach provides the means for developing a coherent content-based curriculum. In this approach the *themes* become the primary source for curriculum planning. A variety of relevant and interesting *texts* leads to topic selection. A coherent set of *topics* is expected to stimulate student interest and allow for the completion of a final project. Specific *tasks* are designed to teach language knowledge and content information central to the texts for a given theme unit. *Transitions and threads* create linkages throughout the curriculum, creating a sense of coherence and seamlessness.

The design that will be shown in this presentation was thought for a Natural Science major. The *themes* that organise the major curricular units are the environment and pollution and how pollution affects humans' health. *Texts* were compiled from different websites and Biology books in

English, providing students with authentic material to work with. *Topics* range from environmental issues, in general, global warming, pollution, alternative sources of energy, to the different body systems and how pollution affects them. Considering the third T, *threads*, responsibility becomes the linkage across themes. Students reflect on the changing situation in our planet and their town due to pollution and humans' intervention and analyse ways to reduce the impact of those changes. Tasks (Ellis, 2009; Marsh et al, 2001) were carefully selected to lead students into the completion of their final projects. Finally, transitions were planned to provide coherence between topics, moving from the environment to *my* environment, from pollution and global warming to how pollution affects the respiratory system.

Conclusion
The implementation of this new curriculum design in a secondary school classroom proved rewarding for both the author and her students. While it was worthwhile for the teacher to see the successful results after a year's work, it was satisfying for the students to see that their learning strategies had been put to good use.

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On the Need for Constructivist Learning: A Didactic Model for Reading Comprehension. Cognitive Learning and Communication

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Abstract

The arrival of Constructivism at the communicative scenario poses the challenge of creating new models for planning our work as teachers that can capture the complexity of learning as a process of construction. This presentation aims at describing a model that has its grounds on a cognitive perspective of comprehension and that can orient teachers in the planning of Reading Comprehension of stories in books for primary school.

The arrival of Social Constructivism at the communicative scenario, particularly with the writings of Vygotsky, has shed light on our understanding of learning as a process that seeks to achieve appropriation of meaning or semiotic uptake (Wertsch & Stone, 1985). The inter-psychological and intra-psychological processes involved are in a permanent dialectic relationship. Teachers as mediators need to work within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), in which certain communicative dynamics occurs in relation to the activity that the community of learners attempts to solve. Our role as teachers is to scaffold learning (Forman, Minick & Stone, 1993).

How is scaffolding to be achieved? The answer to this question seems to lie in the need to develop didactic models informed in the theory and that can help us mediate the construction of learning in the ZPD. Approaches to Language Teaching evolve and give birth to newer versions, which may grow out of deeper specifications at the level of theory. Thus, Social Constructivism has provided solid grounds on which to base more recent versions of the Communicative Approach to the extent of framing what can already be regarded as Post-Communicative Approaches to Language Teaching. There may be different views about the Communicative and the Post-Communicative era, but one thing is certain: as teachers and teacher trainers, we have to face the challenge of how to carry out the theoretical framework at the level of procedure.

Specifically, in relation to reading comprehension, Communicative Language Teaching has taught us to plan activities for three stages. Indeed, we are all familiar with the terms "pre-reading", "while reading" and "follow-up" or "post-reading". We have experienced the benefits that getting students ready to read the text may bring about. We have guided them as the reading went along with suitable questions aimed at fostering comprehension. We have promoted activities to be done once the reading is over generally to link the reading of the text with the other macroskills.

However, students may often find reading a text and understanding it to be a difficult and, to a certain extent, discouraging task. It would take us several papers to discuss the factors at work while comprehension is being built up and the reasons why our students may experience this difficulty and frustration. Our main concern here is to discuss the reading of long texts: stories, photo essays, biographies. We are making reference to the kinds of texts that usually take several lessons and that need to be developed over time. What we have in mind is the type of texts students read in an ESL textbook, particularly in primary school, but the discussion here can eventually be relevant to any text that is several pages long.

Let us begin by challenging the terms "pre, while and post-reading" as they appear to be linear in that they seem to reflect the chronology of reading rather than its construction in vygostkian terms. As teachers, we may be tempted to think, due to the pressure for time during the school year, that one task is enough for the pre-reading phase. In general, it is a task that focuses on the topic students will read about and that aims at having them predict the content of the text. We tend to move fast into its understanding without sometimes having worked thoroughly on the preparation for reading it. However, the deeper the processing in the so-called pre-reading stage, the better equipped students will be to face the text. For the purpose of the discussion, let us leave aside the term "pre-reading" and the chronology it entails and, by the same token, let us leave aside the terms "while reading" and "post-reading".

Before reading a text, students need to activate certain knowledge in their cognitive maps. Nuttall (1997) refers to two broad kinds of knowledge that need activation. The teacher needs to address schematic knowledge, i.e., the topic of the text, the students´ knowledge of the world, the genre. The teacher also needs to address the activation of linguistic knowledge, i.e. morphological, syntactic, lexical and pragmatic. In short, we must seek to activate several kinds of knowledge to scaffold the construction of reading comprehension. How can this be achieved?

Several cognitive models account for how the process of reading comprehension occurs (Molinari Marotto, 1996; Belichón, Riviere & Igoa, 1992). Particularly, Kintsch (1996) have developed within his Integration-Construction Theory, a cognitive model for processing a written text, in which knowledge is represented as concepts or propositions interconnected in a network and where comprehension is conceived of as a matter of degrees. Text is processed at least at three levels: superficial processing, microstructure and macrostructure.

Comprehension is sometimes wrongly expressed as a dichotomy: either we understand or we do not. The degrees described by Kintsch can be seen as layers that are built up as we approach the text in stages. The first thing we perceive and we recognize is the print as it is. We can recognize the words on the page, for example. Kintsch calls this level "superficial processing". The next level upwards is reached when we can reproduce the content of the text as we have constructed the text base, which is made up of propositions that may be isomorphic with the text but which already comprise mental representations of it. Kintsch calls this level "microstructure". The highest peak is reached when we understand the text deeply enough to be able to use its contents creatively. This is, in Kintsch´s terms, the "macrostructure", the level at which the reader has been able to construct the semantic representation of the global meaning of the text (Belichón *et al*, 1992; García Madruga *et al,* 1999)

Kintsch´s cognitive model of comprehension can be considered to be a relevant tool for us, teachers and teacher trainers, first to understand how comprehension occurs and, second, to develop suitable activities finely tuned to each stage along the process. If we ask the wrong questions or the right questions at the wrong moment while we guide reading comprehension, we may be exerting a cognitive demand on our students that may be too high for that stage in the process. We cannot, for instance, ask our students to create if we have not checked whether they can recall, analyze, apply, evaluate. Scaffolding seems to be closely related to well-sequenced guidance.

Let us rely on Kintsch´s cognitive model of comprehension and on Nuttall´s description of the kinds of knowledge that require activation, in order to reconsider the terms that we have suggested leaving aside: "pre, while and post-reading".

Instead, we would like to propose a Five-stage Didactic Model to deal with the comprehension of the kinds of texts that we have mentioned. Each stage is expected to scaffold the students´ process towards the understanding of the text until they reach the macrostructure level described by Kintsch. In addition, each stage attempts to approach the text and the construction of comprehension little by little by considering the text holistically in opposition to breaking up the text into fragments for analysis as it would have been the case in a more linear approach to reading comprehension.

The first stage is "Activation". During activation, we are not working with the text. We are working with the topic, the students' knowledge of the world and the genre. Topic activation will lead to the activation of lexis as we logically need certain vocabulary to talk about the topic. This is the time for webs, mindmaps, diagrams in order to keep a record of the language that is generated in relation to the topic. In addition, this is the time for triggering an appeal to the senses: photos, pictures, maps, videos, music. Please, notice the range of resources that can be used during the first stage as activation of previous knowledge is also a matter of degrees. Kintsch (1996) supports the view of knowledge as organized in a network of interconnected associations whose nodes are activated faster when they are adjacent semantically but, when they are not, their relationships need to be established for meaning to be created. It is expected that the more tasks, resources, support we provide, the more extensive and deeper the activation will be in our students´ cognitive maps.

The second stage is "Focusing". Here we gear our students´ attention towards the text although we are not actually reading it yet. We address, first of all, the paratext: visuals, titles, headings, layout. Genre may be taken up and related to all this description. Furthermore, we acknowledge the author and the illustrator and seek to learn about them.

There is still another task comprised in this stage. We need to signpost the reading. Nuttall (1997) differentiates questions for reading comprehension from questions that orient the reading. A signpost question orients learners in that it provides them with a purpose for reading. One signpost question is often enough and it can be taken up once the reading is over to evaluate what students have learned in relation to it. Generally, in ESL textbooks, the signpost question is printed on the first pages of the text. In short, it is a triggering question.

The next three stages coincide with Kintsch´s levels. Thus, stage three in this Didactic Model is "Holistic Processing" and it addresses Kintsch´s superficial processing in two ways. First, it fosters the holistic processing of the text, which consists in asking students to look at the pictures that go with the text and to work on them while students get engaged in a picture walk, for example. Indeed, the story can be reconstructed from the pictures in a process generally known as visual literacy. In addition, students can focus on a picture that they have found amusing, interesting and they can talk about it. Students can spot the characters, the settings in time and place and some of the main events. These

examples of tasks are mainly relevant to stories, but the same can be said of other kinds of texts such as biographies and photo essays. The idea is to exploit visual support along the text to start building up comprehension non-linearly. Please, notice that, as we have pointed out, students are not reading the text yet. We can, however, ask them to spot some relevant information in the text to interpret the pictures.

Second, the reading proper can be structured at this stage by means of graphic organizers. We can introduce story maps, flow charts, webs, grids, etc, for students to get focused during the next stage where they will be reading the text for the first time. Graphic organizers will help learners record relevant information to be recapitulated easily in the next class as the reading will surely take several lessons. Moreover, graphic organizers will help students tell the story afterwards or summarize the main facts of non-fictional texts. Graphic organizers will certainly prove useful for students to start organizing ideas and information about texts.

Stage four in the Didactic Model is "Intensive Processing". It involves reading the text and working on its comprehension and it is based on Kintsch´s microstructure level.

As it has been shown in the description of the first three stages of this Didactic Model, a lot of work has been done so far, perhaps over several lessons, which ensures that students can now approach the text proper more efficiently as comprehension is built up as from the very first stage. Students work with their teacher on the text and record relevant content in the graphic organizers. This is the time to work with reading strategies (see, for example, Nuttall, 1997, for a full description of reading strategies). We may focus on one and model it while we work on the text.

Throughout, we must seek not to ask questions randomly but following well-sequenced scaffolding. We recall before we analyze. In turn, we analyze before we evaluate. ESL textbooks generally offer suggestions for questions and information about how questions are to be categorized. If this is not available or the teacher is not working on a textbook, questions will have to be asked with the suitable level of both linguistic and cognitive demand in mind. Planning the questions for reading comprehension is often as relevant as planning the tasks. Questions can be considered as one way of scaffolding and, therefore, must be carefully sequenced going from, as we said, what is literal to what is inference and evaluation.

Some intensive work may be necessary in stage four of the Didactic Model but, in general, teachers are used to doing intensive work so we do not regard expanding on it necessary here. It will be enough to say that stage four lends itself easily to doing work on language and it would, therefore, be the most convenient time for it.

The last stage in this Didactic Model is "Creation" and it corresponds to Kintsch´s macrostructure level. By this time, students will have finished reading the text and will be ready to use its contents creatively. Project work can be carried out at this stage to generate opportunities for creativity and for synthesis. It is the ripe time for evaluation as well, we should add, as this last stage includes the evaluation of the text, the strategies developed and the tasks carried out along the process.

To sum up, the stages in the Didactic Model are Activation, Focusing, Holistic Processing, Intensive Processing and Creation. These stages attempt to defy the linearity of pre, while and post-reading by fostering a process of construction based on Kintsch's cognitive model. Indeed, when we thought of this Five-stage Didactic Model, we thought of working out a way of organizing our work as teachers in relation to the comprehension of long texts with the aim to make the process more efficiently scaffolded. Reconsidering pre, while and post reading stages has led us to the elaboration of a didactic model that is more complex than that, as our suspicion was that these terms render a procedure that is too simple to capture the nature of reading comprehension, at least in those cases where teachers and students need to work on long texts, especially at the primary level. Students in upper levels and older students are generally more mature and have developed more strategies to deal with Reading Comprehension.

It is my belief that when procedures are too simple, they may not be wholly consistent with the theory behind. As I said, the arrival of Social Constructivism at the communicative scenario has shed light on our understanding of learning and the models that have been developed within Cognitivism have made relevant contributions to it. Therefore, we expect that a deeper understanding of how comprehension is constructed will result in better decisions for the classroom. It is the role of teachers and teacher trainers to develop models that can capture in the field of Didactics the contributions that have been made at the level of theory. Although it is still in need of further trials, we hope that this Five-stage Didactic Model can serve that purpose.

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The Birth of the Communicative Approach in ELT: A look at the socio-cultural context of its rise and development

Subtheme: Methodological implications: single approaches, eclecticism, or post-method era?
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Abstract

This presentation aims to analyze the context in which communicative language teaching emerged in the 1970s. In particular, it will look into how the growth of international exchanges and developments and insights arising from research into the different branches of linguistics and the social sciences contributed to the change of paradigm in ELT. It will also attempt to anticipate possible paths for future developments in the light of current pedagogical trends and classroom challenges.

The Communicative approach to language teaching has had a major influence on the development of the teaching of foreign languages around the world since its first tenets were postulated in the 1970s. It is the aim of this paper to revisit the historical context in which the CLT movement was born with a view to understanding its basic premises, principles, contributions, and the reasons for its success. This analysis will also attempt to shed light on a number of current issues in foreign language teaching regarding future developments in the field in the face of the challenges that have emerged in recent years.

Communicative language teaching lies at the core of our current teaching practices. Its principles have been the bedrock of our lessons to the point that we have now forgotten how these principles came to be formulated and later accepted by practitioners in Europe, North America and the rest of the world. A closer look at the socio-cultural context in which its first proponents situated their teaching and research will help further our understanding of how the Communicative approach took shape and how it came to be socialized in academic circles and popularized in FL classrooms.

Interest in the teaching and learning of foreign languages had been growing steadily before the Second World War, as international exchanges of all kinds had increased at a very rapid pace in the previous century. A number of methods of foreign language teaching had been formulated to meet the needs of the growing number of students who were offered instruction in a second or foreign language within educational systems in many countries. Still, the number of students was limited, and foreign languages were not a core component of the curriculum anywhere. They were considered "optional", "elective", an extra within the overall educational framework.

The decades after World War II witnessed an unprecedented expansion of educational opportunities everywhere, with the number of students having access to secondary and tertiary education reaching record highs. School systems faced the challenge of providing quality educational services to a larger, more diverse body of students in a context of a shift from a labor-intensive to a knowledge-intensive economy which required the development of different skills in the students. The learners of the postwar years, more of whom now had access to international educational experiences, would need to insert themselves into a much more intricate web of information exchanges and the learning of foreign languages took on greater relevance and became the focus of interest in various international organizations.

The Council of Europe took the lead by encouraging the study of the languages, history and civilization of the countries signatory to the many treaties and conventions negotiated in the fifties and sixties to further European integration. The Council took an active role in promoting cultural activities and undergraduate and postgraduate student exchanges between European countries and helped establish commitment to the principle of national financial support of inter-European educational endeavors. In 1957, the Council of Europe organized the first intergovernmental Conference on European Cooperation in Language Teaching, which led to the first major Project on Language Teaching in 1963. It is important to note that these cooperative efforts to bolster European integration took place against the backdrop of the Cold War and were part of a set of policies intended to boost Western European values and cultural lifestyles.

These early European initiatives promoted international cooperation on audiovisual methods and the development of the new interdisciplinary field of Applied Linguistics, which included support for the founding of the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA) in 1964. This new professional association would play a very important role in the spread of the ideas of Communicative Language Teaching through its AILA Review and its many international conferences and congresses. The various projects sponsored by the Council broke the path for the implementation of the first model for

specifying objectives for a language course. This set of specifications was first elaborated for the English language and published as the *Threshold Level* in 1975. It was followed by a similar publication for French in 1976 (*Un Niveau Seuil*).

The *Threshold Level* and the French *Niveau Seuil* specifications became the basis for course and materials design in the next decade and can be considered a landmark event in FLT. These specifications were the product of the collaborative work of teams of applied linguists who used a notional functional model proposed by British linguist D. A Wilkins. Wilkins developed a syllabus that was based on a functional or communicative definition of language. His framework of notional categories and categories of communicative function rejected and left behind the traditional concepts of grammar and vocabulary as the organizers of syllabi. The notional-functional syllabus focused on the pragmatic purposes to which language is put. Notional categories are concepts such as space, time, quantity, and functional categories include requests, offers, complaints, apologies, among many others. Even though most syllabuses continued to be made up of inventories of language, the notional-functional design represented a major departure from previous practice and set the stage for further developments in communicative language teaching.

It becomes necessary at this point to discuss the significance of this new definition of language lying at the core of the new syllabus design. In the preceding decades, teaching methods had been based on structural views of language. Learning a language meant mastering a set of structures which were presented in discrete form and strictly paced sequences. Grounded in a Behaviorist conception of learning, the foreign language class was the location of carefully staged linguistic practice where there was little, if any, room for creative expression. As the need to provide instances of more meaningful learning became clearer and European governments and agencies gave high priority to the development of alternative methods of language teaching, experts in academia rose to the challenge.

Linguistic scholars had been calling into question traditional assumptions about language that lay at the basis of the methods then in vogue. The first sign that a paradigm shift was in the making came from the American linguist Noam Chomsky, who demonstrated that the structural theories of language that then held the field failed to explain the phenomenon of language in its myriad facets. The prevailing theories, in his view, failed to account for the creativity of speakers and the uniqueness of individual sentences. From this insight followed the notion that a mastery of the structures of the language would be insufficient to develop full competence in a given language. Other dimensions of language, which had been studied by other scholars such as language philosophers John Austin and John Searle came to provide the foundation for a radically different conception of language. In their theory of speech acts, these scholars called attention to the relationship of what is said and what is done in an instance of communication. Their focus shifted from structure to the creation and interpretation of meaning. This "semiotic turn", that is the use of semiotic principles to explore the mechanics of meaning making, led to the formulation of a new conception of language that would inform the new teaching.

Drawing on the work of British functional linguists such as John Firth and M. A. K Halliday, and American sociolinguists such as Dell Hymes, John Gumperz and William Labov, a new theory of language was deployed to lay the foundations of what came to be known as the Communicative approach in its early days. In CLT, language is a complex system for the expression of meaning. Its primary function is that of interaction and communication. This new view, which was the distillation of decades of research and cross-fertilization of ideas through collaborative work in the context of the initiatives of the Council of Europe and the free-flowing exchange of scholarly findings through the numerous publications and language conferences of the sixties and seventies, heralded the arrival of a new era in the professionalization of foreign language teaching.

The first harbingers of change had been British linguists who had been at the forefront of the creation of an English Language Teaching cultural industry. The idea of teaching the English language on a global scale was not at all new for the British. It had been an imperial tradition to build schools in the colonies for the education of local elites and the children of imperial bureaucrats. The teaching of English was an important component of this task so there was a substantial body of materials and experience in the field. The University of Cambridge had led the way by creating the Proficiency exam for colonials who intended to pursue their studies in the UK. In the postwar period, the opportunities to provide English language education continued to grow in spite of the onset of the process of decolonization. The elites of the former colonies believed in sending their children to the old metropolis to learn the leadership skills that would be needed for nation building. A number of universities began to offer courses for newly admitted foreign students and a number of institutes were created to cater to the growing number of foreign students who looked to Britain for the pursuit of higher education or for the language skills needed to conduct business in an ever-shrinking world.

Despite their loss of the empire, the British retained an enormous reservoir of symbolic capital. British universities and educational institutions were still highly regarded and were considered a model for others that were founded around the world as the explosion of school and college enrollment encompassed the globe. The expansion of educational systems worldwide and the inclusion of foreign languages in the curriculum presented the British with an unprecedented opportunity to develop a world market for teaching materials and exams. Both the British Council, which had been founded in 1934, and the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford understood the nature of these developments and were well positioned to take advantage of the growing trends by publishing a number of seminal works which outlined and explained the basic principles of Communicative Language Teaching.

The British Council had begun to use a wider array of resources to promote the teaching of the English language through radio and television through a partnership with the BBC. This was the springboard for the launch of innovative projects and a vehicle for the popularization of the communicative approach. In 1978, the British Council published linguist John Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design*, which was to revolutionize the teaching of EFL. This signaled a new impetus for the teaching of English worldwide and led to the creation of British Council English Language Teaching Centers across the world, especially in the countries in Southern Europe and the Middle East. These efforts served the purpose of trumpeting the merits of and legitimizing CLT, and helped pave the way for the acceptance of its many new courses, textbooks and materials.

Yet the promotion of Communicative Language Teaching was not circumscribed to the British Isles. The ideas proposed by the advocates of CLT gained currency in Continental Europe and across the Atlantic as well. The Communicative approach soon developed a following in the U.S and Canada as these countries also had a growing population of both foreign students and immigrants learning English as a second language. New English Language Centers or Applied English Centers began to appear on college campuses across North America. These centers became the laboratories to try out the many strategies and techniques of the new approach. Other major European countries also made important contributions to the spread of the gospel of CLT. The French, who also drew on their experience of their "mission civilisatrice", had a full- fledged cultural industry well poised to spearhead the advance of communicative tenets. Their own scholarly traditions had led to the questioning of structural views of language and the upheavals of the 1960s had fostered a rebellion against traditional teaching methodologies.

It was mainly in the old bastions of pedagogical traditions that CLT would find a receptive audience. The massive expansion of school and university enrollments had overwhelmed educational systems everywhere and a clamor for reform had begun to resonate across the world. Critics claimed that the teaching at most schools was becoming stale and devoid of meaningful content. In their view, both the school curriculum and teaching methods failed to take account of the needs of students and routinely subjected them to a relentless regime of rote, meaningless learning or what passed for learning. In the teaching of foreign languages in particular, most students around the world had been given heavy doses of audio-lingualism or some variation of Situational Language Teaching in the best of cases, or had been taught through some form of the Grammar-Translation Method which rendered the work strenuous and unfulfilling for both teachers and students.

The Communicative Approach came as a breath of fresh air to classrooms around the world. An approach that was based on a more "real" view of language as communication, which prioritized meaning and real communication, was badly needed to energize classroom dynamics. An approach that gave pride of place to the needs of the learners rather than the prescriptions of experts was more than welcome by teaching professionals who could appreciate the higher quality of the new materials based on authentic sources of language, among many other sound elements.CLT unleashed a wave of creativity in curriculum and materials design and resulted in livelier lessons which engaged students in much more meaningful communicative activities. Learners became more active as creators and negotiators of meaning and teachers began to redefine their roles as facilitators of the communication process and managers of the learning process. Both teachers and students had the chance to be in charge of their lessons as the new approach entailed new freedoms and challenges. It held a strong appeal to those who wanted to try a more humanistic approach to teaching and who wanted to prioritize interactive processes of communication.

The advent of new information and communication technologies contributed to the rapid spread and success of CLT. The new technologies enhanced the quality of the materials produced: advances in printing (more attractive, glossy textbooks became cheaper) and the improved audio and video materials that became widely available to supplement most coursebooks ensured wide approval and increased classroom motivation. As the numbers of students grew, and sales of materials followed suit, British ELT publishers deployed far-reaching promotional networks around the world. As they tried to sell their wares, British publishers championed the new approach by sponsoring a great

number of academic events which highlighted the advantages of communicative methodologies. Both the British Council and British ELT publishers succeeded in building a community of professionals interested in furthering their development who became active proponents and eager practitioners of the new approach.

After more than thirty years of holding the foreign language teaching field, Communicative Language Teaching has withstood the test of time in spite of multiple challenges and remaining doubts regarding its applicability in all teaching situations. It has laid the foundation of our profession as its central tenets have remained firmly entrenched as the pillars of language teaching and learning. In charting the course of its rise and ascendance, it is worth noting that the forces that determined its strength and resilience continue to gather momentum and are likely to further enrich the quality of our teaching in classrooms around the world.

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From International Coursebooks to Teacher-Produced Materials

Subtheme: Methodological implications. Teaching materials and communicative language teaching and learning

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Abstract
In this paper I compare international coursebooks with ELT approaches and examine their influence in teacher development, syllabus design and our local context. I review general principles in materials development and examine the tensions between authors, publishers and curriculum designers. I provide a narrative account of an action research project through which teachers produce their own learning materials to integrate content and language in secondary education.

Introduction
Foreign language learning is a developmental process which requires the mediation of semiotic resources such as coursebooks. Teachers usually adopt UK or US titles for their printing quality, design, and advertised communicative approach. Teachers and researchers are aware of several advantages well-developed coursebooks feature in relation to learners and learning. However, the overuse of international coursebooks raises a number of issues in relation to teacher development, syllabus design and, above all, local contexts. In this paper I first examine these questions before discussing ongoing results of an action research project I am facilitating in Esquel, Chubut.

The influence of coursebooks

Whether local, localised or international, coursebooks should be seen as learning materials to emphasise the fact that they are mostly addresses to learners (Tomlinson, 2008: 3-4). However, international coursebooks are *the* materials (Ramos Garcia, 2010: 83) teachers tend to use to organise English language teaching and learning processes. With the rise of the Communicative Approach, international coursebooks targeted at all possible markets have advertised themselves as communicative since the 1970s (McDonough & Shaw, 2003: 16). Whether coursebook writers explore Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Task-Based Learning (TBL) or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) separately or combined through a multi-syllabus, they all maintain that language is for communication and that communicative competence should be the underlying principle of all ELT approaches and the materials which scaffold them.

Unlike other contexts where officials or policy makers in a Ministry of Education decide which coursebooks teachers may use (Harwood, 2010: 13-15), in Argentina it is teachers who usually decide and adopt coursebooks published elsewhere based on personal preferences, publishers' marketing strategies, peer decisions, and time and training constraints (Crawford, 2002: 81-82; Richards, 2001: 261). Following McGrath (2002: 8), those who adopt such coursebooks may be placed along a continuum, from those who 'teach the book' to those who use it as a map or springboard to develop their own syllabus with a wide range of learning materials. The different uses that teachers make of a coursebook naturally have an effect on their own teacher development, course syllabus and needs analysis in relation to context.

As for teacher development, McGrath (2002: 11) asserts that if a coursebook represents an innovative approach clearly explained and illustrated in the companion teacher's book, then this coursebook can be used as an instance of professional development as teachers will be able to explore how a new approach may be realised in written materials. Similarly, because some books feature a clear road to take in terms of organisation, novice teachers greatly benefit from them as they may improve their subject matter knowledge in unison with their pedagogical content knowledge (Grossman & Thompson, 2008; Johnson et al., 2008). To work with set materials facilitates the understanding of how to make knowledge pedagogically relevant.

We should note that those aspects become advantages when coursebooks are used critically and supplemented with other materials, preferably teacher-produced to meet students´ needs and context. On the contrary, overreliance on coursebooks followed by limited context-responsive materials may deskill and disempower teachers thus transforming them into materials deliverers (Crawford, 2002: 80; Richards, 2001:255; Torres, 1998: 177-178). When this is the case, teachers may lose their authority for the students may realise that it is the coursebook which in fact leads the course. When this

happens, students may question their teachers if some pages are skipped or left undone. For those students, the coursebook carries more authority than the teacher (Dendrinos, 1992).

As regards syllabi, the role of coursebooks as structuring tools (Crawford, 2002; 83-84) may seem problematic. On the one hand, coursebook writers follow a specific pedagogic approach along with an allegedly clear delineation of teacher and students' roles. The most favoured is the Communicative Approach through its many faces. This entails that coursebooks generally offer a multi-strand syllabus (McDonough & Shaw, 2003: 43), that is, a syllabus which combines a lexical approach, CLT through presentation-practice-production pedagogies, some kind of tasks, and sections which aim to integrate English with the school curriculum. This means that the market rarely offers a coursebook which is 'purely' communicative, task-based, or content-driven. This is so because, as Harwood (2010: 13-17) puts it, publishers need to produce profitable products to be sold for commercial purposes. For publishers, coursebooks are only commercial artifacts which need to be made as visually attractive as possible for consumers to purchase over their competitor's.

On the other hand, it may be the case that the coursebook syllabus is different from what national curricular guidelines suggest. When this is the case and teachers are over-dependent on coursebooks, the coursebook dictates the class syllabus. Consequently, we witness a reversal situation where teachers organise their courses and lessons according to what the contents page of a coursebook describes. Such a situation has serious implications on more general levels as the coursebook-driven syllabus designed by teachers may contradict what curriculum planners have agreed on. As a result, we are faced with two curricula: the official curriculum which may exist only in official releases and other bureaucratic formats and the observed curriculum delivered by teachers following a coursebook and their own decisions. It should not be problematic if the discrepancies only pertain to sequence or topics. What should be addressed is whether the approaches suggested by curriculum planners are in sharp contrast with classroom practices. While most teachers claim to be communicative, their practices do not often reflect such a stance.

Action Research: evaluating international coursebooks
I became a teacher-researcher facilitator in my current action research project when we, the three EFL teachers of a secondary school in Esquel, began to integrate content and language or introduce more controversial topics in our classrooms (Banegas, 2011). Our interest to integrate curricular content and language learning arose from needs analysis carried out among our Polimodal students who demanded curricular-based lessons. In 2009, we first chose two different series from Cambridge University Press as an answer to our needs analysis. Against all coursebook evaluations (Sudhoff, 2010:34-36, Woodward, 2001: 147-154) we decided to use *Messages* (Goodey et al., 2005) and *More!* (Puchta et al., 2008) as they met the linguistic demands of our students and offered some CLIL initiatives. This last feature was our driving force as we sought to explore CLIL despite the lack of materials connected with this approach (Coyle at al., 2010). I will now examine both series from the integration of content and language as the first stage in our action research project to produce our own materials.

Messages is not advertised as having a CLIL component. Nonetheless, the series has a section called 'Life and Culture'. In general terms, the topics within this section go from the first Americans, to Australia, the Olympics, famous journeys and explorers, the history of the English language, and Gandhi among others. The section always features a ´task.' In fact, it is a comprehension exercise, as students have to do some of the following: answering comprehension check questions, identifying speakers, deciding whether statements are true or false, or sequencing events. All these variations of comprehension exercises focus solely on content. Unsurprisingly, each level of the series does not follow any logical pattern concerning thematic sequences or specific thematic areas. In other words, there is no systematic treatment of topics. Nor does it encourage students to learn more about a particular topic.

More!, conversely, does advertise its CLIL component called `Learn MORE through English'. It aims at building bridges with an ideal non-existent school curriculum as each topic is linked to a school subject. The subjects represented throughout the series are: Science, History, Biology, Geography, Literature, Technology, Maths, and Music. Although I understand that this series is marketed internationally, the choice of topics does not represent what our school curriculum expects students to learn. Put differently, the integration between curricular content and foreign language learning which the coursebook promotes fails as the former component is not treated in relation to a real school curriculum.

In terms of organisation, each CLIL section begins with a box containing key words, yet there are no exercises for vocabulary. In my view, this is an advantage provided teachers have the time and willingness to develop their own vocabulary exercises. After the key-word box there follows a reading

text or a listening activity. Reading texts usually involve asking or answering comprehension questions or matching headings to paragraphs. Sometimes there are no activities accompanying the text. As for listening activities, students usually have to predict information and then check it while listening, or listen and label. What is common to all CLIL sections is the presence of a mini-project. The project involves searching for further information which may be then presented through posters, leaflets, or oral presentations in front of the class.

Having briefly looked at the coursebooks we use, I believe that although the market attempts to take advantage of integrating content and language, efforts are limited. Neither *Messages* nor *More!* offers avenues for contextualised curricular explorations. Their selection of subject-related contents is random and superficial at times. Even when some of the topics are worth exploiting, they still fall short as they neglect opportunities to make them relevant to teenagers (López Barrio 2008: 40-52). In addition, follow-up activities are at lower cognitive levels since questions usually ask learners to remember or understand facts without evaluating or becoming critical. Furthermore, language awareness or any pedagogical treatment of language learning is not followed by more language-oriented exercises. In general, students are not cognitively challenged as Coyle et al. (2010) hope. In line with Tomlinson's (2008: 8) 'blacklist' of what ELT materials are doing wrong, these titles seem to be treating linguistically low-level learners as intellectually low-level learners, which is, from a more radical view, underestimating learners.

Action research: teacher-developed materials

Because both coursebooks could not possibly feature contents related to our local curriculum and could not entirely meet our learners´ needs, we decided to develop our own context-responsive materials. We initially benefited from the Communicative Approach cornucopia and transformed it in such a way that we could develop a teacher-produced coursebook which in fact came to illustrate our own approach to content-language integration. In the year 2010 we developed our first coursebook aimed at integrating content and language. It was a language-driven model as we sought to use curricular content from the Polimodal curriculum to introduce and revise language learning. Our interest was in language though contextualised in curricular contents derived from Geography, Literature and Research, three areas we felt comfortable with and students had suggested. Each coursebook unit was divided into two lessons and each lesson was divided into the following sections: vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These sections did not maintain the same order in every lesson as we arranged them according to our focus or input sources.

During 2010 we implemented this coursebook as supplementary material to the series evaluated above. Students motivation rose as they were able to build bridges with the school curriculum. Their level of engagement became higher as they realised that our materials directly addressed them, their needs, their linguistic repertoire and, above all, their cognitive development. At the end of each term, we would ask them to provide feedback which could enhance our materials. They found positive the use of authentic sources such as videos from YouTube and written texts, the number of listening and group-work tasks, the vocabulary exercises, and the guidelines for writing. However, they thought that more explicit grammar or situational grammar exercises were needed. They believed that grammar noticing activities could be kept provided they were followed by more focused grammar practice. In addition they also suggested History and Economics as areas we could include in other units.

A new cycle and beyond

After this first cycle, materials evaluation – materials production – implementation – feedback, this year we have started the development of a new collection of units which are implemented once a week with our learners. At the same time we are engaged in studying more about materials development, adaption of input sources, use of authentic materials, and cross-curricular projects as a way of creating our own professional development opportunities.

It is our hope that we can sustain this project in time as we believe that once we become more familiar with materials development strategies and study what principles we teachers follow despite experts' suggestions, we can begin to exercise our teacher agency to the full by adapting and producing learning resources which respond to our learners, their needs and our overall context. It is a time consuming endeavour but by working collaboratively we reduce its weight and the outcomes are tripled. It is our hope I may return to another FAAPI with a richer account of our action research journey.

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The Role of Technology in the Language Learning Classroom in American Public Schools

Subtheme: The Role of TICs in the communicative classroom

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"I think it's fair to say that personal computers have become the most empowering tool we've ever created. They're tools of communication, they're tools of creativity, and they can be shaped by their users".
Bill Gates

Introduction

Presently in Argentina a popular program *Conectar Igualdad* (Connecting Equality) is being implemented by the federal government to promote the use of technology at school. *Conectar Igualdad* has been created in Argentina with the end of supplying a laptop computer to every student and every teacher in public secondary schools, special education schools and teacher-training colleges. For that reason 3 million laptops will be delivered all over the country. This program stimulates the development of digital contents that can be used for didactic purposes, and it aims to transform teaching models and activate new learning processes.

The United States of America has been a leader in this trend and has always supported the use of technology at school by means of rules and regulations that are widely accepted by the educational community.

Being a member of The Distinguished Fulbright Awards in Teaching program at the University of Maryland in the United States of America during the Fall semester of 2010, I was able to observe current practices and analyze the information related to the implementation technological resources in US public schools in order to make the best use of my findings in Argentina´s new program.

Therefore, considering the fact that the new educational policy about the use of computers may be extensive, for the purpose of this work, I will concentrate on the impact of technology applied specifically to language teaching and learning interaction, the role of technology in the English language classroom, the digital resources used to teach a language, the involvement of teachers and administrators in this area and their perception of the impact that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) may have on students to foster language learning in a modern and technologically-driven environment.

In view of my project, I was assigned to Martin Luther King Jr. Public Middle school during the course of my scholarship in the US. Systematically, I was able to schedule observations of the school, classrooms and computer labs. In addition, I conducted interviews with teachers and administrators. All of this provided relevant information to help me answer the following research questions:

- What kind of technological resources are presently used in public middle schools in the United States of America to promote language learning?
- How do teachers develop classroom activities according to these resources?
- Why do they consider, according to their experiences, that these digitalized activities contribute to the development of the four basic skills to master a language?

Related questions:

To what extent do teachers support the use of these resources to enhance the learning process?

To what extent do state policies determine the implementation of these resources in public schools?

To what extent do principals stimulate the application of technology to the teaching practices?

Literature review
Reasons to use technology in the classroom

In order to provide pertinent answers to the above mentioned research questions, it is essential to review the findings that specialists have considered outstanding in the use of technological devices specifically applied to the language learning process. Nowadays it is widely believed that "the most recent developments in computer-driven communication technologies provide us with a new set of

tools to support the enhancement of L2 acquisition" (Kern, 2004). Cubillos (1998) presents evidence that technology,

> 1) can facilitate vocabulary learning; 2) increase students' awareness of language structure through more sophisticated error-feedback programs; 3) support reading and writing development; 4) help teachers keep track of student's processing of language; 5) facilitate student's exploration of the target culture; 6) enhance motivation; and 7) enhance teaching resources through such tools as grading programs, presentation software, and e-mail communication with students as well as other professionals.

Technology in the classroom
Considering the benefits that computers may bring into the language learning environment proposed by Cubillos (1998), the possible uses of technological resources may result in an endless list that would be almost impossible to examine. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this study, the following twelve uses proposed by Brown (2007) are to be considered:

1. Collaborative projects	7. Reinforcement of classroom material
2. Peer-editing of compositions	8. Podcasting
3. E-mail	9. Games and simulations
4. Blogs	10. Computer-adaptive testing
5. Web page design	11. Speech recognition software
6. Videoconferencing	12. Multimedia presentations

Context
The present study involves a series of Language Arts, TESOL teachers and administrators presently teaching at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, in Beltsville, Prince George´s County, Maryland, United States of America. Being an American public middle school, Martin Luther King Jr. is technologically well equipped and every classroom has several computers for the students, moreover, teachers have the necessary hardware and software to include visual and aural resources in their daily lesson planning.

Procedures
In order to carry out this investigation, 10 teachers at Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School were interviewed about the kind of activities they apply in the classroom to enhance language skills in their students through the implementation of technological resources. They were also asked how they develop these activities and why they consider, according to their experiences, that these electronic activities contribute to the development of the four basic skills to master the use of a language and to the involvement of students into cross-curricular contents and social interaction.

Besides, teachers were systematically observed in their classrooms to corroborate to what extent technology is applied to the language teaching-learning process and how students are involved in this process when dealing with technological resources.

An interview with the principal of the school community contributed to the description of the school educational policies to foster teachers´ acquaintance with digital management. A series of standards proposed by the State of Maryland were also checked while observing teachers´ practices.

Results of observations and interviews
Going back to Brown´s (2007) twelve suggestions to apply technology to the language learning environment, each item has been analysed according to the three research questions which were examined during the interviews:

Collaborative projects
Most of the teachers interviewed stated that they group students in front of a computer to look for specific information about a given topic. The groups discuss the relevance of the material that is available on the net and also whether the source of information is considered reliable to fulfil the task required. Almost all the teachers agreed with the fact that this kind of activity is perceived as very helpful, particularly for those students who may benefit from faster learners while working together.

Peer-editing of compositions
Most of the teachers reported putting into practice this kind of activity frequently. One teacher, reported involving students in what is called "Gallery walk", which is carried out in the computer lab. After writing, students, in turn, go from one terminal to another adding suggestions to written essays.

Teachers in general considered the fact that peer-editing gives students the possibility to develop the capacity to analyse critically a written production and learn to work cooperatively with their peers.

E-mail

Some teachers promote the use of e-mails only for internal communication. E-mail exchange is not fully exploited outside this school for preventive reasons. Teachers remarked the necessity to be cautious when dealing with personal information. Only one teacher reported using this alternative to exchange folk tales generated at home with parents´ help.

Blogs

Only three teachers reported using blogs for educational purposes. They use this application to publish complementary information about a specific topic on which students are working, so that students can consult them and read about extra information, watch videos, follow instructions or send feedback to the teacher. The teachers who use this application agreed on the fact that blogs foster reading and writing skills.

Web page design

Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School has its own web site: *http://www1.pgcps.org/martinlutherkingjr/*, where a lot of information about the school is provided to the whole community. Teachers have the possibility to upload students´ productions onto the school page.

Videoconferencing

One of the teachers considers that this alternative is in progress and although it is not fully developed at school, it may provide a very powerful tool to foster language learning.

Reinforcement of classroom material

All the teachers stated that classroom materials are substantially enhanced when technological resources accompany them. Some teachers mentioned that they combine textbooks with CD-ROMs provided by the same book. Many teachers mentioned that they use *Study Island* as reinforcement of classroom material. This state assessment program is completely web-based and students can access it from any computer with an Internet connection and a standard web browser. Videos from Discovery Channel and YouTube were also mentioned by the interviewees as possible classroom resources to provide students with authentic material to enhance language learning. These resources are supposed to be much more appealing than static pictures.

Podcasting

The teachers said that they usually do not apply this alternative when teaching language.

Games and simulations

Most teachers referred again to Study Island to state that the program allows students to play a game that is content-based. Other very popular games implemented are *Jeopardy, Slamdog Millionaire* and *Eggbert.* They are presented on a screen and students can participate in groups or individually to answer a quiz and compete among themselves. Teachers claim that games presented digitally are a powerful alternative to add cross-curricular contents in a highly motivating way.

Computer- adaptive testing

Most of the teachers use the tests on Study Island in order to review contents for formal assessment. A teacher stated that these kinds of tests are easily administered and the results can be obtained immediately.

Speech recognition software

Only four teachers reported using or having used this digital alternative to record students´ voices when they are reading, narrating or discussing a given topic. This exercise allows them to check their pronunciation, diction and fluency.

Multimedia presentations

PowerPoint and other computer-based media presentations are widely adopted to enliven classroom material with graphics, charts, art, and audio sound bites. Teachers find that PowerPoint presentations, video and audio clips from YouTube may be easily applied in the classroom. When students are asked to create a presentation of this kind in groups, teachers claim that this activity can develop a wonderful environment for classroom interaction.

<u>*Limitations of the present study*</u>

Some of the obstacles that should be considered in the present study are the following:

the time assigned to carry out this investigation covered a time span of less than three months, the information obtained is restricted to one school of the State of Maryland and the number of teachers that were interviewed was limited to ten.

<u>*Conclusions*</u>

In order to provide this work with a conclusion, I would like to highlight, the strengths and challenges observed that may be relevant to the successful implementation of *Conectar Igualdad* in Argentina.

Strengths

The implementation of digital resources in the classroom is supported by a series of State standards that clearly outline objectives for the use of technology.

The school I observed proved to be technologically well equipped: every classroom has several computers for the students, and the teachers have the necessary hardware and software to include visual and aural resources in their classes.

All the teachers are periodically asked to attend courses on the educational use of computers.

The principal of the school strongly supports the use of technological devices and promotes permanent equipment updating.

Most of the teachers think digital displays are highly motivating and they have the conviction that students´ interest in a subject is substantially enhanced when a topic is presented in a digital way. The teachers expressed that after answering the questions included in the interview, they became aware that, at their school, they have a wide range of equipment that can serve more ambitious projects, such as videoconferencing with other students somewhere in the US or a foreign country.

Challenges

Some teachers may feel technological implementation in the classroom should be left only to the teacher of the subject Computer Science, and they do not include as much technology as may possibly be done.

Some teachers do not devote enough time to the development of computer-based activities.

Sometimes students are not allowed to put into practice all they can do on their own.

Some teachers avoid using the Internet to exchange personal information and they prefer to be cautious about this issue.

On the basis of the information gathered at Martin Luther King Jr. Public Middle school, I can conclude that my interactive participation in the life of this middle school, provided me with very valuable information about the relevance that administrators and teachers in American public schools give to the role of technology in the classroom. This information will contribute to a better implementation of the government program *Conectar Igualdad* in Argentina.

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Metaphoric Competence and EFL: Language Acceptance and Avoidance of Death

Sub-theme: Discursive practices and communicative language teaching – pragmatics and communicative language teaching

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Abstract

This paper provides a reflection upon the power of language, either bringing to existence or concealing events that affect our daily lives. Death has been selected for the present discussion due to the controversial responses it generates. Two samples of discourse, with opposing perspectives, have been chosen to illustrate the significance of the metaphoric competence for advanced language learners.

Introduction

Decades of structuralist submission were swept away in the seventies when the functionalists came up with the idea that language cannot be understood, and therefore analised, without considering the context in which words come to life. This situation, both of a linguistic and extra-linguistic nature, unravels a number of factors that will condition the choice of syntax, meaning, register and roles that encode the pre-existing ideas which we intend to communicate. Thus, Pragmatics – understood as the study of language in use – gained new significance and became an inherent component of the hitherto omnipotent Linguistics.

The concept of Communicative Language Ability coined by Bachman in 1990, however, lacks a fundamental component for effective language development, which has been neglected for years and which presupposes great proficiency: the metaphoric competence[i] (Littlemore and Low: 2006).

This paper intends to show how metaphors can be used in advanced courses. A pilot experience has been tried with Proficiency students at *Asociación Rosarina de Cultura Inglesa*. On this occasion the topic of Death was selected and approached from two opposing perspectives in order to show how language manipulation purposefully flouts Grice's maxim of Truth (the Cooperative Principle: 1975) for the sake of emotional self-preservation.

Part I

We all end up dead; it's just a question of how and why.

William Wallace (Braveheart – 1996)[ii]

Death is inevitable.

Yet for thousands of years man has strived to find a way to avoid this heavenly imposed end; the most varied tools have been applied to counter-fight it, from the Faustian soul-immortality deal with the Devil to the resourceful application of science to the creation of Frankenstein.

The sole reference to this unfortunate event generates discomfort, fear, pain. Thus naming "it" has become forbidden. There is a popular tendency to believe in the performative function of language, by which the act of mentioning something might have some incidence on its ultimate realisation. This explains the productivity of the semantic field applied to Death. According to Hugh Rawson[iii] (1995) speakers often resort to "roundabout words" in an attempt to conceal fear, to preserve others from a painful or embarrassing moment or even to cover up the unbearable fact that

we are merely perishable. Yet, even when consciously or unconsciously flouting Grice's maxim of quality or truth, it is undeniable that this subject has provided the English language with a rich corpus of data.

The question is: should the system be purged of these expressions? Is there such a thing as *plain words*?

Following the argument presented by Lewis Carroll[iv] (1872) we can observe the impact of the choice of expression on our interlocutors:

> "Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.
>
> "Exactly so" said Alice.
>
> "Then you should **say what you mean**," the March Hare went on.
>
> "I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least – at least I **mean what I say** – that's the same thing, you know."
>
> "Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter.

Do we often *say what we mean*? And alternatively, are our words purposefully backed up with our true intentions? Carroll's categorical conclusion contradicts the essential principles underlying the use of euphemistic language, namely:

Say what you mean This is rarely the case of euphemisms. If the speaker were actually doing so there would be no need to linguistically "beat about the bush".

Mean what you say This is neither true. By choosing alternative expressions the speaker is purposefully mitigating and disguising the sore issue.

In all cases, these lexical substitutions are nothing but metaphors, equivalents which, according to Lakoff[v] (1980), reflect a preexistent conceptual organisation of the mind. This principle lies in the fact that we experience reality in terms of something else. According to this perspective "not saying what one means" would constitute an inherent property of human nature.

To Say or Not To Say it

There is a scene in Robin William's "Patch Adams" (1998)[vi] where this character and a terminally ill patient exchange a long series of euphemisms for *dying* while the former is dressed as an Angel. The moribund, suffering from cancer – an unnamable disease - clings to his hopeless situation and rejects any tie with life. Robin Williams, in an attempt to shatter the patient's pessimism, resorts to a verbal contest, the result of which will restore some of the lost confidence.

Patch opens the speech by presenting the audience with a meaningfully organized list of "dying" expressions which range from the most literal to the most figurative.

A componential analysis of the selected examples will reveal crafty accuracy in spite of the circumlocution. What enables this linguistic phenomenon is the resemblance between the chosen substitute and "death" itself. According to Lakoff[vii], whereas *health* and *life* are related with upward expressions, *illness* and *death* point downwards, a linguistic tendency which coincides with the final location of the corpse.

The chart below intends to illustrate the connection between the concrete and the intended meaning of the chosen euphemisms. This was presented to CPE students in the form of a domino game and a warm-up activity to the video session. Each euphemism had to be matched to the corresponding interpretation.

Literal expression	Euphemism	
	Expression / Denotation	**Connotation / death association**
	To expire [official document; sb's position]	*end*
	To pass on [to delegate, give sth. to sb. else]	*In a biblical sense "to yield up the ghost"*
	To perish [decay, often fodd or materials]	*Decay of the body*
	To peg out [hang wet clothes to dry]	*Idem "to pass on"*
	To push up daisies To push up posies [make them grow]	*Seen from the underground*
	To become extinct [animals, definite state]	*Cease to exist*
	Curtains [signaling the end of a play]	*end*
	Deceased [legalese]	*death*
	Demised [end of something]	*end*
	Departed and defunct No longer useful	*Leaving this world*
	Dead as doornail	*stillness*
	Dead as herring [fish]	*lifeless*
	Dead as mutton	*Dead meat*
	Dead as nits [egg of a louse]	*stillness*
Death (the end of life)	The last breath *Absence of breath =death*	*Breathing =living*
	Paying a debt to nature	*You owe Her your life*
To die	The big sleep	*stillness*
	God's way of saying "slow down"	*Death is God's will*

This monologue is followed by an exchange which is oriented towards a more metaphoric and less common mode of expression. This time students watched the scene and completed the dialogue following the layout of the Listening task in Part 2 of the CPE paper. Subsequently, they worked in pairs to provide their own wording for each expression.

Bill Davis: To check out. *(When leaving a hotel = this world)*
Hunter Patch Adams: To shuffle off this mortal **coil**. *(To get rid of the outer wrapping)*
Bill Davis: To head for the happy hunting ground. *(The Garden of Eden)*
Hunter Patch Adams: To blink for an exceptionally long period of time. *(Keep your eyes shut)*

Bill Davis: To find oneself without breath.

Hunter Patch Adams: To be the incredible decaying man.

<u>Bill Davis</u>: Worm buffet. *(The corpse is finally eaten by worms)*

<u>Hunter Patch Adams</u>: Kick the bucket. *(Originally suicidal men stood on buckets and hanged themselves on a rope, thus kicking the buckets resulted in losing balance and dying)*

<u>Bill Davis</u>: Buy the farm. *(The ideal state)*

<u>Hunter Patch Adams</u>: Take the cab. *(Consistent with the idea of departure)*

<u>Bill Davis</u>: Cash in your chips. *(You pay, you leave)*

<u>Hunter Patch Adams</u>: And if we bury you *** up, I have got a place to park my bike. *(Your burial leaves more room for those who remain alive)*

The language recipient can clearly bridge the coherence gap between the euphemistic utterance and the plain truth because their mind is structured accordingly, equipped with mental scripts which enable them to assign the right value to the given expressions. However, this form of *doublespeak* (Lutz, 1995)[viii], which intends to conceal and obfuscate meaning, can be nothing but detrimental to our linguistic well-being. Janus with its two faces.

Part II

> *Every man dies, not every man lives.*
>
> *William Wallace (Braveheart – 1996)[ix]*

Avoidance has prevailed in the first part of this paper. Conversely, the second section will present an alternative approach to death: its acceptance. The following extract from Conrad Aiken's short story *Your Obituary Well Written* (1982)[x] presents us with more pragmatic perspective about death. The extract was presented in the form of a gapped text, the highlighted expressions being removed – in accordance with the type of skill required in the Use of English paper of the Cambridge Exam.

A couple of years ago I saw in the "**agony** column" of *The Times* a very **curious** advertisement. There are always curious things in that column – I have always been fascinated by that **odd** little company of **forlorn people** who so **desperately** and publicly **wear their hearts on their sleeves** for daws to peck at.

[…]The advertisement of which I have just spoken was of a **different** sort altogether. This was signed "Journalist", and merely said:

'Your obituary?

Well-written, reviewed by yourself,

and satisfaction thus insured'

My first response to this oddity was mere **amusement**. How **extraordinarily ingenious** of this journalist! It seemed to me that he had perhaps found a gold-mine – I could well imagine that he would be **inundated with orders** for **glowing eulogies**. And what an **astonishing method** of making a living – by arranging flowers, as it were, for the about-to-be-dead! That again was **fascinating** – for it made me wonder what sort of bird this journalist might be.

Something wrong with him, no doubt – a kind of **sadist**, a **gloomy creature** who perhaps reveled rather **unhealthily** in the mortuary; even, perhaps, a **necrophile**. Or was he, on the other hand, perfectly **indifferent** and **detached** about it, a mere **hack-writer** who had, by elimination, arrived at the rather **clever** idea?... But from these speculations I went on to others, and among them the question – to me a highly **interesting** one – of what, exactly, one would want to put into one' own obituary. What would this be? Would one want just the usual sort of thing […] … Or would one prefer to have one's personal qualities touched on – with perhaps a kindly reference to one's unfailing generosity, one's warmth of heart, and one's extraordinary equableness of disposition? …

By neither alternative did it seem to me that my "satisfaction could be insured" Neither for those who knew me, nor for those who did not, could any such **perfunctory *eulogium*** be in the least
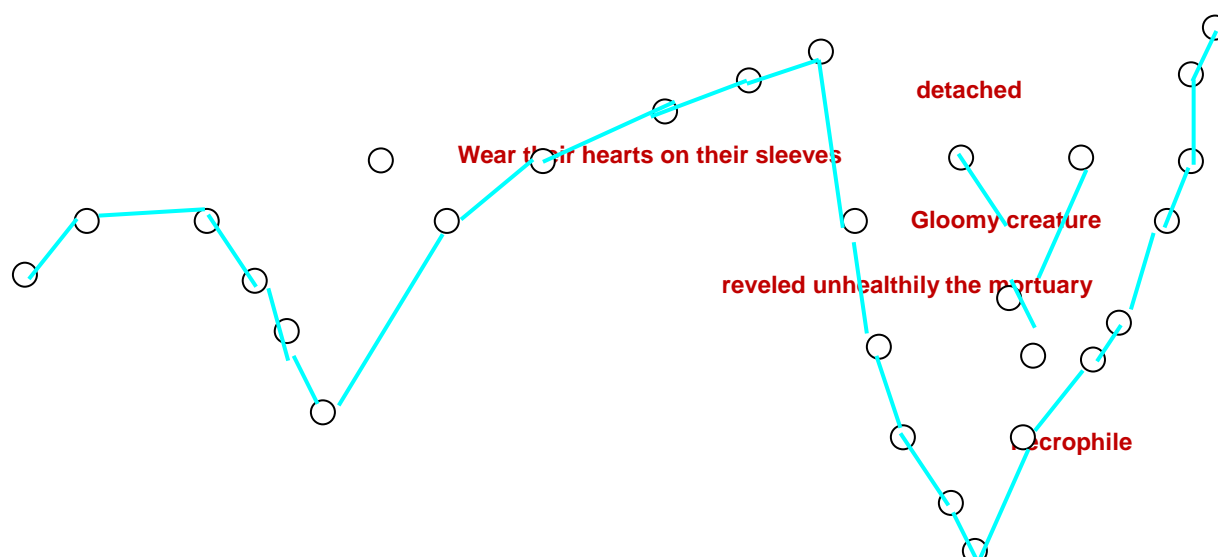
[…] And it occurred to me suddenly that the best, and perhaps the only, way of leaving behind one a record of one's life which might be, for a world of strangers, **revelatory**, was that of relating some single episode of one's history; some single, and if possible central, episode in whose small prim all the colours and lights of one's soul might be seen. Seen just for a flash and then gone. Apprehended, vividly, and then forgotten – if one ever *does* forget such things.

The reader will immediately notice the paradox of the expressions "obituary" and "reviewed by yourself." An obituary is by definition "an article about the life of someone who has just died"[xi] so it is highly improbable that the defunct in question might have the chance to review *himself* the content of the text for which he is the main character.

Students were asked to contrast their own contributions for the gaps with the original ones. Their attention was focused on the slanting of expressions, which reflect the unsteady progression in the narrator's attitude towards the input.

What follows is a graphic representation of a personal interpretation of the narrator-reader's evaluation and reaction. I have proceeded to isolate the words that describe the notion of a self-written obituary together with other expressions that either refer to its context of appearance or the target readership of both the ad and the obituary itself.

If one toys with a pencil and tries joining the dots progressively, we may come across a revealing finding, a visual metaphor that clearly portrays the linguistic fluctuation of the text:

detached

Wear their hearts on their sleeves

Gloomy creature

reveled unhealthily the mortuary

necrophile

What I have intentionally recreated is the shape of an *electrocardiogram* – indexical of a probable impending death. The purpose is to show, through this means, that the narrator emotionally experiences recurrent feelings ranging from sorrow and surprise to euphoria, and back again to darkness in order to finish at its highest point in some sort of divine revelation – the kind of sensation one must undeniably experience upon the fact that one may die…but above all…has lived. At this level of language proficiency students are capable of distinguishing the denotative and connotative value of their choice of words – a reflection that will definitely have a positive impact on their written production.

Writing one's own obituary would be like planning one's own funeral. The problem with death is not that it is inevitable…but that we FEAR it in as much the same way as we fear the Unknown. It is not the act of passing away (who knows where to!) but the disappointing realisation that we are not in control of it.

There are several forbidden social issues which mould our language but Death is undeniably the strongest. Facing it is inescapable… naming it is a manifestation of great linguistic courage. If someone can reach the end of the "play", face "the final curtain" and be able to admit to have "travelled each and every highway", I doubt whether there is much fear for Death left. What we leave behind - our deeds - will surely cushion the un

Projects: the Evolution of the PPP Model and the Place of the Fourth P

Subtheme: Communication oriented activities and tasks

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Abstract

A project is defined as a process through which we attempt to bring a present unsatisfactory situation to a more desirable status. The concept of project is then further refined to envisage classroom applications. The once popular Present-Practice-Produce Model is briefly discussed and project work introduced as a valid alternative to foster students' genuine, true-to-life language production. The stages of the pre-project or design process are explored, the parts of a project analysed and pedagogical implications and conclusions drawn.

Introduction

There are different types of projects that vary in design and methodology depending on the objectives we have in mind. Broadly speaking, a project can be defined as a "process through which we attempt to turn an unsatisfactory situation into a more desirable one" (Ander-Egg, 2005).

Now, to be able to modify an unsatisfactory situation or to intervene successfully, it is necessary to have a diagnosis, a clear identification of needs and, if possible, a priority scheme. At this stage, the concept of project looks much more like classroom realities: diagnosis, needs, priorities, projected intervention, better results.

Situated at the last level of materialization of this process, a classroom project is a didactic model that presupposes pre-meditation and entails an integrating approach.

The aim of this paper is to focus on project work "as a powerful methodology for involving students in an authentic learning experience with language used for genuine communication" (Maley, 2003), namely, as a tool to orient our practice a step further.

Then and Now

Ever since the glorious times of the Present, Practice and Produce Model, the "production" stage seems to have posed difficulty. Even within the Communicative Approach or a Task-Based Learning paradigm, learners' opportunities to use the language "spontaneously" have usually become somehow stiff and painful spells for students and teachers alike, particularly in contexts like our country's, where English is taught as a foreign language.

Teachers do not usually have doubts about communicative procedures: they know how to contextualize language, how to put meaning across "communicatively", how to select or design communicative activities. Yet, the Production stage is all too often rather disappointing: no matter how hard we try to think out a good topic-raising question, how long we take to plan for an attractive task, how carefully we select readers, how close to the students' realities we take a role-playing activity or a writing assignment, there is frequently a bitter flavour left after these sessions to generate opportunities of "use" (Widdowson, 1978) are over. We get the feeling that there is still a need for something more: we have a problem. Project work is proposed as an alternative solution.

Pre-Project or Design Process Stages

The statement of the problem is paramount: shall we be able to solve a problem if we are not certain what it consists of? Certainly not. What really matters at this stage is to pin down the problem and consider if it is worth solving. It might be helpful to ask ourselves questions such as: *What shall I do to…?* or *How can I get to…?.* These questions will help us see the distance between our present situation and the desirable situation. That distance is precisely our problem.

The analysis of the problem is next. This will entail the division of the whole problem into parts. This may be problematic in itself, but visualising discrete parts will be very helpful when projecting the solution.

The search of possible solutions follows. This is a real quest into our minds (ingeniousness; creativity), into the literature (research) and into the world around us (experience). We should bear in mind at this point that any problem usually can have more than one solution, and it is healthy that this diversity is carefully studied and, if possible, discussed with a colleague, for instance, or with the students themselves. The discussion of alternatives is enriching and will enable us to view the problem from different perspectives.

The next stage is the taking of a decision. This entails a process of eliminating alternatives so that we get to the best solution possible. Criteria for selection are usually an average between feasibility and economy: what is best, given the resources available in our context of situation.

The specification of the solution means "turning that solution into a clear and anchored project" (Seleme, 2002) where I can visualise and enumerate the resources, the organization of activities and the expected results.

Action is the next stage: the implementation of the project means to move from a design stage into an action stage, which will call for monitoring and assessment both of the process and of the product (or results).

The Parts of the Project

Projects usually have a name or denomination and a group of addressees or beneficiaries, in our case, our students. Now, technically speaking, in the first place, reference should be made to the situation that has given rise to the project, i.e. we should put forward an argument in favor of the implementation of the project and thus provide what is known as a justification. In the same section, we should also refer to the principles that will govern our projected work; we should outline the ideological support to our practice or, in other words, define our theoretical background.

There should also be a specification of the objectives or achievement expectations, which might be defined as the photograph we would like to get of our students after the project has been implemented.

We should also make a clear statement of the contents, which include concepts, procedures and attitudes the project will focus on, and of the methodology to be used, i.e. the way in which those contents will be dealt with. It is advisable to include a description of the related activities to be developed throughout.

It is as relevant to state what is needed to carry out the project. When making the list of resources, human, material and time assets should be assessed and included.

It is advisable to design and describe instruments that can be used to monitor the project development, in the form of follow-up or process-assessment instruments, and also to include a thorough description of the close, and/or even a sample of the tangible end product, from a leaflet to a school journal, from an open day exhibition materials to a play script or performance.

Last but not least, bibliographical references should be included, particularly if the project is to be submitted for approval.

As projects are truly student-centred, it is a good idea to design some form of simple, data-collection instrument to assess the impact the project and the product will eventually have on the beneficiaries and on other, "secondary" agents, for example, other courses at school, the school as an institution or the students' families, for instance. Feedback forms and short questionnaires are a good example.

Apart from being informative, feedback will eventually become an important, formative part of the feedstock for further projects.

In the Classroom and Beyond

It is clear at this stage that project work originates in response to a learning need, and it is in this sense that it has been defined as a didactic model. Now, once a project is put into practice, the learners naturally exceed the classroom. No matter how simple the activities the project entails may be, they will demand doing some form of research, sharing findouts with classmates and teacher, assessing quality and relevance of the data collected, selecting, outlining, drafting, editing and (re)organizing the data in view of an assigned format or product. All these processes will call for both individual and group work and will get the learners to experience the advantages of collaborative work. In other words, projects bring school closer to everyday life, not only through the type of contents that can be handled but also through how they are to be dealt with, through the way knowledge is approached and applied. Besides being able to tailor tasks to the students' own interests and expectations, we naturally take the students beyond language aims

Main Pedagogical Implications

Project work generates both in the students and the teacher a "this-does-make-sense" effect while promoting autonomy and calling for research. It also entails interaction and collaboration, for everyone involved contributes with his/her findings and natural skills; "there is joint intellectual effort" (Smith and MacGregor, 1992). Thus, research, knowledge and action, which logically interrelate and interoperate, are naturally fused. Last but not least, projects call for data and group organization and imply reflected, pre-meditated and procedural action leading to a tangible, concrete product(ion) fostering genuine, communicative language use throughout the process.

Conclusions

Project work is in itself a cognitive activity that contributes to the organization of ideas, procedures and effective courses of action for both the teacher and the students.
Project work also guarantees "safe" doing because there is a clear specification of objectives to be reached and methodology to be applied (including the tasks to be carried out) and there is always a tangible product, which adds to meaningful, memorable learning.
It also favours multiple-intelligences and promotes interpersonal relations and group work in an orderly fashion.
Furthermore, project work entails reflection, analysis, consideration of different possible approaches to one problem and the assessment of the resources available. Thus, it trains the students to make purposeful choices and to take informed decisions. Learners get naturally involved both in taking pre-meditated and procedural courses of action and in using the foreign language to communicate their views, choices and decisions.
Last but not least, the leading thread in a project development is problem solving, a process that in itself triggers thought. Project work ultimately trains students for life.

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Collocation Awareness to Enhance the Language Potential in Written Communication

Subtheme: Discursive practices and communicative language teaching: Lexico-grammar and communicative language teaching

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Abstract

This paper shows that an approach to the discussion of collocations based on three tenets, namely, awareness, exposure and practice enhances written production. To increase the level of students' writings in a Language I course at Translation College in IESLV J. R. Fernández in Capital Federal, a manageable definition of collocations was drawn for a two-semester course that proved helpful to promote both idiomaticity and fluency in writing. Results show that awareness contributed greatly to understanding and producing collocations with familiar words in combinations.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been increasing recognition of the fact that vocabulary learning has a prominent role in achieving fluent communication in writing and higher comprehension in reading. James M. Coady, researcher from Ohio University, stated that methodological approaches took different stands on this issue –from neglect, to thinking that vocabulary learning occurred naturally (Coady, 1993). Since then, approaches have been focusing on acquisition not of single words but of word combinations. Researchers (Hill, 2001 and Lewis, 2001) have stated that our mental lexicon contains some single words but a great number of collocations. These word combinations and prefabs contribute to communication in various ways. On the one hand, collocations provide idiomaticity to students' written and oral production. On the other, fluency is enhanced in language that is produced and comprehended. For Suárez and Tuero (2009), "The availability of prefabricated units reduces the processing effort required to deliver messages". In a very interesting paper, Rosamund Moon (1996) stated that when fixed expressions are substituted by broadly synonymous items "the connotations of fixed expressions and the sociocultural schemata that they represent have gone entirely". Given the importance of collocations in the teaching and learning of vocabulary, the main purpose of this paper is to show that an approach to the discussion of collocations based on three fundamental tenets will improve students' written production and comprehension.

To increase the level of students' written production and comprehension in a Language I course at a Translation College, IESLV J.R. Fernández, I designed a two-semester course based primarily on awareness of collocation. I simplified the classification of collocations from the BBI Dictionary of Collocations (1993) and presented it to students to facilitate their understanding of the importance of word combinations, which would help them increase their level of fluency in writing and in reading.

The three tenets on which the course was based were awareness of collocation, exposure and practice. Awareness was considered central to the course. The idea of awareness I put forward was based on Howard Nicholas's view on conscious reflection in the class. Howard Nicholas (1992) explained that one view in language acquisition is that "conscious reflection on language by students and teachers leads to improved language use and better overall education".

In this paper I explain how this reflection on collocations was carried out through the discussion of the classification of collocations. I also include the criteria to choose the material used throughout the course.

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Twenty-four students participated in the study. The students were aged 19 to 39 and were all taking a first year Language course at a Translation course. It must be stated that the name of their course of studies is "Traductorado técnico, científico y literario", which implies that they must be relatively well versed in general English. In addition these students will have to understand the role of collocation because, as Peter Newmark (1988) explains, a bad translation is "caught" out not by grammar but by "unacceptable or improbable collocations".

One other very important consideration was that throughout their course of studies, these students have to produce essays and academic term papers in English, as well as comprehend different types of text with varied degrees of difficulty. As a result, they need to gradually develop solid language skills.

The students were pre-tested at the start of the course to establish their initial reading and writing levels. They were given a text with comprehension questions and then asked to write a short opinion piece based on it. Their use of collocation and prefabs was analysed and it was noted that most of the students used an intermediate level of language. They had learnt a number of collocations and idiomatic expressions in their previous courses, but needed more freedom and fluency in their writing.

After this initial test, the students were given a very brief introduction to the concepts of idiomaticity, collocation and prefabs. The aim was to raise their awareness of such linguistic phenomena with a view to training them in identifying collocations, using collocation dictionaries and doing research on the collocations and clichés that they would be exposed to through the materials chosen. To make them aware of the contribution of collocations to idiomaticity, I gave them examples both in English and Spanish.

MATERIALS USED:

The rationale behind the choice of articles and texts used throughout the course was basically thematic with exposure to lexical units that contribute to the expression of those themes. Several considerations were made when materials were chosen:

Exposure: Articles, listening pieces and films were chosen on the basis of interest, range of vocabulary, currency of issues to be discussed. Themes were proposed to students and the following were chosen:

Violence- Food and Eating Disorders- Extreme Sports and Injuries- Psychology and Social Issues.

For each theme three articles were provided by the teacher, a recorded report from British or American media which featured topics similar to those being dealt with in the articles and a film or a documentary. In this way, exposure was ensured and language from a variety of genres was included. Newspaper articles were used because they constitute a suitable source of prefab input for students at this level. (Lewis, 2001)

Frequency: The problem of frequency required much elaboration. For Michel Lewis (2001), language that is communicatively effective combines prefabricated chunks with creative combinations made by language users. For this reason, one of my intentions was to find those creative associations of words to show students how powerful language is in making combinations. Another consideration was what Nigel Harwood states:

The key issue is rather how corpus data is selected and manipulated. To take one example of the potential misuse of data, there is a popular but mistaken belief that the frequency with which lexis occurs in a corpus will determine its priority in our syllabus. In fact, I would suggest that the more advanced the learners' level, the more apparent it becomes that something more than a frequency count is required. (Harwood: 2002)

Moreover, Lewis (1998) states that frequency alone cannot be a guideline in teaching collocations and he adds another element which is strength. For him, strong collocations are those in which both elements are bound together in such a way that they are perceived as one single word. Therefore, the decision was to instruct students to consult dictionaries and available corpora to determine the frequency of only some clichés which presented problems such as whether they were still in use or not. They were asked to pay attention to strength. The presence of the creative use of language was given priority over frequency.

Grammar: Since I agree with Sinclair that grammar is not the only factor to create meaning (Sinclair, 91), and considering the level these students had already acquired in their previous courses, only significant grammar features were highlighted for discussion. Cases of fronting, agency, inversion, etc. were discussed as they appeared in the texts. Reference books were also consulted by the students and room was left for a remedial approach to grammar especially after each writing assignment. The focus was on the discourse function of the grammar within a particular text.

Text-type: Informative texts including newspaper articles and essays were discussed. But, because of the students' needs, fiction was used as well. Though Lewis states that fiction is the least suitable for exposure to prefabricated chunks (Lewis, 2001), novels and short stories were included in the extensive reading segment of the course. Students commented that much of the language discussed in the non-fictional texts appeared in the novels, short stories and films, and having been previously

exposed to these lexical chunks and collocations made reading and listening faster and more enjoyable.

<u>Collocations:</u> The criteria for selecting collocations were based on the classification that the BBI Dictionary of Collocations provides. It was thought to be the most convenient and systematic taxonomy for this level of students. Based on the concept of <u>Didactic</u> <u>Transposition</u> introduced by Yves Chevallard in 1985, I summarised the taxonomy presented by the BBI. Didactic Transposition is a theory which studies the way academic knowledge is transformed into teachable knowledge, so I had to make decisions to simplify certain linguistic phenomena.

The BBI classifies three broad types of collocations, which I have summarised here:

1. <u>Grammatical Collocations</u>: "...a phrase consisting of a dominant word (noun, adjective, verb) and a preposition or grammatical structure such as an infinitive or clause". The BBI discusses 8 of these combinations, but for the purpose described above, students were exposed to the general concept only. Examples from the materials chosen are: *brace oneself for something*, *advocate for*. According to the BBI, the native speaker's ear will reject combinations which are not appropriate as these collocations are perceived as single words; Lewis calls them strong collocations.

2. <u>Lexical Collocations</u>: These collocations do not contain prepositions and are normally formed by nouns, adjectives and adverbs. The BBI considers 7 types. Clichés, frozen collocations or prefabs are included in these collocations. Examples: *to hatch an idea*, *a plan*; *slam my senses shut*.

3. <u>Free Collocations</u>: These are not included in the BBI. However, a definition is given: "Free lexical combinations are those in which the two elements do not repeatedly co-occur; the elements are not bound specifically to each other; they occur with other lexical items freely". These were the most interesting because they provided creative associations for students to notice. In the same text, Benson et. al. state that these should not be included in dictionaries as they are limitless. Examples: *a comfy civilization*, *roast-centred family meals.*

Though both lexical and free collocations were considered the most interesting, grammatical collocations were also measured since students had already been exposed to many of them in their previous courses of study and new ones appeared in the texts.

APPROACH

During exposure to the material, students were asked to do research on certain lexical items which had been previously chosen and to provide further collocations with a selection of lexical items that appeared in the texts. They worked collaboratively and their findings were discussed in class. Students were strongly discouraged from working on and recording isolated words. Additionally, context of situation, register and language variation were analysed to help students understand when these collocations could be used. Debates, presentations, discussions were some of the organised activities carried out for the purpose of giving students chances to use the collocations. Also, short cloze tests, created by the students themselves, were done as well as multiple choice exercises and word forks, but these were only complementary exercises when it was felt that students needed extra practice. Students were asked to write an essay as a follow up activity.

When the course ended, students were asked to write a longer essay and this last piece was the one used to measure whether awareness, exposure and practice had resulted in more fluency in writing. Conversations with students regarding the topic of collocations were carried out throughout the course and students' responses were also taken into account to tune the approach.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

My initial purpose was to help students raise their level of written communication and reading comprehension by enlarging their mental lexicon. At first, it was difficult to persuade students to concentrate on collocations rather than on single words. By the middle of the first semester, they had acknowledged the fact that this approach to vocabulary had had an effect on their written and oral production.

Texts produced by the students were analysed at the end of their course. The different types of collocations used were measured. An analysis of the texts showed that in both the first opinion piece and the last essay, students used more grammatical collocations than lexical or free collocations (roughly three times more). When I compared their initial texts and the last ones, what was clear was that students had become more aware of collocations, made fewer mistakes in grammatical

collocations and made an effort to use new lexical and free collocations. Of course, I did not expect students to use a vocabulary similar in size to that needed to become fully proficient in the language as this was only their first course. However, exposure and practice seemed to have been the best ways to help them retain a number of collocations. It was found that the level of their production had significantly changed. The emphasis given to awareness may have significantly helped students' production.

The collocations discussed in class had been drawn from the texts provided to students or learnt incidentally from exposure to extensive reading and listening. Accordingly, learners were trained to find new collocations with words they knew or could easily guess but in combinations which they had never used or been exposed to before. Students were not constrained to lists of single words and expressions, which very likely contributed to their independence in noticing and learning new collocations.

On comparing the students' first essays with their final ones, it was found that the latter read better, students had become more fluent and their texts flowed more naturally than before.

ENDNOTE

Awareness contributed greatly to the understanding of the role of collocations in the process of learning a second language. The role of systematic exposure and practice was significant as well. Researching and recording useful collocations needs consideration while a wide variety of opportunities to produce collocations may have a positive effect on retrieving the collocations from students' mental lexicons.

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Revisiting CLT from an English as an International Language Perspective
Discursive practices and communicative language teaching: Intelligibility and
comprehensibility vs. accuracy?

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Abstract

This session will provide a detailed look into the recently acquired status of English as an international language and its methodological implications with reference to the Communicative Approach and pronunciation. By carrying out error analysis, we will particularly focus on the teaching of pronunciation in the first year of a teacher-training college, with an emphasis on the acquisition of accuracy, fluency and intelligibility in such a communicative language teaching-learning context.

Introduction

The fact that English is used as a means of communication among individuals from different countries -globally- and individuals within one country -locally- (McKay 2002) as a *lingua franca* or *global language* is unquestionable. Crystal (1997) characterises a global language as one which performs a specific function in every country by either becoming an official language in the country or by being given priority as a foreign language in the educational field. Crystal's views clearly shed light on the need to move away from paradigms which discuss English as a Foreign Language (EFL) into new ones which fully acknowledge the present status of English as an International Language (EIL).

Within the realm of phonology, the question of intelligibility -or the possibility of its future decline-, and that of the phonological model or variety to be taught in a teacher-training college ought to be paid special attention. The aim of this paper will be to briefly characterise the phenomenon of EIL within Communicative Language Teaching and Learning and to discuss the concepts of intelligibility and native speaker affiliation in order to raise awareness of present and future changes affecting these latter paradigms given the present role of English as an International Language. James' theories of Contrastive and Error Analysis (1980; 1998) will also be discussed as suitable paradigms informing trainers of future EIL speakers and teachers.

The Communicative Approach to Teaching and Learning English and its Implications as to Pronunciation Teaching

CLT originally developed as a reaction to the Audio-Lingual Method, and is based on the assumption that communication is effective as long as meaning can be transmitted, thus accuracy loses importance. As opposed to the Audio-Lingual Method, CLT seeks "comprehensible" rather than "native-speaker-like" pronunciation, and has as its primary goal "fluency and acceptable language", as opposed to "formal correctness" (Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983). This, in the field of pronunciation, has often been coupled with a prevalence of a focus on fluency, which is somehow felt to be carried out to the detriment of accuracy. This, hand in hand with the loss in strength and validity of the Native Speaker as a realistic pronunciation model, has brought the widespread desire for "intelligibility" to the forefront.

An Achievable Aim: Comfortable Intelligibility

Kenworthy (1996:15-16) takes full account of the importance of **intelligibility** in the context of communication. She sets 'comfortable intelligibility' as a general pronunciation goal within CLT, and she claims that in this context, intelligibility will ensure effective and efficient communication and will contribute to revealing the speaker's intention. Communication will be effective as long as it achieves its desired results, and it will be efficient as long as it flows smoothly and does not place too high a demand on either the speaker or the listener. It cannot be denied that, since intelligibility plays a decisive role in communication, it should remain a paramount teaching objective and its development must be ensured at university level.

Dalton and Steidlhofer (1994) couple intelligibility with the sound realisation of transactions and interactions and the production of phonologically **accessible** and **acceptable** discourse. The concern with attaining phonologically acceptable discourse is, in turn, not simply a linguistic objective but a social one as well. **Acceptability**, which depends on intelligibility, will also be determined by the value

that interlocutors attribute to each other's accent, and thus the perception of such accents as "appropriate to the occasion and to their respective roles and status in society" will contribute to rendering discourse acceptable. The idea of intelligible, acceptable discourse and pronunciation become even more desirable and imperative within the wider confines of English as an International Language.

English as an International Language, Nativespeakership and Pronunciation

Among the authors who discuss EIL, McKay is a major representative. According to her research, a language is considered to be "International" when it is mostly spoken by non-native speakers, which entails that this language serves as a means for "wider communication" (Mc Kay 2002: 5). Such complexity in the variation of English means that the role of the native speaker as a pronunciation model is challenged (Medgyes 1992; 2001), and so is that of the bilingual teacher.

Following this line of thought, and as proposed by McKay (2002), it is important to take into account the diverse contexts where English is used as an international language. Since most speakers of EIL will tend to use English in contexts where the interactants are not native speakers of English, the relevance of nativespeakership may no longer be valid. Following this theory and adhering to "the native speaker fallacy" (Medgyes 2001), authors such as Jenkins (1998) state that teachers should not worry more about losing their accent than what they should about being good professionals, and that it would be much more realistic and productive to think of the native speaker as a "referent" pronunciation than as a "target".

Is Comfortable Intelligibility Good Enough as a Pronunciation Goal for Future EIL Teachers?

EIL is an emerging construct, and as such, materials have yet to catch up with its emerging characteristics. This will have a particular bearing on pronunciation, since the Phonology of English as an International Language is still in flux, and the present changes may eventually result in the rise of World Englishes (Crystal 1997) which are mutually intelligible but which do not overlap with any of the standard varieties spoken where English is an L1. In this light, university trainers need to keep constantly informed about the changes affecting English pronunciation worldwide. Even if they use materials which stem from an analysis of a standard variety of English as a mother tongue, as is the case of the chairs of Phonetics and Phonology at the School of Languages, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, trainers should be very much aware of the present primacy of intelligible communication.

Thus, informed by past accounts of language transfer and error analysis, it seems wise for trainers to seek to develop in future speakers and teachers of EIL an awareness of the relevance of acceptable, comfortable intelligibility which will ensure effective and efficient communication among the emerging caste of bilingual speakers of English, i.e. speakers of EIL.

Contrastive and Error Analysis as a Suitable Framework for the Description of Common Errors

Contrastive Analysis (CA) was based on the idea that languages can be compared (James 1980), and that in comparing a person's L1 and L2, when mismatches were identified, it was possible to predict errors that students might have in the production of language (James 1998). This variety, which emerges during the acquisition of a second, foreign or international language has been referred to as "Interlanguage" (Selinker 1972), an intermediary linguistic variety of the Target Language (TL) that presents characteristics of both the learner's L1 and L2. Interlanguage can be analysed from the perspective of Error Analysis (EA)– which is aimed at describing the non-native learner's realisation of the L2 in order to disclose these mismatches.

According to James (1998), the difference between CA and EA lies in the fact that while in CA "errors could be fully described in terms of the TL, without the need to refer to the First Language (L1) of the learners", in EA there is no reason why errors could not be described in terms of the L1 (James 1998: 5). For the purposes of CLT, then, Error Analysis is more appropriate, since according to this approach, "judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible" (Finocchiaro and Brumfit 1983). However, one of the main sources of criticism of CLT has been the fact that in this approach only comprehensible communication is sought. This necessarily entails that if the teacher understands what the student says, then "communication" is achieved, and thus the purpose is fulfilled. In so doing, as posed by van Hattum (2006), the teacher can fail to interpret the students' errors, since he/she can be so used to errors and mistakes typically related to L1 interference that he/she understands these mistakes very easily.

Informing Tertiary Education Trainers: CA and EA

It would be advisable, then, for trainers to strike a balance when it comes down to spotting those errors which would play against comfortable intelligibility or bring about a breakdown in communication. According to the final comments stated in the previous section, a university trainer should be mindful in the sense that intelligibility should entail the production of a variety of which is English intelligible to most, or ideally all, bilingual speakers of English, no matter what their mother tongue may be. In this respect, conclusions arrived at within CA and EA and the teacher's own experience and expertise will inform the latter's judgement and assessment of what is acceptable in an international academic environment.

Revisiting the Communicative Approach within an EIL Context: Recap and Final Comments

The concerns raised above, then, pave the way for a re-thinking of the communicative approach and the teaching of pronunciation in general. Problems in communication do not only stem from grammatical or lexical errors, they can also be brought about by a lack of intelligible pronunciation. As van Hattum (2006) states, it is important for the teacher of English not to "tell" students what is wrong, but to "show" them what is wrong, reacting to what the students actually say and not to what they want to say.

Another major problem is that of cultural differences, which, now that the English language has achieved the status of "international language", is gaining more importance. It is clear, from a starting point, that whenever a person acquires a language, he/she does not only acquire lexical items or grammatical structures, but also all the cultural assumptions and presuppositions that a language is laden with.

As it has already been stated in accordance to McKay (2002), EIL is used in very different contexts cross-culturally, which entails that the question of *whose* culture should be taught takes centre stage, and of course, this is going to affect English language teaching, since the teaching-learning process should take place and be contextualised within the confines of a target culture construct. Cortazzi and Jin, already in the 1990s, offer a cultural sphere other than the source culture and the target culture: an international target culture (1999), which can be suitable for English language teaching if the cultural complexity of EIL is taken into account.

The horizons of Communicative Language Teaching should thus be broadened by feeding on past theories such as Contrastive and Error Analysis, and fully acknowledging and embracing the present and future discussions and trends that come hand in hand with the fast-changing nature of English as an International Language in this new global communication era.

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UNL: Communicative Academic Language Teaching. What 12 years of experience have taught us

Subtheme: Methodological implications - Single approaches, eclecticism or post-method era?

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Abstract
In 1999 a decision was made concerning the way foreign languages were to be taught at Universidad Nacional del Litoral if the institution aimed to develop professionals for a new world. An innovative proposal was construed integrating the four communicative skills and new instruments for assessment. Here, we describe the proposal, report the changes it suffered, explore the representations ignited in teachers' minds about CLT at university level, and put forward a new proposal.

Introduction

In the year 1996, a report on the situation of Foreign Languages (FL) at Universidad Nacional del Litoral (UNL) showed that only 50% of the 33 existing programmes offered courses in FL; that barely 12% of UNL's active students studied a FL, that approximately 95% of those students took English, the rest being distributed between French, Italian and, to an even lesser extent, German; that most of the few teaching positions (30) were not in the hands of FL teachers, and that FL modules were designed to develop reading-comprehension skills which "generally surfaced as translation of technical texts" (Fernández, 2007: 27). A decision was then made to institutionalise FLT, i.e., contribute to the construction of an international university curriculum that aimed to educate postmodern students and enable potential professionals to survive in the *Liquid Modernity* (Bauman, 2000). The academically limiting instrumental perspective which equated knowing a foreign language with knowing how to read did no longer carry. However, this traditional approach based on the analysis of study skills, though in many cases, consistent with the ideas underlying the Communicative Approach (CA), remained, in some of the university schools, tied to structural procedures and translation processes, and overemphasised pedagogical and contextual issues to the detriment of the development of an adequate communicative competence in the foreign language.

An innovative proposal construed on the belief that knowing a FL in a global world implied more than reading was designed and taken on board by the schools that made up the UNL in 1999. The proposal integrated the teaching of the four communicative skills and, accordingly, incorporated new instruments and parameters for proficiency assessment. In this work we reflect on what 12 years of communicative language teaching at university level have taught us. To this purpose we

- briefly describe the proposal,
- report on some of the changes it has suffered due to a natural process of adaptation,
- explore some of the polysemic and multifaceted representations the proposal ignited in UNL teachers' minds about communicative language teaching at university level,
- present and discuss results obtained so far.

Our 1999 Proposal

The proposal was meant to redefine and update the role of FL at UNL. Study programmes at UNL are organised in two cycles: i) an Initial Cycle (IC) devoted to a strong basic, general disciplinary training; and ii) an Upper Cycle (UC) emphasizing disciplinary specificity. Therefore, we devised an FL Initial Cycle which began to be taught in the 2000 academic year. This Cycle was construed around the following key concepts:

- General English
- Communicative Approach

- Integrating the four communicative abilities with an emphasis on listening and speaking
- Expected levels of achievement: A2 in listening and speaking, B1 in reading; A1 in writing (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR))[15]
- Taught lessons reinforced by tutor lessons and IT.

The first challenge the change brought about was the difficult task of deconstructing the deeply rooted belief that due to contextual and academic reasons the only thing that should and could be done at university was to teach how to read in a foreign language. Comments such as:
- *There is no time for more;*
- *In the academia, learners have to read updated specific information;*
- *Teaching general English to university students is nonsensical and ridiculous;*
- *Technical English has a higher status;*
- *Students already know General English from previous programmes of study*

reigned for many years and struggled to survive. They were carried out to the point of negating that a general knowledge of the foreign language would help in the development of more sophisticated reading strategies. The beginning was hard. It took time. However, the incorporation to the teaching staff of new minds aided the process and brought in new airs.

Along the course of its implementation, several changes had to be introduced to the original plan. These changes were mainly connected with the different academic idiosyncrasies and cultures of UNL Schools which impinged on the number of taught hours, the FL they opted for, and the compulsory or non-compulsory status of their insertion in the study programmes.

From the very beginning, we insisted on creating a complementary cycle, the FL Upper Cycle, which we describe below.

The New Proposal:
The Upper Cycle

In order to design the proposal, we opted for going back in time and rereading a book that had a tremendous impact on university FLT, brought about a radical change in the methodology used in the field and had been introduced and thoroughly analysed precisely twenty-three years earlier, when the CA was spreading nationwide and becoming the mainstream in EFL teaching: John Munby's *Communicative Syllabus Design* (1978). As Munby explains, Hymes, several years before, had highlighted the fact that Chomsky's notion of competence ignored sociocultural issues and omitted the most important linguistic ability: "to produce or understand utterances which are not so much grammatical but, more important, appropriate to the context in which they are made" (In Munby 1978: 9). In the same year, Hymes came up with what was to become the slogan of the days when the CA was having its momentum: "there are rules of use without which the rules of grammar would be useless" (Hymes 1971: 278). Hymes' definition of competence is very much like Halliday's definition of meaning potential – what we can do, in the special linguistic sense of "what we can mean – avoiding the additional complication of a distinction between doing and knowing" (Halliday 1971 in Munby 1978:13).

Some assumptions

Before starting with the design of the UC, the following decisions were made: i) The proposal was to respond to a relatively new educational paradigm in which the centrality of process has been brought to the foreground while product has been backgrounded; a framework where learning has moved from the acquisition of knowledge and skills into the development of the competence and expertise that learning produces; a standpoint where the emphasis is put on information processing and problem solving; ii) Approaches, methods and contents were to be contextualised on the basis of our goals and the professional profile set up by the institution.

Accordingly, the main features of this new proposal are: i) It is disciplinary genre based and consistent with the epistemological decisions made for the IC, ii) It is competence oriented, iii) It is more flexible in the treatment of communicative abilities and levels of achievement than the IC. This means that the fact that the UC will cut across all schools involved in the programme does not mean that they will emphasize the development of the same competences and communicative abilities.

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[15] http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/cadre_en.asp

Likewise, levels of achievement as proposed in the CEFR[16] may vary in the different schools. Again this will depend on the disciplinary requirements and professional competences they have prioritised in their programmes. Academically we need to offer

      a. A general and flexible education which brings together theoretical and procedural content;

      b. Instrumental training that will allow students to interact constructively in problem-solving situations in a highly complex professional environment;

    c. Instruments to operate in globalised scenarios and multidisciplinary academic and professional contexts.

Our plans

In our proposal, language is understood as social semiotic. Following Halliday, we understand that "the study of language as social behaviour is an account of semantic options deriving from the social structure" (Halliday 1971: 82). When we say that our proposal is genre oriented we are saying that we aim to approach the linguistic study of disciplinary genres as social activities.

UC Proposed Scheme

School	Language	Skills to be emphasised	Expected levels of achievement	Time	Theoretical considerations
FADU1	English Portuguese	Reading, Listening Speaking	B2 B1 B1	60 clock hours	Disciplinary academic and professional discourses
FCA	English	Integrated reading comprehension	B2	60 clock hours	Skill oriented ESP
FCE2	English (Portuguese)	Reading Speaking Writing	B2 B1 B1	60 clock hours	Disciplinary academic and professional discourses
FCJyS	English Portuguese	Integrated reading comprehension	B2	60 clock hours	Disciplinary academic and professional discourses
FCM	English	Reading Writing	B2 B1	60 clock hours	Disciplinary academic and professional discourses
FCMV	English	Integrated reading comprehension	B2	60 clock hours	Skill oriented ESP
FHUC	English French German Italian	Integrated reading comprehension	B2	60 clock hours	Disciplinary academic and professional discourses
FICH	English	Integrated reading comprehension	B2	60 clock hours	Disciplinary academic and professional discourses

      1 - Optional

      2 - Compulsory

      NB: In all cases Foreign Languages will be a requirement but for FCE, where Technical English is a space in the School Curriculum

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[16] It is worth mentioning that the parameters proposed by the CEFR have been adapted to the standards required by the institution and to environmental variables.

Results: What 12 Years of Experience Have Taught Us

Our project brought about significant changes in the field of FLT at UNL. Amongst the issues we consider worth mentioning we would like to highlight the following:

(a) The status of FLT and FL in general was updated and upgraded

(b) The table above shows a prevalence of English over other FLs. This university policy reflects what a common situation is worldwide: the fact that English has become a genuine lingua-franca in research and scholarship (Swales 2004). "... we believe that English is no longer the property of English native speakers, and that it is important that scientists all over the world can use a common language to communicate their results, lest they run the risk of re-inventing the wheel" (Grimaldi 2010).

(c) The implementation of the CA also impacted on Professional Development: From having 30 teaching positions (only 10 of them occupied by FL teachers), today our university has 87 FL teachers; 26 of these have completed a university course of study, and 11 have obtained postgraduate degrees.

(d) New Programmes and courses of study were designed: *Licenciatura en Inglés, Licenciatura en ELE, Especialización en Análisis del Discurso en Inglés, Módulo de Redacción de Abstracts en Inglés para Cientibecarios.*

(e) The UNL Language Centre was created. The Centre is organised around four areas: (a) Academic Development, in charge of FLT in all UNL academic programmes (around 2500 students per academic year) (b) Foreign Languages for the Community with over 1500 students per semester learning more than 10 different foreign languages, teaching FL to the visually handicapped, sign language and Latin; (c) International Activities in charge of Spanish as a foreign Language and cultural activities for exchange teachers and students and with an active role in reciprocal and dual international academic programmes; and (d) Research and Professional Development, responsible for the design and implementation of research projects aiming to upgrade and update FLT at the university.

(f) The insertion of FL in areas formerly circumscribed to the so called 'hard sciences', e.g. the FL projects included in the last two editions of *Semana de la Ciencia y la Tecnología*: English plays in South Africa (2010); Women in Science (2011).

(g) FL have become a crucial axis in the development of the university international curriculum that aims to meet the demands of an increasingly interrelated world while preparing students to become academically competent members of worldwide collaborative communities of practice.

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Why use texts about Argentina in the EFL class?
Sub-theme: Cultural awareness in the communicative class

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Abstract

We present some pedagogical reflections derived from a research project conducted at San Juan's National University, which explores the representation of Argentina and its people in English-speaking media discourse on the basis of Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis principles. We argue that there are good linguistic, socio-cultural and educational reasons to use texts about Argentina (TsAA) in EFL for promoting students' sense of national identity and intercultural awareness.

Within the framework of a research project being conducted at the English Language Department of the School of Philosophy, Humanities and the Arts of the National University of San Juan, we are exploring the way/s in which Argentina and its people are represented in the discourse of English-speaking print media. To this purpose, we are collecting a number of Texts About Argentina (TAA/TsAA) published on-line by recognized newspapers and magazines from English-speaking countries which have to do with some aspect of our life as a country or as individual citizens. In order to provide a context that can serve as a shared frame of reference for the texts, we have narrowed down our selection to texts published between December 2007 and October 2011, roughly corresponding to Cristina Kirchner's presidency. Our investigation relies on Discourse Analysis tools afforded by Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday, 1985, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004) and, also, on some of the principles put forward by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1992, 2005; Wodak and Meyer, 2001).

Apart from the exploration of our national representation and of some of the linguistic resources used in texts, our work involves the development or adaptation of SFL and CDA text analysis tools to be applied to EFL classrooms. It has been through the application of these tools to our teaching situations that we have come to appreciate the special value of utilizing TsAA in EFL reading classes at upper-intermediate to advanced settings. Our own work environment is that of a Language III class at a Teacher Training College, in which topics such as the media, politics and economy – among others – are discussed.

It is our belief that there are sound reasons to warrant the use of TsAA in our reading classes, whether that implies adding extra texts to the ones provided in the course books we may be using, or including TsAA among selected items when we compile class material ourselves. We claim that these reasons are **linguistic**, **socio-cultural** and **educational**. We will address each of these categories in turn. However, it seems relevant to point out that this separation serves strictly organizational purposes, as we believe that no clear-cut boundaries exist between them. In our view, considerations about language, culture and education should underpin any EFL setting. We dearly embrace the idea that language is inseparable from culture -as advocated by SFL- and that all our activities as educators need to be informed by educational research findings.

We also believe that SFL is the linguistic theory that best suits our purpose. From the strictly linguistic point of view, SFL offers an extremely rich description of the linguistic resources deployed in texts as meaning making choices. From the socio-cultural perspective, this theory focuses on language in use and perceives any instance of use as being inseparable from its immediate context of situation, and its broader context of culture. From an educational stance, SFL is, in Byrnes' words, "an education-friendly theory of language" (2009: 51) which has been applied to promote literacy in various parts of the world. Given these powerful features, it should come as no surprise that SFL is the theory most widely used by renowned critical discourse analysts such as Fairclough, Kress, Gee, among others.

Linguistic reasons

As already noted, we believe there are sound linguistic reasons to use TsAA in our classroom. Printed media materials are an appropriate vehicle to expose students to the pragmatic nature of language, that is to say, to its situational, contextualised, purposeful essence. Most newspaper articles published in international media, however, tend to pose a number of difficulties to the average EFL student, even at upper-intermediate and advanced levels. Such difficulties may be brought about by the occurrence of complex or unknown lexical elements, such as journalistic jargon and/or vocabulary that is specific to the topic being discussed, or it may sometimes result from special syntactic choices, as is often the case in many newspaper and magazine headlines.

We claim that the lexico-grammatical challenges that students may encounter when dealing with this type of texts can become more manageable if we use TsAA. This is so because the students are likely to be familiar with many aspects of the texts' field and context of culture. Such familiarity can become a very important element to facilitate the process of deriving meaning from context. It can also make it easier for students to formulate valid predictions and associations that can render a text more accessible.

The type of complexities that students are likely to be faced with can be better understood when seen from the perspective of genre. Newspaper articles, be they opinion essays, news articles or editorials, correspond to recognized journalistic genres, with genres understood as "staged, goal oriented, social processes" involving recurrent configurations of field, tenor and mode variables (Martin and Rose, 2003, 2008). Journalistic genres as such tend to pose a relatively high level of challenge to EFL students, who are often more familiar with narrative, descriptive and expository genres, or even – in a teaching training context such as ours – with EFL-specific academic genres. In this latter case, students' familiarity with the field of discourse and with the likely participants of the text (teachers, students, classrooms, tasks, etc.) is bound to facilitate comprehension.

We argue that the use of TsAA can provide for a smooth transition to journalistic genres, since students will be familiar with some of the participants, processes and circumstances involved. Chances are that such participants will be prominent political figures, sports figures or other popular celebrities in our country, as these headlines illustrate:

- Ernesto Sábato, Argentina's conscience, dies at 99 - *The New York Times*. (Barrionuevo, 2011).
- The sins of the Argentine Church - *The Guardian*. (O'Shaughnessy, 2011).
- Lionel Messi on Argentina roster for friendly vs. United States - *The Washington Post*. (Goff, 2011).

When compared with other headlines involving other places and other people, the level of complexity appears to multiply:

- Clock Ticking on War Powers Resolution -*The New York Times*. (Savage, 2011).
- At Tulane, No Fireworks Over Airgas Case - *The New York Times*. (Davidoff, 2011).

In a survey conducted at the National University of San Juan (Cúneo, in progress), students ranked these issues as having the highest level of linguistic complexity, even when the lexico-grammar was not significantly more complex than in other texts. The differences in the level of complexity or the degree of facilitation associated with the various texts can be partly ascribed to the systematic link between language and context, as put forward by SFL (Halliday, 1994; Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004).

Socio-cultural reasons

It is well recognized that "to be competent in one language is not simply to know the grammar and words of a linguistic code" (Caldas-Coulthard, 1997: 27). Neither is it sufficient to be familiar with the socially recognized stages of a certain genre. Being competent in a language implies various types of competences, identified by Canale and Swain (1980) as grammatical, socio-linguistic and strategic. The socio-linguistic category, in turn, includes a socio-cultural and a discourse competence. None of these competences in itself can claim prominence over the others as proficient language use involves the interaction of them all.

Among the variables at play within the socio cultural competence, Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell refer to such factors as background knowledge of the target culture and cross-cultural awareness, to name a few (1995). Many socio-cultural references will come as no surprise to our students when a reading task is based on a text about Argentina, as the students are likely to be familiar with many of the conventions or much of the culture-specific information that appear in the text. What may come as a surprise, however, is the view of the state of affairs presented by the writer, who will most often embody a foreign voice. It is precisely this aspect that opens the door to discursive considerations involving text production, consumption and interpretation processes (Fairclough, 1992).

Fairclough presents a multidimensional notion of texts as discursive and social practices immersed in ideology (1992). Any text implies text producers -or rather a text production process often involving various producers, as Goffman points out (1981, in Fairclough, 1992). It also implies various distribution forms and channels (television, internet), and consumption practices, which permeate the whole process, with ideological forces or 'constructions of reality' (Fairclough, 1992) running through the entire text.

Why should these considerations be relevant to our local teaching situation? In our context, the practices of consumption and interpretation of TsAA acquire somewhat special characteristics, as our

students are not necessarily the intended audience of such texts. This is in line with Fairclough's argument that "texts are […] consumed differently in different social contexts." (1992: 79). When reading a TAA, students will often find themselves approaching the text both from the 'outside' and from the 'inside'. They approach the text from 'outside' in the sense that Argentina is presented as a third party, i.e. Argentina is discursively constructed as 'them' rather than 'us', or as Others rather than Self (Wodak, 2011). At the same time, students cannot help but feel they are 'inside' the text, as they will most likely be somewhat acquainted with the issues raised and the participants involved, in this case, feeling it is 'us' – not 'them'- that the text refers to.

Thus, the interpretation practice is shaped by a very special 'context of situation'. Since our learners are not the intended audience of these publications, a particular reading context is created, which brings to light the fact that "texts are usually highly ambivalent and open to multiple interpretations" (Fairclough, 1992). This idea is compatible with Wallace's claim that "the shift from a text-oriented view of reading to a reader-oriented one certainly allows for multiple interpretations" (2003: 25). Awareness of such diversity of interpretation should be a component of any reading class, be it part of an L1 or L2 setting.

Educational reasons

Why should we, as educators, promote the use of TsAA in our EFL classes? We believe the use of such texts can serve a two-fold purpose. On the one hand, it is any educator's duty to promote acceptance and tolerance of multiple views of the same reality. Such acceptance and tolerance may be harder to embrace when the reality in question involves us directly as happens in TsAA. On the other hand, such texts provide a good excuse to discuss national identity issues in a globalized world. This is particularly relevant in an EFL class, which tends to be centered on the foreign culture.

The fact that the EFL classroom is focused on the teaching and learning of a foreign language should not be equated with downplaying our own identity. When we encourage students to make special efforts to see things from the perspective of others, we are not promoting the idea that the representations made of our country in foreign media should be blindly or unquestioningly endorsed. On the contrary, our objective is to bring these representations to the forefront and engage our students in constructive discussions involving the ideology built into the linguistic choices made in a text.

Byram, who has written extensively on national identity and language education issues, endorses the view that that students' awareness of otherness and self can be enhanced by means of exposure to a variety of perspectives and "shared understandings" (2008). He claims that this awareness is part of what he has labeled "intercultural competence," which he considers to be a crucial educational goal. According to this author, key characteristics of a foreign language educational program should be "learning more about one's own country by comparison" and "learning more about 'otherness' in one's own country" (2008).

By exploring the various ways in which our country is portrayed in foreign publications, and comparing these representations with their own local and individual perceptions, students can develop a stronger sense of national identity and deeper intercultural awareness. Such comparisons can only be made in a classroom environment that promotes critical thinking, which we believe is one of the central goals of any educational process. We agree with Fairclough's argument when he says:

> "There is a strong case to be made for a mode of language education which emphasizes critical awareness of ideological processes in discourse, so that people can become more aware of their own practice, and more critical of the ideologically invested discourses to which they are subjected" (Fairclough, 199: 90).

We stand by Byram's belief that "language teachers can no longer simply be teachers of language and linguistic competences" (2008). Adopting Wallace's ideas (2003), we promote an approach to teaching that goes beyond fluency and accuracy and enters the realm of critical awareness. With the experience we have gained in our own practices, and considering "what more than thirty years have taught us," we are in a position to make choices with respect to the texts that we use in our classes, and also with respect to the way in which we go about dealing with such texts. As Wallace claims, criticality is "socially and educationally learned", so we have a role to play as educators in helping our students engage in critical thinking processes, while strengthening their national identity in a multi-cultural context.

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Learner Autonomy within CLT as a Desirable Goal in an Academic Environment

Methodological implications: Cognitive learning and communication

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Abstract
This paper will look into the nature of autonomy within a Communicative Language Teaching framework as a highly desirable and necessary goal to be attained by students pursuing a degree in English at university. The concept of self-direction will be thoroughly explored and enlightening and critical reference will be made to its development, including the use of suitable materials and technologies, and its overall positive impact on university trainees' learning.

Introduction

Throughout most of the 20th century, there has been a passionate debate between those who believe that the function of an educational system is the transmission of a received body of facts, values and procedures for conceptualizing and adding to that body of knowledge, and those who hold that the function of an educational system is to create the conditions by means of which learners may generate their own skills and knowledge. It is, namely, a debate between those who consider that education is a matter of making meaning for learners on the one hand, and those who state that the purpose of education is to facilitate the process whereby learners make their own meaning, on the other hand. The issue of how education is to be conceptualized in general, and the question of whether learning is a matter of mastering bodies of content, or the development of skills and attitudes in particular, is reflected in much of contemporary research in ESL and EFL (Kolb 1984; Ellis 1985; Ellis and Sinclair 1987; Cook 1991; Nunan, 1991, 1999, 2001; Lightbown and Spada 1993; Hedge, 2000, among others).

The communicative approach to language teaching, critical language study, learner-centred instruction and task-based language teaching (Willis, 1998) have had a particularly important influence in the field of foreign language education over the last twenty years. These concepts, which are all interrelated and strongly rooted in humanistic psychology, are part of an interpretative view of education that argues that, in order for learning to take place, learners must reconstruct the skills and knowledge for themselves; they cannot simply 'receive' these from external sources. Central to the interpretative tradition is the belief that learning is an active, dynamic process of self-discovery and that not everything a learner needs to know can be taught in class (Nunan 1988:3). Autonomy, independent or individual learning, self-direction, self-instruction -such terms have earned a place in the interpretative view of education, the constructivist approach to language learning and in the discourse on learner-centredness, each term indicating that effective language learners have the capacity to take responsibility for their own learning, independent of the teacher.
Different classroom management techniques have been applied in the classes of *English Language III*, Facultad de Lenguas, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, to provide learner-centred instruction. In fact, the 2010 syllabus makes clear reference to the desire to foster learner autonomy. At best, teacher-student discussions of the implications of learner autonomy, project work, small group reports, activities and various tasks have proved a suitable mode of organization in oversized classes to advance interactional dynamics and to promote experiential learning as well as reciprocal teaching in an atmosphere of shared partnership. However, mainly due to the large number of students handled by one lecturer, the shortage of staff and the lack of support structures, not enough emphasis has been laid on learner initiative, self-regulation or self-assessment.
In view of the resourceful, independent and self-actualized persons we would like our students to become, we acknowledge the importance of personal growth and autonomy as an educational objective, and firmly believe such an objective can be attained if the adequate opportunities are available in the setting. The purpose of this paper is then to

discuss the way in which technology-mediated, out-of-the-classroom activities are being implemented by the chair of *English Language III* of the teacher/translator/licentiate training programme of *Facultad de Lenguas, UNC,* mainly through the design of materials which actively incorporate and promote blended learning tasks as a integral part of student training*.*

The Need for Autonomy: Rationale and Literature

We live in a period of intense change. In a globalized, fast-forward, information-bound and progress oriented society such as ours, where new technology helps us develop greater efficiency, and where there is the constant pressure to rush on and keep abreast of developments, the role of education has also changed as befits the ever increasing pace of modern life. This view was already expressed some decades ago by Carl Rogers (1969: 57-8).

> "If there is one truth about modern man, it is that he lives in an environment which is *continually* changing ... We are faced with an entirely new situation in education where the goal of education, if we are to survive, is the *facilitation of change and learning.* The only man who is educated is the man who has learned how to learn; the man who has learned how to adapt and change..."

People cannot be effective or productive citizens in a democratic society if the educational system does not equip them with the tools for undertaking their own learning. Therefore, as far as learning to learn is concerned, the aim is to encourage students to develop lifelong learning skills. Such skills include the ability to deal with the unexpected, to make informed choices and to construct useful knowledge in their interaction with the world. The concept of learning presupposes then constant improvement. This is possible through autonomous work, which implies choices and responsibilities as well as the articulation of needs and goals, both long-term and short-term (van Lier 1996:91-92). Furthermore, since students are individuals with different needs, attitudes, interests, cognitive abilities and learning styles (Oxford, 1990), it is essential to introduce -especially in the large multi-level classes of *English Language III* some measures for the provision of individualized tutoring and autonomous learning in order to cater for and exploit personal differences.

There is a significant body of research literature about autonomy in learning, starting with the work of Vygotsky (1962) and Bruner (1963), continuing with Holec; (1979); Rubin and Thompson (1983); Kolb (1984); Littlejohn (1985); Kolb (1984); Littlejohn (1985); Dickinson (1987); Oxford (1990); van Lier (1996) and others. Many of the above mentioned authors have stressed the fact that learning has to be done by the learners. This means that teaching cannot cause or force learning; it can merely encourage and guide it. The impetus for learning must come from the students themselves. In his study on adult learning, Knowles (1983) suggests that good learners tend to exhibit specific characteristics, among which finding their own way, processing information through multiple channels, having learnt how to learn and being autonomous are ranked very high. These characteristics are also essential if learners are to be prepared for an even more rapidly changing future, in which independence in learning will be vital for effective functioning in society. Helping learners become more independent in their learning is one way of maximising their life choices. Deci and Ryan (1985), as well as Weinert and Kluwe (1987) point out that an outcome of learners acting more autonomously may be an increase in enthusiasm for learning since positive affect derives partly from feelings of control, self-regulation and ownership.

Independence in language learning is necessary for pedagogical reasons. The view that all instruction should ultimately point toward autonomous learning is a compelling pedagogical consideration if learners are to be successful. Independent learners are more likely to take responsibility not only by setting their own goals and planning their practice opportunities, but also by assessing their progress. Learners who are involved in making choices and decisions are liable to feel more secure in their learning because

> "adults demonstrably learn more, and more effectively, when they are consulted about dimensions such as the pace, sequence, mode of instruction and even the content of what they are studying" (Candy 1988: 75).

Promoting learner autonomy can also be justified on practical grounds. The most extensive

and prolonged period of classroom instruction can only provide a limited introduction to the study of the foreign language. The main practical argument for advocating learner autonomy is the fact that a teacher or lecturer may not always be available to assist. Students need to be able to learn on their own because they do not always have access to the kind or amount of individual instruction they need in order to become proficient in the language. Besides, learners become more efficient if they do not have to spend time waiting for the teacher to provide them with the necessary resources or solve all their problems.

Fostering Autonomy and Communication beyond the Classroom

Blended learning refers to the appropriate use of a wide range of technologies, such as CD ROMs, the Internet, interactive whiteboards, e-mail, blogs and wikis, among others. Coupled with the time-place flexibility that blended learning naturally offers, there is the obvious fostering of the development of learner autonomy. Technology allows for language and strategy practice beyond the confines of a classroom and leaves room for learners to become used to evaluating and selecting tasks and materials, as well as assessing their own performance (Sharma and Barret, 2007). They can easily become autonomous learners by being able to plan out and structure their own use of web-based materials, which are in turn carefully designed to meet the course's need, in their own time and at their own pace. Sensible and teacher-guided use of technology thus complements, enhances and maximises learning

In addition to providing information on a variety of topics, increasing the overall quality of language use, generating general language practice activities, the use of blended learning opportunities fulfils the needs of learners as individuals in promoting individualized problem-solving through the construction of knowledge with a communicative, task-based framework (Willis, 1998). Furthermore, it helps learners realise they have power and control over their learning. To help achieve these aims, the materials to be used on-line should be carefully selected and designed as to provide a selection of reading, vocabulary and grammar practice materials, as well as a collection of online listening and writing materials.

The tasks and materials at the students' disposal should also be often updated, and teachers may base the future design of tasks and materials on the effectiveness reported by the students using them, as the latter become efficient independent evaluators. The chosen technological tools should also offer a user-friendly system of organizing and displaying tasks and materials so as to enable learners to practise and improve their language proficiency outside the classroom. As students become more and more sophisticated learners and users of technology, they may be eventually be involved in the design of tasks and material, which would point to successful autonomous learning development.

An Example of Blended Learning in Action: *The English Language III Virtual Classroom (Moodle).*

The English Language III syllabus integrates a combination of task-based language learning approaches with content-based instruction and computer-supported collaborative learning (Flowerdew, 1993; Long and Crookes, 1992; Nunan, 1989; Pica, Lincoln-Parker, Paninos, & Linnell,1996; Doughty and Long, 2003; Warschauer, 1997; Warschauer and Kern, 2000 as in Bañados, E., 2006). The computer clearly plays the role of a tool (Crook, 1994; Levy, 1997; Kern and Warschauer, 2000) for it provides media that students use to access information.

An example of such a communicative, task-based and content-based approach is the provision of a wide variety of computer-mediated, tailor-made tasks accesible to students via a Moodle platform. The tasks on this platform integrate the macro skills and provide outside-the-classroom development and reinforcement of several metacognitive and cognitive learning strategies and linguistic skills. Students work with clear instructions and questions to guide their tasks while they work on their own. Communication among students and with the teacher is enhanced and ensured through the use of emailing, blogging and wikis.

Conclusion

Due to the constructivist approach to learning and the incorporation into classroom teaching of insights from CLT research, certain changes have been brought about to pedagogical practice. Shifting focus both in the classroom and outside it from lecturers and teachers to

learners necessarily implies the need to provide opportunities for study, reflection on and self-assessment of the learning process. Blended learning provides a naturally enhancing environment which can widen both the students' and the teachers' horizons and foster autonomy.

Autonomy in language learning is desirable for it is both liberating and empowering, in that it gives students a greater sense of ownership and control over their own learning. Besides, in furnishing them with the necessary tools to perform effectively when they complete their studies, autonomy also enables them to develop independence. We believe that if a plan to foster autonomous learning is to be successful, a fluid relationship must be established between students and lecturers, and technology comes in handy as another student-student, student-lecturer means of communication, as well as a medium which today's students are adept at and feel motivated by. Since communication and introspective accounts of the learning process are more important to autonomy than structures, provisions must be made for the process of reflection as well as for learners, lecturers and teachers-in-training to engage in dialogue about learning. Technology thus becomes an immensely valuable tool in such a communicative and autonomy-oriented context.

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Exploring Teachers' Discourse in the EFL Classroom

Subtheme: Discursive practices and communicative language teaching: Discourse analysis / text grammar and communicative language teaching.

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Abstract

This research study investigates the impact that teachers' discourse has on the foreign language classroom as well as the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom discursive practices. The findings show that language students have very limited time to practice their knowledge. It is argued that teachers still claim for a central place in the interaction, thus contradicting the latest approaches which highlight the gradual change from teacher-centered to learner-centered instruction.

1- Introduction

This research study investigates the impact that teachers' discourse may have on the foreign language classroom as well as the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their actual classroom discursive practices. One of the purposes of this study, then, has been to carry out a close textual analysis of teachers' discourse at specific teaching moments in order to trace and describe ways in which teachers exercise power and control over students. More importantly, however, has been to attempt to find an explanation for the continuity of teachers' discursive practices in the foreign language classrooms in spite of the latest methodological trends. Therefore, it is hoped that the present study will act as a tool for professional development not only by raising teachers' awareness of their empowered discourse but also by widening their general research knowledge about how foreign language classrooms work.

2. Theoretical framework

Until recently, a great deal of thought in language teaching circles had gone into methods, syllabus design and materials, but very little attention had ever been paid to what actually went on inside the foreign language classrooms. Early investigations carried out in genuine language classrooms showed that many of the best intentioned changes in language teaching were not reaching students because the new ideas were being short-circuited by various features of teacher-student. It turned out that there was often a great difference between what was supposed to happen and what actually happened in the classroom, and also between what teachers thought they were doing and what they were actually doing. These differences have led to a growing emphasis on classroom-centred research, as opposed to classroom-oriented research. Classroom-centred research over the years has focused on teacher talk as the source of comprehensible input which is crucial for language learning. The language classroom provides what might be almost totally inaccessible outside the class – a native speaker (or a really proficient non-native speaker) who is delegated to interact with students and to provide them with linguistic input. Gaies (1977), quoted in Allright and Bailley (1991),in an investigation of the syntactic features of ESL classroom teachers, revealed that the subjects' classroom speech was syntactically less complex on a number of variables. The subjects of this investigation were observed to drastically fine-tune their classroom speech to the level of their students' proficiency. Krashen (1982)
, also quoted in Allright and Bailey (1991), claims that by providing comprehensible input through teacher talk second language classrooms are environments more conducive to learning, at least up to intermediate level, than an informal environment. Nunan (1991) examines the importance of teacher talk in terms of its primary role in the process of acquisition and in the organisation of the classroom. The researcher holds that teacher talk is the only major source of comprehensible target language input that students need in many foreign countries. Another aspect of classroom centred research which has received special attention for several years is the way in which student errors are treated. Research has shown errors to be an inevitable part of the language acquisition process; they are seen as overt reflections of a student's internalized knowledge of the language. In some sense, they suggest hypothesis testing on the students' part, and regularities in the errors and types of errors across speakers of different first languages reflect universal processes at work. Increases in error rate and new kinds of errors can often indicate progress as the students attempt to restructure their interim

second language grammars. Therefore, given the new positive status, teachers are supposed to respect errors in various ways, viewing them as signs of learning rather than as problems to be dealt with. However, although prescriptions abound, there is very little agreement among current methodologists as to which errors should be corrected, how, or by whom. Other investigations on teacher talk seem to demonstrate that language teachers do most of the talking - two thirds of the total talking time - in classrooms (Legaretta 1977; Bialystock et al. 1978; Ramirez et al. 1986 quoted in Ellis 1994). According to Flanders (1970), two thirds of that teacher talk is direct instruction, and two thirds of the direct instruction takes the form of questions that require a predictable response. Teacher-talk generally takes the form of Initiation, Response, and Evaluation (IRE) or what others call IRF (Initiation Response Feedback). In either case, the teacher initiates a question, the student responds and the teacher evaluates, gives feedback or extends the answer. These findings indicate that generally language students have very limited time to participate in classroom interaction, and thus, to negotiate meaning, to test their hypotheses through output and to practice their knowledge.

3 - Methodology

Due to the nature of the phenomena to be analysed, a number of data collection methods were employed. This has enabled the researcher to obtain a more complete picture of the phenomena under investigation. As this investigation was of teachers' discourse and of teachers' beliefs, the data for investigating these phenomena were collected in two phases. In the first phase data was collected in the classrooms, whereas in the second phase, a focused interview was conducted in order to analyse teachers' beliefs and awareness of their own discourse. The observations were highly-structured non-participant observations of teachers' roles and discourse and each teacher was observed twice a week over a five week period. The researcher observed teachers' discourse for the whole duration of the class, recording teachers' discourse with a portable tape recorder and using an observation scheme adapted from Jay Lemke's work on analysing the talk in Science lessons (1990) analysed in Nunan (1992). This scheme was adopted in the belief that this technique would provide better tools and would make it easier to find out those moments in which students were engaged in communicative tasks so as to transcribe and analyse teachers' discourse at those specific moments. In addition, field notes were taken during each class observed in the belief that these written notes would then enhance the subsequent task of transcribing and interpreting the taped lessons. The results have shown that the teachers consistently dominate the talk that takes place in the classrooms and, the amount of teacher speech outnumbers the linguistic quantity of students' contributions by far. All teachers spent considerable amounts of time on material related classroom management and on offering feedback in the form of Initiation, Response, and Evaluation (IRE) and only a few moments were left to students to actually work on their own on the set tasks in all the classes. This model has proved to be a solid basis for analysing teachers' behaviour. It has provided some valuable insights on characteristics of teacher-centred classroom work in general and, it has also been valuable to spot those instances in which students were left to communicate in the target language. After the analysis of the data obtained in the classroom observations, those instances in which students were involved in communicative tasks were transcribed. In the analysis, a social perspective was adopted and Fairclough's model of Critical Discourse Analysis to describe discursive practice was followed. Critical discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of texts, which views 'language as a form of social practice' (Fairclough 1989). The transcripts illustrate three types of constraints. In terms of content, the students are required to perform their roles according to a learned routine, incorporating set phrases and pre determined expressions. The topic of the interaction is also determined and controlled by the teacher, the more powerful participant who is often in a position to specify the nature and purposes of the interaction, and to disallow contributions which are not (in her view) relevant thereto. The teacher forces them to occupy the subject position of passive listeners and behave in certain constrained ways by using various devices such as interruption or feedback to the students' answers, by repeating an answer, correcting mistakes and/ or by making evaluative comments. To effectuate an analysis of the transcripts on the basis of Fairclough's CDA model has shown to be of personal and professional interest from several points of view. It has shown that these teachers still tend to claim a central place in the interaction, thus contradicting the new psychological and pedagogical theories. These classrooms are clear examples of how the conventions for a traditional type of learning situation between teachers and students embody "common-sense" assumptions which treat authority and hierarchy as natural – the teachers know the language and the students don't; the teachers are in a position to determine what should be taught and the students aren't; it is right and "natural" that the teachers should make the decisions and control the contributions, and the students should comply and cooperate; and so on.

In the second phase, a focused interview was conducted in order to analyse teachers' beliefs and awareness of their own discourse. The interview questions were designed to elicit information about teachers' beliefs regarding teaching and learning. The questions were formulated controversially either in favour of a highly structured, teacher-centred, grammar-based teaching or in favour of a task-oriented, communicatively-based, student-centred teaching. The teachers were asked twenty four questions. The questions were randomised and formulated in such a way as to elicit dichotomous "yes-no" answers in order to achieve greater uniformity of measurement and therefore greater reliability. In general, categorizing the different answers proved to be a relatively easy task; however, in some cases although the teachers agreed with a question, they felt their answers did not reflect accurately their true beliefs so they provided extensive explanations to make themselves clear. In order to categorize these answers a third response category "uncertain" was included. There are two general findings that seem to stand out in the data. First, there is not much variance in teachers' beliefs. There are no significant differences among the answers provided by the teachers, who seem to agree on most of their answers. Second, teachers seem to disagree with most of the statements that support a traditional approach to EFL teaching, whereas they appear to have a positive attitude towards the current approaches to EFL teaching.

4- Discussion of findings

One of the central questions of this research study was whether teachers were capable of both removing themselves from their 'authority' and creating the necessary conditions in their classrooms so as to enable students to generate their own learning. However, as hypothesized, all the teachers adopted somewhat of a traditional approach to teaching. The observed lessons were mainly teacher-centred, with teachers providing explanations and instructions, and asking questions and eliciting responses from the students on their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary items. Little integration of grammar into speaking and writing activities was observed. Little time was left to students to actually work on their own on the set tasks and few opportunities were given to them to interact directly with the target language. Another similarity among the teachers' classroom practices was the manner in which they provided feedback on their students' oral performance. These findings seem to indicate, as hypothesised, that although the traditional teacher-centred grammar-based approach has been widely criticized as being ineffective and although the current literature stresses that importance of creating opportunities for students to exercise their own communicating and learning initiative, teachers still tell pupils when and how they can speak, what they should do, how they should do it and what they should say even when they are engaged in independent work. Fairclough's model of CDA also proved to be appropriate to analyse the turn-taking structure of some specific instances of these classroom lessons and to document patterns of who spoke, when, about what topics and with what officially recognised authority and force. It provided a detailed analysis of the specific ways in which teachers dominated students' interaction and it made an important contribution to this research study by giving further evidence that teachers were still the 'authority/depositor' imparting knowledge into the 'student/receptacles' (Freire,1972).
Inspection of the data gathered from the interviews suggests that among the teachers there was heterogeneity regarding beliefs about the importance of grammar, as well as about the different roles that teachers must adopt in the language classroom and the need for student-centred learning. However, there appeared to be a disparity between the teachers' stated beliefs and their actual classrooom practices.

5- Conclusions and suggestions

Having outlined the findings of the classroom observations and based on the CDA analysis conducted, the first basic conclusion that can be drawn is that teachers, in spite of the radical changes in both language theory and language-acquisition theory, are still the givers of knowledge, the controllers and the authorities in the EFL classrooms. Moreover, despite the new array of approaches, methods, materials and techniques which have appeared in the language-teaching profession, this study has shown evidence that teachers still adopt a traditional grammar-based approach to language teaching. Additionally, and directly related to what has been mentioned before, this study has made clear that teachers' discourse not only reflects the dominant social ideologies but it also determines the status and consequent roles of the different actors involved in the classroom setting and, consequently, the range of possibilities for action and talk. These findings address the need for teachers to become aware of the impact of their discourse on the learning environment. It may be that our discourse has

become so familiar to us that we think of it as common sense and we are unconscious of its influence in the language classroom.

Finally, this research study, elucidated that investigating teachers' beliefs and classroom practices raised teachers' awareness of both what they do and what they do not do. In conclusion, teachers should be encouraged to articulate and reflect on their beliefs while also investigating any discrepancies between their beliefs and classroom practices. There are many studies supporting the idea that if teachers are given the opportunity to reflect on their teaching practices, they not only get better at reflection but they also often change as well. They should encourage students to take initiative and give them ample opportunities to manipulate their new language and become truly involved. This kind of teaching approach places some serious responsibilities on teachers and requires a commitment on the part of the teachers to reverse many of the teaching practices which have become traditional in language teaching methodology over the years.

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Educating the gaze: improving communication in the multi-medial ELT class

Subtheme: Communication oriented activities and tasks

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore how film may be used in the English language classroom as an enlightening and thought-provoking pedagogical resource which may help teachers and students alike to experience a hands-on communicative language approach. The exploitation of the relatively new field of Film Studies, in conjunction with communicative language, may provide teachers with the tools to enhance students' communication skills, linguistic and visual literacy, and intercultural awareness.

The field of Film Studies may give teachers the invaluable opportunity to use all kinds of cinematic texts in the classroom for multiple purposes. Films, as audio-visual texts, may offer unique visceral experiences of sensing possible fictional worlds and getting acquainted with unknown worldviews. Cinematic texts not only enrich audience's views appealing to 'the mind's eye' but they also broaden their worldviews facilitating empathy with other people. Since film is a multi-medial text in which all senses are engaged, sight and hearing in particular, it lends itself to work with cognitive, intellectual, experiential, kinaesthetic and emotional engagement in the ELT classroom. The audience is thus interpellated by cinematic texts through the amalgam of iconic, acoustic and linguistic signifiers. Through editing, *mise-en-scene* and sound, the audience is not only aligned, but also "establishes allegiance with fictional characters" that synecdochally stand for other culture's realities (Shohat & Stam, Alberto, 1999). The viewing of these 'other' worldviews makes it possible for audiences to go beyond their own assumptions and beliefs and to relativise their own preconceptions. It also allows them to see how cultural stereotypes are both visually and acoustically constructed.

This paper aims to develop visual and critical cultural awareness through active engagement with live action films. The main purpose, however, is to explore how film may be used as a pedagogical resource to enable teachers and students alike to deconstruct their culturally-constrained "spectatorial gaze" (Aumont, 2001). To such end, the framing and implementation of an interdisciplinary approach, smoothly articulating Film Studies with Postcolonial Theory, would be instrumental to challenging spectatorial assumptions of alterity and broadening their understanding of other worldviews. Therefore, through the critical analysis of films such as *Water* (2004) directed by Deepa Mehta, applying postcolonial notions such as otherness, difference, hegemony, hybridity (Ashcroft, 1995; Manzanas, 2003; O'Reilly, 2001) and paying special attention to "how editing and *mise-en-scene* create cinematic meaning" (Gibbs, 2002; Orpen, 2003), it is possible to enable the spectator to access a particular fictional world in which a different worldview and different universes of meaning are (re)presented. This process of 'looking outside' also triggers off an introspective 'looking in', since audiences re-construct themselves as they challenge their own perceptions.

Elements of film language

In order to work on the analysis and interpretation of film texts, it is fundamental to become better acquainted with the concepts of editing and *mise-en-scene.* Whereas editing refers to how the different shots are assembled along the syntagmatic axis, *mise-en-scene* includes everything which is in front of the camera (including off screen space).The meaning of film texts is transmitted through the combination and articulation of acoustic, visual and linguistic signifiers. It is, therefore, of utmost importance to explore how films interpellate us through the creation of fictional worlds. The most important elements of *mise-en-scene* are: "framing, costume design, non-verbal communication, diegetic sound (including dialogue), blocking, make up and hair style" (Gibbs, 2003, Lacey, 2005). Within non-verbal communication, the gaze of the characters is highly significant because it allows us to access their inner life. Editing is "associated with the concept of point of view" (Orpen, 2003: 34).

Through the assembly of types of shots (taking angularity and camera movement into consideration), the spectator is aligned with a particular character and his/her view of the world. This process of spectatorial alignment may lead to the establishment of empathy or allegiance. Whenever a film is screened, due attention should be paid to all these elements of film language in order to see how film functions as a signifying practice and how it could be used as a resignifying exercise to develop critical cultural awareness. Films are key contributors to intercultural awareness, since they invite reflection on socio-cultural (mis)constructions and (mis)representations of others as well as of the self. This helps learners become more sensitive to (inter)cultural difference, interaction and identity.

The spectatorial gaze

Watching a film is based on the dynamic "interplay between the spectatorial gaze, the gaze of the camera and the gaze of the fictional characters" (Aumont, 2001: 143). The spectator may be allowed to access a particular point of view through a close up shot or may be prevented from doing so if a particular character and/or event is kept off screen. This combination of enabling and censoring shots underlies the ideological agendas of all film texts.

Classical Hollywood 's continuity editing, which aims at transparency and tries to make the spectator believe that what is being watched is a natural reality is often deconstructed in films belonging to other cultures. Many postcolonial films enable the spectator to see the point of view of the oppressed 'other'. Together with the visual component of film, special attention should be paid not only to diegetic (within the fictional world) sound but to the soundtrack as well. Point of audition has often been underestimated since Western culture has foregrounded the sense of sight. However, music and dance form an essential part of cultural identity, as Bollywood ('Bombay Hollywood') films may well illustrate.

Non-Hollywood films, postcolonial films and/or independent films, may then operate as key resource materials instrumental to critical cultural awareness, since for many learners, they provide the necessary affective, attitudinal and experiential factors—"curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief and judgement with respect to others' meanings, beliefs and behaviours" (Byram, 1997: 35)—to motivate them to talk and to engage with language and cultures. This active work with empathy will help them attempt to analyse life from the viewpoint of other social actors with which they are engaging. This ability to decentre is fundamental to understanding other cultures and to better grasping a sense of self by means of delving into (un)explored circumstances, realities and traits that shape identity.

Postcolonial notions instrumental to non-Hollywood film analysis

Postcolonial criticism may be used as point of entry into representation in films such as *Water* (2004) or *Persepolis* (2007) which are culture-specific and challenge Western modes of perception and segmentation. Postcolonial theory argues that the "other" as "peripheral", "marginal", "savage", "false", etc., is a misrepresentation of the epistemic violence of the West, which constructs other cultures against itself as a "central", "cultivated", "true" (Ashcroft, B. *et al* (1995). The main purpose of postcolonial criticism is to expose, denounce and deconstruct this Maniquean system of representation and to reinscribe the body and voice of those absent, blurred or misrepresented by Western discourse. Many postcolonial critics and writers have been interested in both the psychological and cultural effects of colonialism and how its dominant values were internalised by colonial subjects. Three of the most salient figures in postcolonial criticism are Palestinian literary critic Edward Said (1978), Indian cultural critic Homi Bhabha (1994) and Indian deconstructionist Gayatri Spivak (1985), who explore notions of otherness, discourse, hegemony, hybridity and difference to deconstruct cultural misrepresentation.

As previously pointed out, the other, in the sense of alterity, is a construction of Western system and modes of representation. The notion of otherness can be better understood through the exploration of "hegemony" and "discourse". The concept of "hegemony" was first developed by the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci, who defines it as "the force by which people are convinced of the naturalness or rightness of their position and that of their rulers" (Gramsci in Forgacs, 1999: 189). Since culture is the site on which the struggle for hegemonic power is conducted, hegemony can be seen as a model for understanding how dominant cultural concepts of the coloniser become imbued by the colonised and

how colonial power becomes accepted. Hegemonic discourse, as the set of rules ('limitations on thought and action') which determine who can speak and what statement will be regarded as valid, plays a key role in the misrepresentation of colonised lands and peoples reinforcing preconceptions and negative stereotypes. As far as hegemonic discourse is concerned, Said (1978) sees the postcolonial subject as a fallacy, constructed by a dominant Western system of binary oppositions. Spivak (1985) exposes the postcolonial subject as trapped between two contending discourses, the dominant and the local, and therefore silenced or incapable of a language of their own. Bhabha (1994) locates the postcolonial subject outside binarity and silence and inside discourse, in a 'hybrid' place betwixt and between the borders of language. The subject can appropriate and hybridise the dominant discourse in a liminal or interstitial space of enunciation which breaks down previously distinct cultural boundaries and that allows identity reinscription. However, the subject, instead of blurring cultural borderlands, may use discourse to enhance cultural distinctiveness. The assertion of difference from within the colonial discourse can be done depicting specific cultural practices or alluding to indigenous literature or oral traditions. On one level, it acts as a way of asserting a specific culture in opposition to the stereotypes which made up a picture of empire. The effect can be to create a distance between the text and the reader who is not familiar with what is depicted or the vocabulary used. This detachment is significant because of the uncertainty and ambiguity it creates. Such gaps in understanding and indeterminacy reflect those aspects of different cultures which are, at least immediately, unbridgeable. In this case, the text is dense with cultural signifiers which reveal, or unveil, the absence which lies at the point of interface between two cultures.

Screening and analysing film texts

The film experience has often been defined as visceral, hence its great affective impact. Since cinematic texts are made up of visual acoustic and linguistic signifiers, pedagogical tasks should be designed in order to help the audience focus on *mise-en-scene* and editing (including sound editing). The formal/thematic analysis of films may prove to be extremely fruitful in terms of educating the spectatorial gaze.

One interesting point of entry into the diegetic world created by films is the screening of the opening credits sequences. In the case of *Water* (2004), the spectator is gradually aligned with the character of Chuyia, a little Indian girl who has just become a widow and is condemned to a life of seclusion in 1938 colonial India. Through a series of extreme close ups and close up shots the audience is brought very close to this character and has the possibility to access her feelings. At the same time, this sequence narrates the painful process through which this girl becomes the oppressed other. Within *mise-en-scene* hairstyle functions as a "narrative marker" (White, 2004: 342) and in this case the viewer witnesses how Chuyia's head is shaved off now that she has become a widow. The loss of her hair is not only indexical of the loss of the innocence which characterizes childhood but of the fact that this child has been deprived of her voice.

The soundtrack which accompanies this sequence not only adds dramatic tension to this mini narrative but reinforces the national identity which this film aims to foreground. Through the rhetoric of film the audience is not only aligned with the colonial subject and invited to see and understand a different worldview but is forced to reconsider a number of assumptions in relation to Indian culture. Thus, the Western gaze is (de)constructed and enhanced.

The development of competence in another culture through film challenges and transforms the learners' mode of perceiving, conceptualising, and expressing about the self. This enriching experience of otherness in language and culture promotes a favourable development of selfness (Council of Europe, 2001: 1) and strengthens the bonds between communities as cultural differences are acknowledged and accepted.

Challenging assumptions

The screening and analysis of world cinemas may contribute to the development and enhancing of visual literacy and cultural awareness through the representation of those points of view which are often backgrounded by Western films. The formal approach to the study of film together with the

insights offered by Postcolonial theory may prove to be not only productive but pedagogically empowering. Film is an extremely suitable and highly appealing pedagogical resource which may enable teachers to design interesting interdisciplinary projects at all levels.

Intermedial literacy enables learners to grasp both global and local issues that shape the reality in which they are immersed. This knowledge and critical awareness of the circumstances that frame their world helps them make better sense of their own subject positions and worldviews. Throughout the educational process, identities are (re)constructed in the interplay with others without effacing selfness. This enriching in-betweenness is increasingly being experimented with in FLT classrooms working with postcolonial films to empower learners to be themselves in spite of their using another language by means of using resource materials and strategies that would cater for intercultural interaction.

Teachers who are keen on working with intercultural awareness in FLT classrooms are experimenting with these films as resource materials for powerful reflection upon the worldviews of L1, L2 and their respective socio-linguistic realities and cultural identities. This process is captured in the expression "looking out is looking in", a notion that has permeated the field of intercultural language education. Linguists, pedagogues and interculturalists highlight the educational value of working with language, film and culture in integrated ways with a view to enabling learners to negotiate between the contrasting world-views of home and target culture. This opens a window of opportunity to create a completely new linguistic and cultural identity, or a "third place" (Kramsch, 1993) to mediate between various cultural contexts.

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Translation Revisited: Can it be Used Communicatively in the Classroom? Communication Oriented Activities and Tasks

Subtheme: Methodological implications. Communication oriented activities and tasks

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Abstract
The aim of this paper is to show that translation is a valid communicative classroom activity. This ancient craft has gradually become fossilised and now time has come to renovate and demystify it. I intend to share with the audience some theory and practical ideas for the classroom.

Theoretical background

Translation in the EFL classroom, yes. "What?", many traditional or conventional teachers may say. Allow me now to demystify probably the oldest language learning tool of all: translation. There are several definitions of translation; some see it as an art, others as a science; still others, as a craft. However, as a teacher willing to find new and alternative ways to facilitate learning and motivation, I am particularly interested in translation from the point of view of the teaching-learning process, that is o say, as a pedagogical tool. Therefore, Tudor's definition of translation (Duff, 1990: 5) as presented by Duff (1990) seems to me to be the best one to express how I see it: "*Translation, as the process of conveying messages across linguistic and cultural barriers, is an eminently communicative activity, one whose use could well be considered in a wider range of teaching situations than may currently be the case.*"

Admittedly, recent years have brought about a more positive outlook on the use of translation in the classroom; nevertheless, this reassessment has occurred more in the realms of research than in the actual practice inside the classroom. Many teachers are still reluctant to use it either because they consider it taboo or because they do not know how to use it communicatively and purposefully.

Translation suffered from a process of evolution and involution along the history of language learning approaches and methods, from being considered of vital importance to being completely discarded. As Maley says in the prologue of Duff's book (Duff,1990: 3) "*Translation has long languished as a poor relation in the family of language teaching techniques. It has been denigrated as 'uncommunicative', 'boring', 'difficult', 'irrelevant', it has been pushed into the methodological lumber room.*"

In the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries the Grammar Translation Method approached the language learnt through translation of sentences and texts into and out of the target language. Toward the 19th century, due to increased opportunities for communication among Europeans, the need for oral competence was vital. Hence, the Direct Method appeared. Its main principle was "never translate, demonstrate".

Early in the 20th century, the oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching also promoted the oral skills, leaving translation aside. Later on, toward the end of the 1950s, Audiolingualism emerged as a primarily oral approach to language teaching, which obviously discouraged the use of translation or the mother tongue in the foreign language classroom.

Communicative Language Teaching (late 1960s), aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and to develop the four language skills. For this approach, any device, including translation, is valid provided learning is promoted. Parallel to this, the Cognitive-Code learning Method developed. It considered translation as a short-cut to understanding. Similarly, for Community Language Teaching, translation was considered useful, not only to understand but also to communicate. Krashen and Terrell's Natural Methodology did not favour translation exercises due to the fact that the main goal in a classroom language was developing communication skills. (Richards & Rodgers, 1986).

It can clearly be seen, then, that translation was not a prominent learning activity mainly because it was or is still considered "uncommunicative". But, is this really so? Translation is a purely communicative activity considering that developing communicative competence means knowledge of the language and the ability to use it appropriately. According to Nunan (1989: 132), a good communicative language lesson will:

-derive input from authentic sources
-involve learners in problem-solving activities to negotiate meaning
-incorporate tasks which relate to learners' real life

-allow learners to rehearse, in class, real-world language tasks
-expose learners to the language as a system
-require learners and teachers to adopt a range of roles, and use languge in a variety of settings in and out of the classroom
-integrate the four macro skills
-involve learners in creative language use

Translation surely accounts for all these characteristics and can therefore be considered communicative. Besides, this activity can be challenging, motivating and a real break from the typical classroom routine.

Undoubtedly, translation has many merits which make it a great classroom activity:
-it is a natural and real activity
-it promotes questioning, understanding, confidence, language awareness; hence, learning
-it promotes speculation and discussion and creativity
-it develops three qualities: it trains the learner to search (flexibility) for the most appropriate words (accuracy) to convey what is meant (clarity)
-it goes beyond the limits of the classroom
-it contributes to the transmission of culture
-it promotes the integration of the four skills

Gomes de Matos (1991) best summarises how important translation becomes in the learning process, *"Whether language educators like to admit it or not, language learners typically move back and forth from their native language to the second or foreign language. If translating is characterised as a right rather than as a dangerous, forbidden, or taboo activity, both, learners and teachers will share the humanising power that inheres in language use and translation as interpersonal communication."*

From theory to practice

Before using translation in the classroom there are some basic principles to bear in mind:

linguistic
meaning (message rather than form)
form (language structure-changes)
register (formality & intention clear)
source language influence (natural patterns of thought)
style and clarity (a particular use of speech & writing- not ignored)
idiom (do not force them into translation- cultural meaning)

pedagogical
time (time-consuming?/ time management/ all ages/ judicious use)
correction (the teacher's role/ monitoring)
material (any kind of text- from short ads to novel extracts – authentic material)
class organisation (individual, pair and group work)
dictionary use (limited)

Examples of activities

Through the set of activities I will present, I aim to show how translation can be used communicatively in the classroom and how it complies with the characteristics Nunan considers a communicative lesson or activity should have.

Activity	Skills/ Functions/ Grammar / Vocabulary
a-News Programme	Comprehension-speaking-improvisation
b-Comparing & Contrasting Texts	Reflecting on how both languages work-speaking
c-Subtitling	Listening skills- vocabulary revision
d-Chinese Whisper	Revise and check vocabulary items and simple short structures
e-The Interpreter (versions 1-2)	Listening and thinking skills-questions and word order
f-The Matching Game	Reinforce and revise vocabulary items and grammar structures
g-Guess what	Warm -up activity
h-Word Play	Warm -up activity

i-"Small talk" to "speak up"	Phrasal verbs and idioms-focus on sense
j-Scanning Through	Revsision of any grammatical or lexical item-Reading
k-Cultural translations and add-ons	Foster cultural awareness and paraphrasing skills
l- Bilingual crossword	Revise, check and/or reinforce vocabulary
m-Bilingual dictation	Revise, check and/or reinforce vocabulary-comprehension

a- Students translate short pieces of news as if they were reporters. Classmates are the audience.

b- Students work in groups and are asked to translate a text or part of a text into Spanish. Then give them the same text in Spanish version and ask them to find similarities/differences. You can use songs, poems, instruction manuals, tourist guides, etc.

c- Students listen to / watch part of a film, video clip or song and have to subtitle it.

d- Students form two lines. The teacher whispers a word/ sentence in English to the first student in the line who passes on the message in English. The last student translates the word/sentence into Spanish and says it aloud. The first line to get the correct message wins. It can also be done the other way round or alternating English/Spanish.

e- 1-Have students listen to extracts and interpret/ translate what they hear.

2- Three students are tourists. One speaks English, the other Spanish and the interpreter both languages. They role play a situation in which the interpreter has to translate/interpret for both.

f- Students match words in English to their Spanish counterparts. This can be done as a competition using word flashcards to stick on the board.

g- Give students some phrases which are badly translated and ask them to guess what the message is and provide a better translation of the original message.

h-Students work in groups to translate titles of films, books, plays or advertising slogans. Then the class discusses which is the most suitable one.

i- Give students passages illustrating common uses of phrasal verbs, idioms, proverbs and ask them to translate them in whatever seems to be the most natural way in their mother tongue.

j-Deliver either newspapers or magazines for the students to work with. Ask them to scan a few pages in search for examples of whichever topic you might be working with in class. Once they've found them, they should suggest possible translations.

k-Students work in groups to translate short texts containing one cultural situation from the local culture that does not exist in English- speaking countries. They have to translate and add information.

l-Give students a word in English and they have to translate it into Spanish in the form of a crossword using a letter both words have in common. This can be made more complex if you give student A a crossword in Spanish and they have to give student B a definiton of tha word in English so that they write the word in English to complete their crossword.

m- Dictate a word in Spanish and students have to write in English.

After the explanation and demo of the activities listed above, which are just examples of the very many possibilities available, I hope you can really reconsider translation as a useful communicative activity for your class and start putting it into practice.

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DVD Combined with Blogs

Subtheme: Communication oriented activities and tasks

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Abstract

Adolescents spend much of their free time in front of the TV and computer screen, so why not take advantage of this? The class experience reflected on this paper has been planned to cope with the students' need to communicate and have fun. A sit comedy for adolescents and its blog, together with a class blog, are used to foster students' communicative competence. This paper exploits the potential of entertainment the DVD content has with meaning-focused communicative tasks, where the four skills are involved.

Introduction

The objective of this paper is to show a second language teaching experience using DVD combined with blogs as teaching devices. This experience has been developed and implemented with intermediate polimodal students. They attend English classes 8 hours a week, 2 of which are devoted to DVD and blogs. This 2 hour-class-a week is called "Workshop". This paper will illustrate the three resources used in the workshop:

- The teacher's blog
- The series blog
- One episode of the series

The inclusion of authentic audio-visual material into the EFL syllabus gives the opportunity of bringing life-like situations, characters, settings, conflicts, and communication, into the classroom. That is, all the elements of human communication are available in a video: a message with its form and context, a setting, participants, a communicative purpose, a key, a medium, etc. (Hymes 1967). According to Richards and Rogers (1986:72), "learners must be engaged in meaningful and authentic language use for learning to take place"; therefore, watching a TV series in class that is not meant for teaching, replicates a situation they frequently experience at home. The use of the DVD in an academic environment helps bring real communicative situations to the classroom, since there is a linguistic message supported by images. The soundtrack of the material used in the class is authentic, thus, students are provided with truly contextualized and up-to-date language. Not only do students discuss what they have seen and heard, but they also discuss their points of view on different situations shown in the comedy: they engage in conversations with a clear and real purpose in mind, just as in life outside the school.

Additionally, using blogs brings the outside world into the classroom. The use of the Internet offers excellent opportunities for collaboration and communication between learners who are geographically dispersed: the series blog encourages students to get in touch with the show characters. Besides, technology offers students new ways for practicing English and it offers teachers new ways of assessing performance. Students upload their work and the teacher evaluates them "at the click of a button". In addition, the class blog allows students to publish their own performance, which prompts them to monitor themselves before their productions are sent to the outside world. Blogging gives the class dynamism, fosters group work, and stimulates communication on real topics. The use of blogs and DVD gives learners exposure to and practice in all of the four language skills: speaking, listening, writing and reading

Development of the Workshop
- **Reasons for creating the blog**

Since we only have one meeting a week, the blog helps us to have a more frequent teacher-student contact. Besides, communicating through a screen gives us the opportunity to recreate what happens in real-life: students use technology to communicate with their peers. Apart from that, because the use of blogs encourages a student-centered learning experience, students who do not dare participate in class, started doing so with the help of the blog.

The use of ICT tools such as blogs are very motivating for adolescents. The interactive nature of blogging creates enthusiasm for participating and communicating. Though teachers themselves are fearful of the

technology, or feel they are not technically competent enough to use these tools, blogs are easy to set up and use, with no specialist technical knowledge required. .

The use of blogs engenders a sense of social responsibility, with learners working collaboratively on content. The public nature of the content created using these internet tools ensures that accuracy and appropriacy become more important to learners. What they do can be (and will be) published. Because students are writing for publication, they are usually more concerned about getting things right, and usually understand the value of rewriting more than if the only audience for their written work is the teacher.

Another important reason for using blogs is the social integration blogs provide. There were students in the class who were very shy, so the blog helped those who otherwise might not have participated in class. According to Graham Stanley (2005) there is evidence to suggest that students who are quiet in class can find their voice when given the opportunity to express themselves in a blog.

- **Reasons for using DVD**

One of the main concerns in language teaching is to provide circumstances that maximise student participation and creative involvement. This DVD that has not been tailored for a language class has the power of achieving it, since it is an activity students perform at home, with their friends. We take advantage of what they like doing: using screens. Human beings are social beings, and the scope of free time is the primary relational scenario, growth and change. Several studies show that the consumption and interaction that young people develop around the screens are a major socializing factor. The use of these media becomes a relational praxis, which projects a significant scope of socialization and knowledge. Using DVD then is just using the social aspect of our students for their own benefit.

If we want our learners to be able to understand genuine spoken language, as it is actually used by native speakers, then the input of the instruction needs to be authentic. What I refer to when using the term "authentic input" is the characteristic of genuineness. Genuineness refers to features of colloquial style that characterise everyday spoken discourse. (Rost 2002) And that is what the students are exposed to when working with this kind of audio visual - non tailored material:
✓ Natural speed
✓ Natural phonological phenomenon, natural pauses and intonation, use of reduction, assimilation, elision
✓ High frequency vocabulary
✓ Colloquialism, such as short formulaic utterances, current slang, etc
✓ Hesitation, false starts, self corrections
✓ Orientation or the speech toward a 'live' listener, including natural pauses for the listener to provide backchannelling (nodding, um-humm) or responses (e.g. 'yes , I think so')

Furthermore, according to Krashen (1982 in Rost 2002), by receiving input that is progressively more complex, the learner 'naturally' acquires listening ability. That is the principle of i + 1.

- **How to create a blog**

To create a blog you need a gmail address. Go to http://gmail.com and go to "crear una cuenta". You follow the instructions there and you have a gmail address. Once you have a gmail address go to http://blogger.com and follow the instructions. You have a blog! You can start posting.

- **What was done in the teacher's blog**

I selected an episode of the series from "iCarly" (iDon't want to fight) which is 20 minutes long. *iCarly* is an American sitcom created by Dan Schneider and taped at Nickelodeon. It focuses on a girl named Carly Shay who creates her own web show called *iCarly*. I watched it thoroughly taking into account the language used and the message. The language is everyday language that adolescents   use, and the values discussed are friendship, the importance of good intentions and honesty, among others.

Students had to check the teacher's blog before going to the class and after attending it. The blog has the links to the iCarly blog and its theme song. The instructions for homework were posted weekly, and students had to submit their homework there. I also uploaded some scenes from the episode, so that the students could view them as many times as they wanted, imitating pronunciation, intonation and body language. Vocabulary was posted weekly.

- **How the classes were organized**

The workshop consisted of 12 classes. The episode lasts 20 minutes, and it was divided into 2 or 3 minute segments, which coincided with the length of the scenes. I began by showing them the teacher's blog and introducing the show we were going to work with. This series is about Carly Shay and 2 adolescent friends who produce a 15 minute web show, which runs everyday, and everything they go through in order to

broadcast it. Because it is a DVD without subtitles I looked for the script in www.AllSubs.org to work with the written text. It has to be made clear that the students are not going to sit and watch an episode in a row, that they are going to be watching short pieces of it, and work will be done. This is important to establish, since from the moment students hear the word "dvd or video workshop" they have the misconception that they are going to watch the complete episode during the first class. They have to know that they *are* going to have fun, but *while* they are working. I also stated the rules for passing the workshop. The following items are important when grading the student: Class work; homework: working in the blog and the production of a group video.

I started off from the teacher's blog, using the links to the *iCarly* show. The characters of the show were introduced. Students had to work in pairs for about 3 minutes looking for information about the characters and about the show in general. The role of the teacher here is to try to make them feel that they choose, that they have a percentage of autonomy in what they do, so that they perceive themselves as someone who is responsible for his/her acts (Milicic 2010: 30). They had to be able to tell their classmates what they found out about the show: the profile of the characters, (age, interests, relationship among them), games the blog has, links to different episodes, summaries of the different episodes, and so on. Once there was a common knowledge of what they were going to see, we began viewing the episode. Krashen states that exposing students to listening experiences that lessen their anxiety is generally beneficial. This principle is based on the idea of affective filter proposed by Dulay and Burt (1975 in Rost 2002) and was given a more extensive treatment by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982 in Rost 2002). The filter is that part of the internal processing system that subconsciously screens incoming language based on what psychologists call affect: the learner's motives, need, attitudes and emotional states (Rost 2002). This is a sit comedy not meant for teaching. At that moment there is a common ground, they know exactly what they are going to see, and some new vocabulary has already been introduced, so students focus on the message, and not on the language itself.

The episodes were presented in different ways: Silent viewing, just listening   without viewing,   viewing and listening, and also viewing and reading the script. Students were exposed to each segment two or tree times.

- **Activities carried out in the classroom**

✓ **Working with Vocabulary:** New pieces of vocabulary connected to the scenes were given to students (in the blog and/or on the blackboard). We worked on their meaning. Students used those words in different ways: predicting what was going to happen in the next scene, summarizing the episodes they had seen, making sentences about themselves, describing a still image.
✓ **Using the iCarly workshop box**: A box that was introduced into the class. Students started filling the iCarly box with cards (which they had to produce) with the new vocabulary on one side and the definition or an example on the other side. The box was on the classroom desk every class, so each class started with a revision of the vocabulary of the previous viewings. They re-used the words in sentences connected to the episode and then with sentences connected to their own life.
✓ **Defining words:** Students had to write definitions as the ones they may find in a dictionary. Students were given the theme song, for example, and they had to choose 10 words, produce a definition, and their classmates had to guess the word.
✓ **Making questions:** Students had to write questions for their classmates about the episode or about the iCarly blog as a competition. The winners were those who finished writing the questions first, (grammatically correct ones) and the student who found the answer to those questions (also grammatically correct answers).
✓ **Paraphrasing**: Students were asked to say and write in their own words what a character meant when he/she said a certain line, or what each stanza of the song means, which led to discussions.
✓ **True/ false**: The teacher gave them sentences about the episode, and students had to say whether they are true or false. They had to correct the false ones.
✓ **Sentences completion**: The teacher gave students incomplete sentences about characters, plot or themes which they had to complete.
✓ **Description of the characters**: Written and oral work.
✓ **Identifications**: Say who said what in what circumstance.
✓ **Discussions and role plays**. "What would you have done in the same situation?"

- **Assessment**

1. Class work. Hand outs were given to students with activities planned for the class.
2. Homework: posting homework on the teacher's blog
3. The production of a group video: they could choose either:

- ✓ a karaoke with the theme song of the program.
- ✓ A dialogue they find fun to act out, recreating a scene and imitating pronunciation and intonation.
- ✓ A piece of writing stating their point of view on one of the topics presented in the episode
- ✓ An article summarising the episode and giving their point of view.

Evaluation was done taking into account these elements. Each item had to cover a 60 % of completion and correctness in order to pass the workshop.

- **Conclusions:**

Exposing our Spanish-speaking students to authentic English was a way of giving them the opportunity to witness the language they are learning in a natural environment. It was also a way of making them feel they can be in a community where English is spoken and be able to handle it. They were able to learn updated vocabulary and produce and recreate parts of the show they saw. Not only were students exposed to life like situations in which authentic English was used, they were also shown values that ennoble human beings, which gave them the opportunity to take a stand and get engaged in discussions.

In addition, teaching with DVD and blogs is accepting the fact that our students belong to the culture of the image. A generation that can simultaneously absorb 2 or 3 sources of information, a *multitasking* generation (Funes 2010). Their daily life is full of screens: cell phones, computers, television. Bringing them a lesson in the format they usually use at home for entertaining may guarantee success. Standing in this century, we have to take the best of both worlds: the immediacy technology offers, together with the teachers' experience and knowledge to put content across a screen and in that way avoid the clash between the two generations.

Furthermore, these technological tools allowed collaborative work in 2 directions: student-student and student- teacher. We exchanged knowledge: they taught me how to deal with certain technical issues, and I taught them English in a different way. It was an enjoyable experience.

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Asynchronous Learning Networks and the Enhancement of the Speaking Competence

Sub-theme: The Role of TICs in the Communicative Classroom

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Abstract

This paper describes an experience consisting in helping advanced undergraduate ESL students to improve their grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic oral competence by means of an out-of-class, online, technology-aided project based on the notion of asynchronous learning networks. The analysis includes a comparison of pre-project hypothesizing and real difficulties encountered during the first phase of the implementation of the ongoing project. The work concludes with pathways orienting future research in technology-mediated oral discussion procedures.

Students who have reached the fourth level of a typical ESL undergraduate course of study at the School of Languages (National University of Córdoba) usually have the overriding perception that they have attained a satisfactory degree of proficiency in their speaking skills, even if they admit they are still in need of improving other macro-skills, typically the writing ability. The experience of a group of professors teaching English Language IV students—prospective ESL teachers and translators in about a year's time—shows that the speaking skill is in fact a neglected ability and one that, contrary to what students often assume, does require further tending. This paper describes an experience consisting in helping advanced undergraduate ESL students to improve their oral competence by means of an out-of-class, technology-aided project based on asynchronous learning networks.

The members of the Chair mentioned above first agreed on what it means to be proficient in a language, and to be knowledgeable in terms of grammar, vocabulary, sociolinguistic appropriateness, conventions of discourse, and cultural understanding in order to use a second language effectively at an advanced level and for authentic purposes. Thus, the concept of communicative competence developed by Canale and Swain was heavily drawn upon. According to their theory, communicative competence is divided into four different components: a) grammatical competence; b) discourse competence; c) sociolinguistic competence; and d) strategic competence. The first two sub-categories reflect the use of language itself. Hence, grammatical competence includes "knowledge of lexical items and of rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics and phonology" (Canale and Swain, 1980, p.11). The second sub-category is discourse competence – the ability to connect sentences in discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterances. While grammatical competence focuses on sentence-level grammar, discourse competence is concerned with intersentential relationships. Sociolinguistic competence "requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used: the roles of the participants, the information they share and the function of the interaction. Strategic competence can be understood as "the verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or due to insufficient competence" (Canale and Swain, 1980, p.33). Strategic competence refers to the way speakers manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals and use conversation management strategies.

In light of this concept, the members of the Chair carried out the pertinent needs analysis process, through observation of students' interaction and the aid of observation sheets which were completed while the students were performing real discussions of the topics being studied. Since the purpose of the needs analysis process was to determine learners' needs in terms of the institutionally laid goals for the course and the group of students was perceived to be extremely heterogeneous in level, the approach to needs analysis employed was the language proficiency orientation, according to Brindley's tripartite division of approaches (Cited in Nunan, 1990, p. 24). The discussions in which the students were engaged were prompted by a variety of resources, such as video clips with interviews and news reports, talks and conferences, fragments from films, and others. The use of authentic audio and video materials is vital in the selection of materials because the teachers regard the spoken form of the language as a "neglected source of richly diverse language choices which should be central to the teacher's repertoire of vocabulary and grammar structures to be taught" (Hugues, 2002).

Every weekly session during the first six weeks of the academic year, the team of instructors (head teacher, teaching assistant, teacher trainees) focused on a particular competence in their observation. Some students were also invited to participate and required to record strengths and weaknesses of their peers' interaction. After the information collected in this way was processed, it became evident to both teachers and students that the latter were in need of improving various aspects of their communicative oral competence. Some of the problems detected were: 1) advanced students generally took their speaking competence for granted and focused on content to the exclusion of such aspects of their competence as grammatical and lexical accuracy; 2) students frequently failed to communicate effectively due to mispronunciation, flawed syntactical constructions, or lack of rhetorical strategies to signpost their discourse; 3) there were awkward breakdowns in communication, with students interrupting lines of thought by introducing ideas of questionable relevance or digressing without justification; and 4) there were also awkward repetitions of ideas, which did not have the intention of further elaborating on a notion but were, rather, indications of failure to listen attentively. In other words, despite students' general perception at this advanced stage that they have achieved a satisfactory level of proficiency, in class-based oral interaction, there is evidence to suggest that additional intensive work should be done to improve their grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence.

As an attempt to offer students additional opportunities to enhance their speaking competence and introduce a specific problem resolution strategy, the members of the Chair decided to implement a technology-mediated project as a complement to the in-class practice activities performed, which consists in creating on-line discussion groups by means of an Internet resource. This technological aid is known as "Voxopop" and it is a voice-based e-Learning tool which is used by educators all over the world and is freely available on the Internet. Its user is only required to have an Internet connection, loudspeakers and a microphone; moreover, it is a completely user-friendly tool for both, students and teachers. The website claims to bring people together in an environment of constructive communication and to provide a kind of bridge connecting people of different social, political and religious backgrounds. Under the premise of transferring this major goal and adapting it to the context of the advanced class where the experience is taking place, the teachers decided to take advantage of this technological resource to foster the development of the students' critical and reflective thinking skills, as well as the enhancement of the various aspects of their speaking competences.

Therefore, the project falls under the general category of asynchronous e-learning in the well-known classification of synchronous and asynchronous e-learning varieties. In the process of designing the project, the teachers considered not only the possible benefits but also the weaknesses of asynchronous learning in general. According to Hrastinski (2008), synchronous communication increases psychological arousal and motivation more actively than do asynchronous models, in that the type of communication which is generated resembles real, face-to-face communication more closely. Psychological arousal is to a large extent due to the sender's capacity to monitor the receiver's reaction to the message by such features as facial expression or body language and in part also due to the immediacy of the response. On the other hand, according to Hrastinski, whereas synchronous e-learning enhances arousal and motivation, asynchronous e-learning seems to be more effective in increasing cognitive participation, or the ability to process information, which is largely made possible by the fact that asynchronous e-learning gives the receiver more time to comprehend a message. Hrastinski summarizes his views of the potential benefits and weaknesses of synchronous and asynchronous e-learning in the following table:
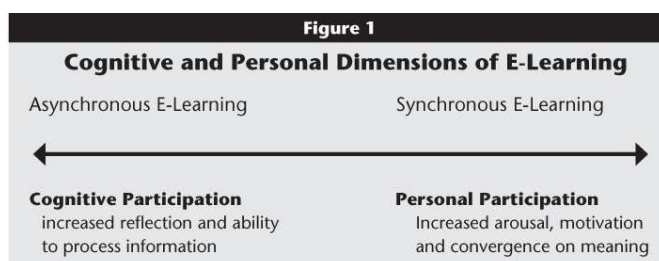

Figure 1

Cognitive and Personal Dimensions of E-Learning

Asynchronous E-Learning   Synchronous E-Learning

Cognitive Participation   **Personal Participation**
increased reflection and ability   Increased arousal, motivation
to process information   and convergence on meaning

Table 1[1]

Despite the drawbacks of asynchronous e-learning in terms of motivation and communication fluency, the Voxopop-based project was expected to compensate for such deficiency by contributing directly to the students' development of their comprehension and cognitive processing abilities. Furthermore, since the formation of asynchronous e-learning networks through the discussion talk groups is dealt with as a complement to classroom-based learning, in a blended-learning component to the course

(Sharma and Barrett, 2007), the teachers thought that the negative effects of asynchronous communication would be minimized by adding variety to the class activities.

To initiate the project, the head teacher recorded a welcome message for the students and the main goals of the project were uploaded onto the website. The specific objectives listed are: 1) to create opportunities for the development and enhancement of the students' speaking skills; 2) to share opinions about topics addressed in the class; 3) to ask for and offer clarification of lexis, concepts and/or ideas developed by any of the speakers; 4) to engage in a lively, spontaneous and enlightening debate of ideas; 5) to participate in a truly collaborative project; and 6) to get rid of possible fears and inhibitions about speaking in public which may hamper students' oral performance. Additionally, a set of rules were designed and also uploaded. Such rules are oriented at organizing the work of the students participating in the talk groups. For example, one of the rules is that the discussion is initiated by a member of the Chair and only the initiator may invite a limited number of students to participate in the group. Each discussion lasts for a week and each participant may record a maximum of five messages during that week, while each recording also has the limit of a maximum of five minutes of duration. Students are required to interact by making meaningful contributions in relation to what has been discussed in class and the course materials. Typically, the teacher poses a question or insists on an aspect of the topic which did not receive enough attention in class. The students are asked to agree with, disagree with, challenge and redefine other participants' ideas and not to record isolated messages. The teacher who participates in each group is expected to provide relevant linguistic feedback regarding the speakers' competences before the discussion group closes. Task management and fulfillment are also considered crucial at the moment of giving feedback.

Since the project is still under way and the teachers involved are in the process of observing the data gathered so far, the present work will inform about a few preliminary conclusions. Before the implementation of the project, the teachers formulated a series of hypotheses concerning the possible difficulties that might arise during the use of this learning tool. The following is a hierarchically arranged list of the main anticipated problems, organized in a descending order of importance:

1. Students might find it difficult to truly interact with their peers in a context different from the classroom and would thus quickly lose motivation.
2. Students might tend to produce rehearsed and unspontaneous speech, instead of on spot interactions.
3. Students might deal with the questions posed in simplistic and reductive ways.
4. Students might not understand the basic notion of following the line of thought proposed in an unstructured but profound discussion and insist, instead, on expressing a point of view in a manner more or less unwarranted by previous exchanges.

After the first two months of this ongoing project, the first conclusions to be drawn refer to these hypothetical difficulties. Teachers have encountered some of the problems listed above while other unexpected obstacles have arisen. In the first place, an analysis of the recorded discussions has proved the first of these hypotheses wrong, in the sense that students have shown no difficulty in interacting with their peers in a different context and have not lost their motivation. The second anticipated problem was probably the most frequent hindrance to open, spontaneous interactions. It was evident from the characteristics of the recorded messages and from conferences held with the students, that the students in general, and more evidently the ones who received invitations during the first two weeks, had exaggerated their "preparedness" to the point of having written texts which they later rehearsed several times before recording a message which was ultimately read rather than spoken. The third problem on the list was confirmed in a few cases, with about ten per cent (10%) of the participants making comments of a reductive and simplistic nature and failing to acknowledge the complexity of a question or topic. The forth type of problem was observed in a greater number of students—approximately twenty per cent (20%). Indeed, several students strayed considerably and did not contribute to the production of a unified, coherent and cohesive discussion.

On the other hand, there was an extremely high incidence of a major stumbling block which had been unaccounted for in the preliminary, hypothesis-generating stage. None of the teachers had envisioned failure to comprehend or respect the rules proposed for the asynchronous interactions, which were very clear and straightforward. Besides, the students received the recommendation to read them, twice—both in class, when the instructions were given, and online, when they had to log onto the website that contained the written rules to listen to their peers' messages and record their own. Indeed, these rules were contravened in a number of ways. One particular student recorded a seventeen-minute long message and another recorded two thirteen-minute long messages, despite the specific indication that messages should not exceed five-minute limit. Some students recorded a

single message, even though students who recorded later messages and raised issues which demanded answers.   When asked about this situation, they invariably answered that they did not know they could log in several times during the week, again failing either to notice the respective rule and overlooking the nature of the concept of interaction, which requires a series of exchanges rather than a single monologue. Finally, another serious hindrance was of a technical nature. The project was undertaken on the assumption that every student would have access to a fully-equipped computer and an Internet connection. In practice, however, one student claimed not to own a computer, while several others declined the invitation because they had no microphones.

Thus, a comparative table was drawn to contrast the anticipated list of problems and the real issues encountered during the course of the first stage of this project. It is possible to observe the major differences between teachers' assumptions and the real difficulties encountered, both of which have been listed in a descending order of importance, while the main coincidence has been shaded:

ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS	PROBLEMS ACTUALLY ENCOUNTERED
Anticipated problem 1: Unfamiliar context and lack of motivation	Real problem 1: failure to observe rules
Anticipated problem 2: unspontaneous speech	Real problem 2: unspontaneous speech
Anticipated problem 3: simplistic treatment	Real problem 3: lack of cohesion
Anticipated problem 4: lack of cohesion	Real problem 4: simplistic treatment /
	Real problem 5: technical problems

In conclusion, the first stage of the Voxopop project yields a number of intriguing results which should be further explored and dissected. In particular, one major concern among teachers is not only students' failure to acknowledge and/or observe practical regulations, but also the consequences of this attitude spilling over into other areas of their academic work. Another major concern is with the reasons underlying students' inability and/or reluctance to use the spoken language in unrehearsed and spontaneous ways, unencumbered by worries about teachers' and peers' perception of their performance. Hedge (2000) points out that speaking activities are probably the most demanding from the affective point of view. In her own words:

> Trying to produce language in front of other students can generate high levels of anxiety. Students may feel that they are presenting themselves at a much lower level of cognitive ability than they really possess; they may have a natural anxiety about being incomprehensible; they may have cultural inhibitions about losing face, or they may simply be shy personalities who do not speak very much in their first language. It is therefore a major responsibility for the teacher to create a reassuring environment in which students are prepared to take risks and experiment with the language. (p.292).

Given the high incidence of students' difficulty in using free, spontaneous discourse in talk group discussions, it would be very useful to carry out research with the aim of discovering whether the reasons are related to a competitive, goal-oriented academic environment, lack of training in cooperative work, or any other unknown factors. Incidentally, such research could approach the ways in which a technology-mediated project like the one discussed in this work, could be implemented on a permanent basis and improved to ensure that it actually helps to ameliorate the negative impact of such individualistic trends and contributes positively to the development and enhancement of students' speaking performance. In designing such research project, the challenges posed by Hugues should be taken into account to construct the asynchronous learning networks of students working together as an authentically "reassuring environment."

Notes
[1] The table has been drawn from Hrastinski's work.

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Cultural Awareness and Language Teaching: A Common Path

Sub-theme: Cultural awareness in the communicative class

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Abstract

The link between language learning and culture can be explored from two perspectives: the learning of culture as content and aim for language programmes and culture as context for learning. The learning of culture is of central importance. However, apparently, an approach to culture is not stressed actively on language learning programmes. If EFL learners are to become successful (inter) cultural communicators, it is important to provide them with systematic cultural training.

Culture has been variously defined and can be understood and approached in different ways. According to Kramsch (1998: 10) culture can be defined as "membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings".
Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino and Kohler (2003) consider culture as:

> A complex system of concepts, attitudes, values, beliefs, conventions, behaviours, practices, rituals and lifestyles of the people who make up a cultural group, as well as the artifacts they produce and the institutions they create.
> (Liddicoat et al in Si Thang Kiet Ho 2009)

Duranti (1997) defines culture as
> Something learned, transmitted, passed down from one generation to the next, through human actions, often in the form of face to face interaction, and, of course, through linguistic communication.
> Duranti (1997:24 as in Thanasoulas D 2001)

From these definitions we can understand the significant role played by language in culture. It is through the use of language that we become members of a community of ideas and practices. As Thanasoulas states:
> ...as a complex system of classification of experience and 'an important window on the universe of thoughts' (Duranti, 1997: 49 as in Thanasoulas D 2001); as a link between thought and behaviour; and as 'the prototypical tool for interacting with the world' (ibid), language is intertwined with culture.

Risager (2006, 2007 as in Young, Sachdev and Seedhouse 2009) considers that it is generally accepted that the interrelation between language and culture is strong but complex. Language is a component of culture which interacts with it in different ways as it is a transmitter and main tool of internalisation of culture. Language as used every day is flavoured with little pieces of culture. Just by talking we take on social and cultural roles which go unnoticed. There is no level of language which is independent of culture.
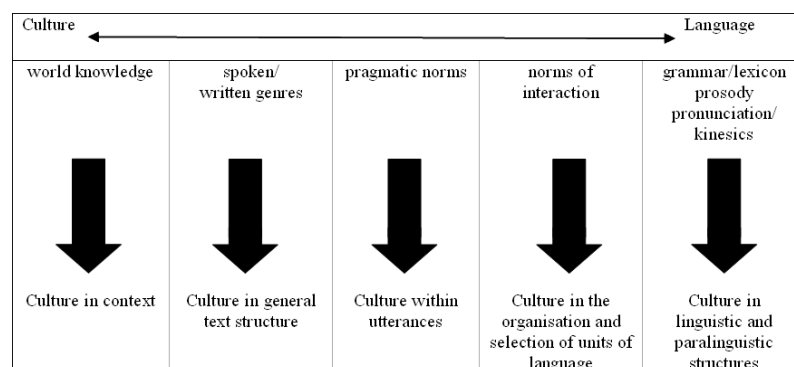
Culture				Language
world knowledge	spoken/ written genres	pragmatic norms	norms of interaction	grammar/lexicon prosody pronunciation/ kinesics
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Culture in context	Culture in general text structure	Culture within utterances	Culture in the organisation and selection of units of language	Culture in linguistic and paralinguistic structures

Fig. 1: Points of articulation between culture and language (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 9)

The question still remains as how and when to introduce culture in the EFL curriculum in order to raise cultural awareness. As many scholars admit, Culture cannot be taught but shown. It is teachers' responsibility to pave their students' way to the understanding and acceptance of their own and other peoples' culture. This can be achieved by highlighting elements of the target culture emphasizing important characteristics, helping students become aware of the non-existence of such things such as good / bad or superior / inferior cultures, working with students' towards the acceptance of what is different, thus contributing to the pulling down of barriers based on prejudice and discrimination. The teachers' task is to make the foreign language classroom

> not so much as a place where the language is taught but as one where opportunities for learning of various kinds are provided through the interaction that takes place between the participants (Ellis, 1992: 171, cited in Kramsch, 1993: 245, as in Thanasoulas, 2001).

In Byram et al's opinion it is the teachers' task to bring information and the foreign society into the classroom so that students can observe and experience. The teachers' role is to facilitate learners' interaction with other societies (or part of them) and their cultures in order that learners can

> investigate for themselves the otherness around them, either in their immediate physical environment or in their engagement with otherness which internationalisation and globalisation have brought into their world (Byram et al 2001:3).

The link between language learning and culture can be explored from two different perspectives. On the one hand, the learning of culture as content and aim for language programmes (learning culture); on the other hand, culture as context for learning. Even if the focus in on one of these perspectives, the links between them are inevitable.

Despite the fact that the learning of culture is of central importance, it is apparent that an effective approach to culture is not stressed actively on language learning programmes. This may be due to different reasons:
  a) Non native speaking (NNS) teachers of the language may lack confidence to teach about the sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects of a society.
  b) Teachers find it difficult to teach culture in the same way as they teach grammar, vocabulary, etc.
  c) The inclusion of approaches to culture in language teacher training curricula is unusual.
  d) Some teachers consider learning culture as unimportant or irrelevant.
  e) Teachers' and learners' own negative attitude towards English-speaking societies may reduce the motivation to learn about other's culture.
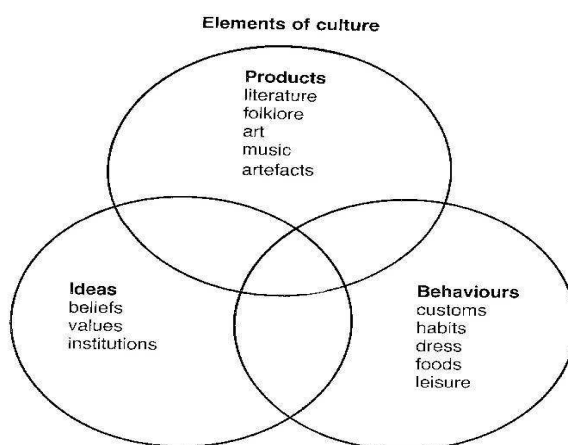
(Young et al 2009:151-152)

Two other important factors can be added to this list:
  f) Lack of awareness and lack of consciousness of the fact that culture is a factor.

g) Culture is seen as an unanticipated and unwelcome factor in the classroom.

Gail Robinson (1985), informs that teachers' most common response to the question "What does culture mean to you?" falls into three categories which can be represented as follows:

Elements of culture

Products
literature
folklore
art
music
artefacts

Ideas
beliefs
values
institutions

Behaviours
customs
habits
dress
foods
leisure

The behaviours which are culturally influenced have generally been treated in an "anecdotal, peripheral, or supplementary way" (Tomalin and Stempleski 1993: 7) depending on the teachers' and students' awareness and interest. According to these authors:

> The study of culturally-influenced behaviour should arise out of the language material being studied, but should nevertheless be clearly identified and systematically treated as a regular feature of the language lesson.
> (Tomalin and Stempleski 1993: 7)

Byram (1989) observes that culture represents "hidden" curriculum in second and foreign language teaching. Teaching a language can seldom take place without implicitly making reference to the culture of the people who speak it since language always refers to their knowledge and perceptions of the world. Byram points out that communicative competence involves "appropriate language use which, in part at least, is culture specific" (Byram 1989: 61 as in Hinkel 1999:6).

Nowadays, the teaching and learning of a foreign language cannot be reduced to the teaching of morphology, syntax and phonology. Updated models of communicative competence prove that there is more to the learning of a language: cultural knowledge and awareness.

If EFL learners are to become successful (inter)cultural communicators, it is of fundamental importance to provide them with systematic cultural training.

"Culture in language learning is not an expendable fifth skill, tacked on to the teaching of speaking, listening, reading and writing" (Kramsch 1993 as in Chlopek 2008), it is important that the cultures are dealt with during EFL lessons.

Intercultural language learning reflects awareness of the inseparability of language and culture and the need to prepare language learners for intercultural communication.

If we agree with the idea that language teaching has moved away from the communicative approach towards intercultural communicative competence, we may ask: what does ICC (Intercultural Communicative Competence) require learners to acquire?
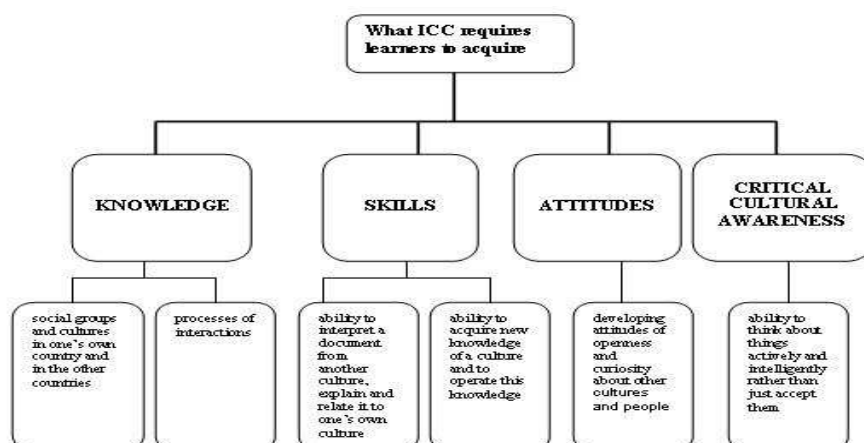
Figure 1. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)

Ferit Kilickaya (2004)

In order to facilitate the development of cross-cultural communication skills it would be useful to keep in mind some goals of cultural instructions originally proposed by Ned Seelye (1988) and modified by Tomalin and Stempleski (1993) as follows:

1. To help students to develop an understanding of the fact that all people exhibit culturally-conditioned behaviours.
2. To help students to develop an understanding that social variables such as age, sex, social class and place of residence influence the ways in which people speak and behave.
3. To help students to become more aware of conventional behaviour in common situations in the target culture.
4. To help students to increase their awareness of the cultural connotations of words and phrases in the target language.
5. To help students to develop the ability to evaluate and refine generalisations about the target culture, in terms of supporting evidence.
6. To help students to develop the necessary skills to locate and organise information about the target culture.
7. To stimulate students' intellectual curiosity about the target culture, and to encourage empathy towards its people. (Tomalin and Stempleski 1993: 7-8.)

The above mentioned authors also recommend that we include these goals in these teaching principles:

1. Access the culture through the language being taught.
2. Make the study of cultural behaviours an integral part of each lesson.
3. Aim for students to achieve the socio-economic competence which they feel they need.
4. Aim for all levels to achieve cross-cultural understanding –awareness of their own culture, as well as that of the target language.
5. Recognise that not all teaching about culture implies behaviour change, but merely an awareness and tolerance of the cultural influences affecting one's own and other's behaviour.

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Listening Competence and Communicative Competence Hand in Hand

Sub-theme: Cognitive learning and communication

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Abstract

Listening comprehension (Morley, 2001) and learning strategies (Oxford, 1990) are essential for the development of communicative competence in a second or foreign language. The dimensions of communicative competence are related to listening competence. A pilot study carried out with a group of upper secondary school students shows their inefficient listening strategy use, which gives evidence of the need to implement a more communicative syllabus according to the principles of Communicative Language Teaching.

Introduction

Listening comprehension (Morley, 2001) and learning strategies (Oxford, 1990) are fundamental for the development of communicative competence in a second language. Nowadays the Argentine secondary school does not implement a listening comprehension model which involves listening strategy patterns when students listen to an oral text. This work proposes a model based on the identification of the most effective patterns used by students of both genders during the comprehension processes (perception, parsing and utilization). The application of this model would increase efficiency in the teaching and learning of listening. At present, the Argentine National Law of Education 26,206 and the Provincial Law 9,870 for the province of Córdoba establish that secondary school students will have to develop not only linguistic competence but also comprehension in a foreign language. In agreement with the National and the Provincial Laws, this study focuses on listening and listening comprehension strategies for their significant role in both communication, and in the acquisition of a foreign language (Celce Murcia, 2001).

Literature Review

A literature review shows numerous research studies on listening comprehension strategies (Goh, 2000; Vandergrift, 2002; Vandergrift, 2003; Goh & Taib, 2006; Graham et al., 2008; Goh, 2008). However, only O'Malley et al. (1989) and Vandergrift (2003) focus on listening strategy patterns. In contrast to the researchers mentioned before, Lan & Oxford (2003) and Maubach & Morgan (2001) found gender differences in learning strategy use. In the national context, Pistorio & López (2003) and Pistorio & López (2005) present a methodological model for explicit and implicit instruction in listening comprehension strategies for Argentine lower secondary school students (Ciclo Básico Unificado). The present study contributes to widen the knowledge about the listening comprehension strategies used by Argentine upper secondary school students (Ciclo de Especialización) with a pre-intermediate level of English.

Theoretical Framework

According to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), the acquisition of language is the result of communication. The goal of this approach is communicative competence, which is enhanced and developed by the use of language learning strategies. Sauvignon's model (2001) integrates four components of communicative competence: grammatical, discourse, strategic and sociocultural, each of which is essential, and cannot be developed on its own. When one of them improves, this component associates with others, which results in an overall increase of the communicative competence. These components are related to the dimensions of listening competence (Scarcella and Oxford 1992, pp. 140-143).

The first component of communicative competence related to the listening skill is grammatical competence, which includes the ability to understand all aspects of vocabulary, mechanics, morphology and syntax. The word *'mechanics'* in grammatical competence is linked to basic sound of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation and stress in listening. Therefore, a competent EFL listener needs to understand and apply the rules of morphology and syntax, recognize the words heard, and understand language mechanics.

The second component of communicative competence related to listening competence is discourse competence, which involves the ability to communicate above sentence level. Thus, an EFL listener

having discourse competence would apply the rules of coherence and cohesion so that he is able to understand the idea of what is being spoken, or to predict what will be said next.

Sociocultural competence allows listeners to understand the purpose of oral communication, and to adjust to the social and cultural norms of a speaker so that he is able to find the speaker's purpose, to know the right time to comment, to ask questions, and to give appropriate nonverbal answers.

The strategic component of communicative competence related to the listening skill allows listeners to enhance communication as a result of limiting factors in actual communication, or insufficient competence in one or more components of communicative competence. Strategic competence is very important in listening because learners are able not only to guess the meaning of unknown words but also to test, to adjust and to confirm hypothesis (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, pp. 140-143). Listening comprehension strategies are directed towards the development and growth of the listening competence. As the listening competence is developed, listening strategies can support any of the dimensions of the listening competence (Pistorio & López, 2003).

Anderson's Language Comprehension Model
Anderson (2010) presents a model of language comprehension that distinguishes three phases: perception, parsing and utilization. In the perception phase, listeners focus on the sounds of the language and store them in echoic memory. Since the echoic memory is extremely limited, listeners almost immediately begin to process the sounds for meaning. In the parsing phase, listeners use words and phrases to construct meaningful representations. Listeners decompose the information into a meaningful unit that can be stored in short-term memory. The size of the chunk that listeners retain depends on several factors including knowledge of language, knowledge of topic, and quality of the signal. In the utilization phase, listeners look into long-term memory to connect what they hear with what they know. Stored information is in the form of schemata and script, or interrelated concepts.

Antecedents
Using the psycholinguistic model described above, O'Malley et al. (1989), cited in O'Malley & Chamot (1990), describes a hierarchical order of listening comprehension strategies. First, during perceptual processing, the participants used *Selective Attention* and *Self-monitoring*. Second, the strategies used during parsing were *Grouping* and *Inferencing* from context. Third, during utilization the researchers detected *Elaboration of world knowledge*, personal experiences or *Self-questioning*. O'Malley et al. (1989) thoroughly examined the participants' verbal protocols and evaluated how systematic their strategy patterns were while listening to an oral text.

Nowadays, listening is considered an interactive process which can be approached *bottom up* and *top down*. These processes do not take place separately; on the contrary, they are simultaneous and mutually dependent (Hedge, 2000). During the bottom up process, the smallest units of language are identified to decode phrases, sentences and oral texts using linguistic, lexical, and syntactic knowledge to understand. The top down process utilizes schemata (background knowledge) to derive meaning and to interpret a message. At the beginning of a listening activity, listeners hypothesize about what is heard and link their information to their schemata. Later, as they listen, they change or verify their hypothesis.

Vandergrift's (2003) most important contribution is a model of the skilled listener who can orchestrate or combine cycles of cognitive and metacognitive strategies that lead to successful listening performance. Vandergrift (2003) established differences in strategy use between skilled and less skilled listeners. The latter engaged in bottom up processing almost exclusively, and rarely applied top down processing actively. In contrast, the most skilled listeners tended to approach listening tasks using bottom up and top down interactively using both world and text knowledge to interpret successfully what they heard.

Methodological Framework
Participants
This pilot study was carried out with 5th Year students from a confessional private school in Córdoba City. It should be noted that these pre-intermediate students belonged to a group of learners with the highest language proficiency among 5th Year students Classes A, B and C. This group consisted of 30 students (9 males and 21 females) who were randomized. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 6 students (3 males and 3 females).

Instruments

Instead of using a background questionnaire, the school files provided information about the participants' age, their general academic performance in all the subjects as well as their social economic background. A listening text was selected from the syllabus so that its vocabulary and content was related to the students' knowledge and experience. A thriller was chosen to raise students' interest. After listening to a radio drama, the participants were required to discover a murder case.

Procedures

In November 2010, data collection sessions were carried out on an individual basis, and were conducted by the researcher in a language laboratory. During the sessions, the participants verbalized their thoughts in Spanish while performing a listening task by means of retrospection. The data collection sessions were audio-recorded for later verbatim transcription and coding. In addition, video-recordings of the sessions were implemented since they were expected to provide important information to confirm or discard data provided by the audio-recordings alone. The data collection sessions lasted approximately 50 minutes each. The audio-recordings of the think-aloud sessions were transcribed verbatim. After that, the protocols were coded to identify listening comprehension strategies using Vandergrift's (1997) taxonomy, which includes cognitive strategies (steps or operations involving the manipulation of the learning material to perform a listening task), metacognitive strategies (mental activities used to regulate or self-direct listening performance), and socio-affective strategies (behaviors related to social mediating activities and transacting with others).

Results and Discussion

A quantitative and a qualitative analysis were carried out to uncover the listening strategy patterns used by upper secondary school students, and the differences in listening strategy patterns between male and female students. From a quantitative perspective, with regard to the listening strategies reported by male and female participants, cognitive strategies were far more frequent than metacognitive strategies for both genders. Since think-aloud protocols do not allow the elicitation of socio-affective strategies, they have not been included in this work. The graphs below present the frequency of strategies used.
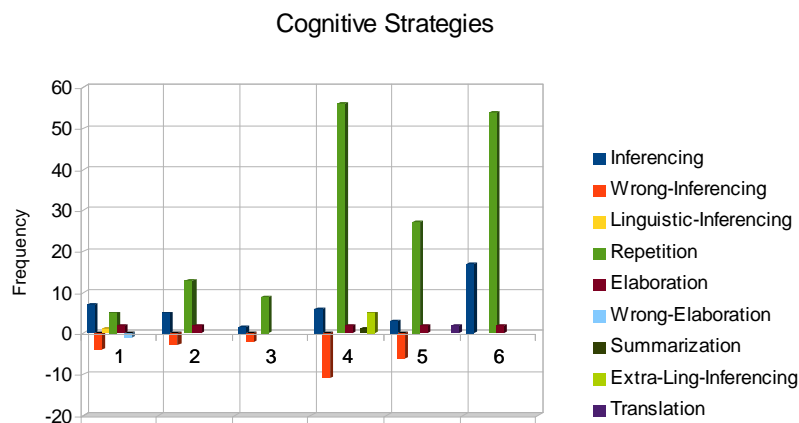
Cognitive Strategies

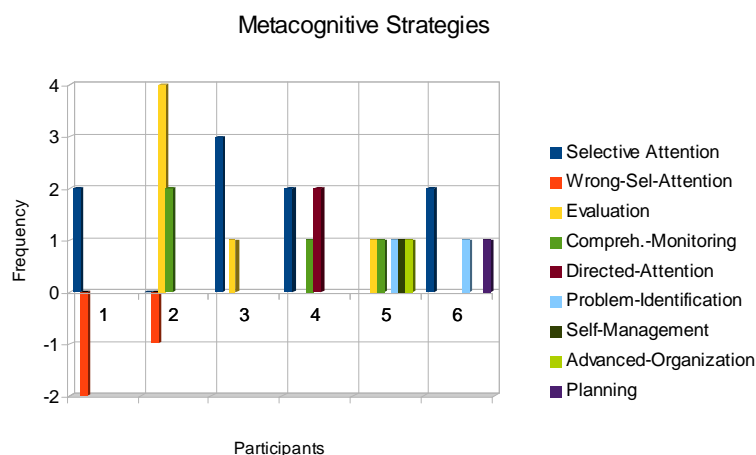Figure 1. Cognitive strategy patterns of both genders.

Figure 2. Metacognitive strategy patterns of both

A quantitative analysis shows significant differences in strategy patterns in male and female learners. Although subject 1 appeared to be the most skilled female listener with a moderate range of cognitive strategies (inferencing, linguistic inferencing, elaboration, repetition) and a limited range of metacognitive strategies (selective attention), she could not achieve complete understanding of the listening test. In fact, a qualitative analysis of her verbal protocols suggests that she failed to grasp specific information about a murder weapon; moreover, she did not understand the circumstances under which one of the characters was murdered in the radio drama that the participants listened to during the data collection sessions. It is interesting to note that the frequency of wrong inferencing and wrong elaboration account for her inability to fully comprehend the listening text.

On the other hand, subject 6 not only became the most skilled male listener, but also outperformed the most skilled girl, whose listening profile is discussed above, thus emerging as the most effective listener of the sample. Subject 6 reported an orchestration of cognitive strategies (inferencing, repetition, elaboration) and metacognitive strategies (planning, selective attention, problem identification). A qualitative analysis indicates that in contrast to Subject 1, Subject 6 never made wrong inferences, and in addition, he identified his use of deduction, a strategy categorized as inferencing in Vandergrift's taxonomy. It is also worth mentioning that Subject 6 achieved complete understanding of the listening text since he came to the right conclusions about the murder case.

In agreement with Vandergrift (2003), the less skilled listeners appeared to be engaged in bottom up processing as suggested by subject 5 who reported translation while listening. His strategic behavior did not allow him to direct his attentional resources to elaborate, to make correct inferences, or to use world knowledge efficiently. Similarly to Vandergrift (2003), although less skilled listeners in the present study reported inferencing and elaboration, their strategies were not as qualitatively good as those strategies reported by more skilled listeners. Contrastively, the most skilled listener (subject 6) used bottom-up and top-down processes interactively, and approached the listening activity by means of good quality inferencing. The most significant difference between subject 6 and the rest of the participants was in the accuracy and flexibility that the former subject showed in his use of world knowledge.

Conclusion

Although the results obtained in this study cannot be generalized, they are indicative of the listening strategy patterns of more skilled and less skilled male and female listeners. This work also highlights how most skilled listener combines cognitive and metacognitive strategies that ensure an efficient listening performance. In addition, these findings suggest the need to incorporate a model of listening strategy instruction in secondary schools to improve learners' limited listening comprehension as well as a narrow use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. The implementation of listening strategy training will lead to the growth of the strategic component of learners' listening competence. Therefore, their overall listening competence will increase, and so will their communicative competence. In summary, learners' communicative competence and listening competence will develop hand in hand.

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Literature Circles for Assessment: Two Parallel Experiences

Evaluation in the context of the communicative language teaching and learning

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Abstract

Literature circles for assessment are a joint effort of a small community of inquiry. The presentation will start by characterizing literature circles and briefing their use in EFL classrooms. We will then examine the structure of courses and assessment processes applied. We will also show samples of students' written and oral production. We will finally round up the presentation by discussing the achievements and flaws discovered and the implementation of remedial actions.

The starting point of the present paper is grounded on Daniels' (1994) claim that the old traditions of book clubs and reading discussion groups could be transferred into the classroom. Moreover, we subscribe to Daniels' view of literature circles as strategies for reading where the principles of cooperative learning, independent reading, and group discussion are combined. The concepts aforementioned, together with his argument in favor of literature circles calling for a non prescriptive way of assessing students' progress, were thought provoking enough for us to attempt at exploring its efficacy in language programs as an assessment tool in two different contexts.

Conscious of the fact that Daniels' experience with literature circles was circumscribed to L1 classes, we referred to Furr's (2004) work on the implementation of the concept in EFL settings.

The first experience of literature circles that concerns the present paper took place at a private language institute in Buenos Aires. LC were applied to two groups of adult advanced students as part of an annual scheme of oral assessment. During the first term of the year, students were asked to prepare a two-minute oral presentation on a topic covered in their coursebooks. They were assessed by their teacher and an assessor and were given feedback on Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency. They were then asked to improve on this version and were assessed again by the end of the term. Assessment was focused on a comparison between the first and second renderings of the task, mainly around the issues provided in feedback (González, 2010).

During the second term, these students were assessed on their oral production but in a setting that demanded group interaction along the lines of the social description of skills in ALTE Level 4: "CAN keep up conversations of a casual nature for an extended period of time and discuss abstract/cultural topics with a good degree of fluency and range of expression", and level 5 "CAN talk about complex or sensitive issues without awkwardness". (ALTE Can Do Project) Group discussions were performed on the novels being read that term: Paul Auster's *Oracle Night* and Daniel Wallace's *The Big Fish*. Both works offered a rich ground for exchange of impressions and interpretations.

In order to provide an organization for the discussion -both for teachers who were performing the task for the first time, as well as the students- the roles set by Mark Furr in Oxford Reading Circles were applied without eliminating any despite the fact that level of production per role could be foreseen as variable.

Group discussions were performed twice, the first time when the students had covered half of the novel, and then after the novel had been finished. Students were recorded and notes were taken down by both the teacher and assessor to provide feedback.

The foreseen differential performance due to role distribution was confirmed on the basis of time of production. Students in the role of discussion leader and summarizer covered around 70% of the allotted time while students in the role of connectors, word experts and culture experts had shorter and poorer participations.

The implementation of reading circles was deemed useful in general terms even though it was decided that roles should be limited in the future if LC were to be used as a stable assessment tool.

The results were then shared with our colleague in the bilingual primary school, in particular the findings on weakness of design and implementation.

The second experience was carried out in 6th and 7th forms at a bilingual school. In this case, LC were applied to six groups of 20 students as part of oral assessment within the Literacy Programme that the school held. This Literacy Programme aimed at guiding students to become active readers; promoting student's reading habits and enabling them to communicate accurately and creatively in writing and

oral skills. As a result, the reading specialist selected three authentic novels for each form which were assessed by means of three tasks per novel: a task at home, a task in class and a literature circle. Sustained silent reading was encouraged once a week at the school library with the reading specialist while students took down notes, consulted and completed their tasks.

The literature circle was applied to the last part of each novel in the following way: students were given role sheets and started completing them in class. After three classes of reading and note taking, class time was devoted to the actual performance of the literature circle. The reading specialist monitored students' work, assigned roles and assessed actual performance in the literature circle. In this opportunity, five literature circle role sheets adapted from Furr's (2004) work were the tools given to students and great consideration was given to their design after listening to the first experience. During the LC, the reading specialist acted as a facilitator rather than an instructor and students interacted among themselves and shared their findings with the members of the group.

Assessment was performed by observing students' interactions and recording the literature circle. The reading specialist prepared a rubric to complete for each role in sixth and seventh forms. Students also had a self assessment checklist to complete after the literature circle, adapted according to their age. By doing this, each student read the last part of the novel from a different perspective and prepared a role sheet which was fairly simple. When the literature circle was carried out, those role sheets were combined in a discussion group which allowed students to engage in a complex analysis.

The experience was enriching to both students and the reading specialist. Most of the students prepared their role sheets and were ready to discuss the last part of the novel and share their opinions. As it can be seen, the flaws detected in the first experience were considered in the second one and thus changes in the design of the role sheets and implementation were done.

We both found literature circles to be an alternative tool for assessment, where students were provided with a setting that allowed for interaction, where the possibility of repetition of the task helped build predictability and self=assuredness.

The following chart summarizes both experiences:

CONCEPTS	ADULTS	CHILDREN
Setting/context	Private Language School	Bilingual School
Students' age	20-40	11-12
Language level	Advanced (C1)	Pre-intermediate (B1)
Course description	General language teaching program from A1 to C2, subdivided into 16-one-term courses. Courses belonging to C1 and C2 are assessed through portfolio. In the first term, individual sustained speech is assessed while in the second term group discussion is assessed.	Sustained silent reading once a week at the school library with the reading specialist. Project covers 4th to 7th forms. Literature circles only used in 6th and 7th.
Titles used in the Project	*Oracle Night* *The Big Fish*	*The Mystery of the Dead Man's Curve* *The Secret Garden* *Dinah Forever* *Island* *Bridge to Terabithia* *The Secret City*
Global Assessment Scheme for the course	Portfolio consisting of four written assignments and two oral discussions during the term with an external assessor.	Independent reading of three novels assessed by means of three different tasks per novel: task at home, task in class, literature circle
Internal structure of literature circle as assessment tool	In the term where group discussion participation is assessed, students are asked to read the novel. Reading is planned in parts and first literature circle is	Literature circle is applied to last part of the novel. Sts are given the handouts and start completing them in class. After three classes of reading

	used by the middle of the book and, second, when the novel has been finished. Preliminary discussions are led by the course teacher, who is also in charge of assigning roles for LC. Supervisor acts as assessor on given dates.	and note taking, class time is devoted to the actual performance of the reading circle. Reading specialist monitors students' work, assigns roles and assesses actual performance in LC.
Instruments	Adapted instructions from OUP's literature circles	Especially prepared Handouts

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The prologues to Shakespeare's plays. Do they "make all well"?

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Prologue: *For us and for our tragedy,*
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.
Hamlet: *Is this a prologue or the posy of a ring?*
William Shakespeare

Abstract

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*,   Bottom claims that prologues "make all well". Though the character is no scholarly authority, his words seem worthy of attention. Hence the focus of this presentation: to explore the prefatory texts Shakespeare appended to his plays in order to draw attention to their features and functions as well as to interpret them in the light of the English dramatic tradition and the conventions of the Elizabethan stage.

Prologue

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Bottom highlights the importance of prologues:

> […] I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say we will do no harm with our swords , and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: this will put them out of fear. (III.i. 17-23)

Though this character is no scholarly authority, his words seem worthy of attention for they trigger questions concerning Shakespeare's prologues. Hence the aim of this presentation is to explore the six prefatory texts he appended to his plays in order to determine their features and functions as well as to interpret them in the light of the English dramatic tradition and the conventions of the Elizabethan stage.

However, before considering the Bard's texts some general remarks about the prologue as a genre seem to be in order. A gradual narrowing of focus will lead us to consider the use of prologues in the field of literature in general, with special reference to those appended to drama to end up with considerations about their presence in the English dramatic tradition.

The Prologue as a genre

Publications of different sorts -collections of essays, textbooks, treatises, dictionaries, journals, plays, novels, anthologies - are often preceded by preliminary texts entitled *prologue*, *preface*, *foreword*, or *introduction.* Dictionary meanings today highlight one semantic feature common to these parasynonyms: initial position. Dictionaries also point out preference for the use of the term *prologue* in the field of literature. But slight differences between these lexical items emerge, as Derrida (2007) and Genette (1997) argue, especially when two o more of these preliminary texts share the same context.

This type of opening piece that we find appended to different kinds of discourses is one of the various elements that may form the paratext. Prologues have a long standing tradition in both non-literary and literary contexts and their form, function and status have been constantly changing depending on period, author and genre. But in spite of this heterogeneity, some regularities confer a certain degree of stability to the genre. Whether authorial, editorial, or written by a delegate, prologues are metatextual, peripheral and ancillary texts, usually, put to serve more than one function. Numerous prologues provide information: they throw light on purpose, content, author, sources, editions. Prefatory texts appended to compilations, series, or collections confer cohesion to the set of texts they precede, whereas other preliminary texts provide one or more critical views thus acquiring a strong interpretative function. Another recurrent function which is characteristic of editorial prologues is to cater for a wide readership. .

Because of the scope of this presentation and due to the fact that we are mainly interested in getting an insight into the reasons why our author included prologues to some of his works, when turning to literature we focus on authorial prologues exclusively. In this field, the prologue seems to "smell as

sweet by any other name", without a name, or under sophisticated titles. A few examples may help illustrate the point: *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales*, *Preface to the 1855 Edition of Leaves of Grass*, *Preface to Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*. More recently, Michael Cunninghan uses the term *prologue* in *The Hours* and Kurt Vonnegut uses *Introduction* and *Editor's Note* to label his prefatory texts to *Mother Night*. Harriet Scott Chessman does not use a label for her prologue to *Lydia Cassatt Reading the Morning Paper* whereas Johnathan Swift appealed to two prologues which he labelled *A Letter from Captain Gulliver to his Cousin Sympson* and *The Publisher to the Reader*, and Walt Whitman coined a memorable title for one of his prefaces: *A Backward Glance o'er Travelled Roads*.

At first sight prologues to narrative fiction have a strong family resemblance to other prologues: they are liminal, ancillary, metatextual. However, they differ in the type of information they provide and have a new illocutionary dimension. In fact, they usually orient their informative function to make text genre clear and to introduce one or more characters before the story proper starts (Balbi & Lothringer 2009). This manoeuvre aims at blurring the distinction between fact and fiction and turns the prologue into a command or, if you prefer, a piece of advice from author to reader to suspend disbelief.

It is important now that we zoom in on prologues to dramatic texts and that we clarify at the outset two points. First, we should establish the distinction between two types of prologues whose prevalence has varied across time: those not aimed at performance but meant to be read and those meant for stage presentation or representation. Shaw's long prologues or Tenessee Williams's are instances of the first type, while famous among those of the second type are Marlowe's, Ben Johnson's. Our focus is on Shakespeare's prologues which were written to be performed at the Globe during the Elizabethan period.

A second point needing clarification concerns the different manifestations of 'prologue'. As Bruster and Weiman (2004:1) note

By 'prologue' we refer to a multifaced phenomenon and term that operates as text,   actor and performance, and whose manifestations include

- the scripts for and textual traces of introductory performances that survive in printed playtexts and in other sources […]
- the costumed actor who introduced plays in the theatres of Shakespeare's day; and
- the performance of those theatrical introductions.

Because our source of information is textual, we explore Shakespeare's prologues as text rather than as actor or performance. .

The English dramatic tradition and the prologues to Shakespeare's plays

If, as Genette (1997: 8) points out, *every context serves as a paratext*, we should consider the historical context where Shakespeare's production flourished. The use of a prologue, a tradition inherited from ancient Greece and Rome, was common in English drama in the 16th and 17th centuries. Both *Ralph Roister Doister* (1577(?), acted *c* 1547), usually known as the first English comedy, and *Gorbuduc*, (1565, acted 1562), a definite attempt to initiate English tragedy in strict conformity to the Senecan model are preceded by prefatory texts. In the comedy, a prologue clearly sets out subject, intention and moral aim, thus complying with the requirements of the classical tradition; whereas the authors of Gorboduc appealed to dumb shows to introduce the acts and appended a chorus with a strong summarizing function at the end of each act.

In their inquiry to determine the popularity of prologues between 1560 and 1639, a period roughly corresponding to the rise of the commercial theatres and their closing, Bruster and Weimann (2004: 4) provide significant figures and interesting considerations:

> For the period in questions, then, figures provided by the *Index* suggest that something like 40 per cent of the surviving playtexts feature a prologue.
> We should notice, though, that this number varies significantly over time: […] a high of 64 percent of surviving plays originally performed from 1580 to 1589 have prologues in contrast with a low of 31 per cent of surviving plays performed from 1590 to 1599. […] It seems no coincidence that the decade with an apparently low number of prologues also sponsored a number of remarks, in and out of plays, about the patent artificiality (and apparently unfashionable nature) of prologues.

Shakespeare used prefaces sparingly: he wrote thirty eight plays[17] and included prologues on six occasions only[18]. In table 1, relevant features and functions of the six prologues have been summarized.

Shakespeare's Prologues: Features and Functions

PLAY[19] / PROLOGUE	MEDIUM	LINE NUMBER	ADDRESSER	FUNCTION
Romeo and Juliet (Tragedy 1595-96)	Sonnet	14	Chorus	Inform Promise Demand
The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth (History Play 1598)	Rhyming couplets	32	Rumour (The presenter)	Inform Demand
The Life of King Henry the Fifth (History Play 1599)	Blank Verse	34	Chorus	Inform Demand Apologize
Troilus and Cressida (History Play 1601-2)	Blank Verse	31	Prologue	Inform Demand
Pericles (History Play 1607-8)	Rhyming couplets	42	Gower (as Chorus)	Inform Demand
The Famous History of the Life of King Henry the Eighth (History Play 1612-13)	Rhyming couplets	32	Prologue	Inform Demand

TABLE 1

Following the fashion of his day, Shakespeare departed from the classical tradition which demanded the presence of a group of performers for the chorus or prologue. The opening parts of his dramatic

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[17] The two plays attributed to him and Fletcher – *Cardenio* (now lost) and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* – have not been included in this count.
[18] I focus my attention on the texts placed at the beginning of plays exclusively and do not consider the prologues to plays or dumb shows within plays for they would involve other levels of analysis.
[19] Though deficient in delicacy, we have maintained the first categories established by Heminge and Condell in the 1623 folio since we are not discussing the genre of Shakespeare's plays and dates of composition correspond to the ones provided by Blakemore Evans, G. and Tobin, J.J.M.(1997).

texts are to be voiced by a single performer not invested with character status and whose function is to deliver these preliminary speeches which are not meant for another character but for the audience. The various labels used to identify this prefatory role are not included in the *dramatis personae*, an absence which reinforces its extradiegetic position. In the light of these characteristics, Shakespeare's prefatory texts share features with the *aside* which, according to Pavis (1998: 30)

> […] reduces the semantic context to that of a single character; indicates the character's true intention or opinion, so that the spectator knows what is going on and can judge the situation on a well-informed basis.

In this respect brief consideration of those aspects of "the situation" Shakespeare was interested in highlighting appears as necessary. Concerning prologue functions, the prevailing ones are to inform and to involve the audience. As for the first function, the amount and type of information provided varies from prologue to prologue. Thus we find quite complete reference to plot, setting and character in *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Second Part of King Henry the Fourth*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Pericles* and genre is anticipated in some of the plays:

> […]
> From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
> Where civil blood makes evil hands unclean,
> From the fatal loins of these two foes
> A pair of star-crossed lovers take their lives;
> Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
> Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
>
> (*Romeo and Juliet* 3-8)

If the prologues are rich in information about the plays themselves, they are also valuable for their references to performance and the material conditions of the theatres. Two aspects deserve attention. Firstly, there is insistence on the "traffic of the stage" duration, a preoccupation we interpret as prompted by the fact that Shakespeare's plays, as Blakemore Evans (1997: 57) reports, were generally over the average length required by the book-keeper. Secondly, the theatre's aspiration at substituting illusion for reality is recurrently questioned. In this respect we find eloquent lines:

> […]Can this cockpit hold
> The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
> Within this wooden O the very casques
> That did affright the air at Agincourt ?
>
> (*The Life of King Henry the Fifth*: 11-14)

In all six prologues Shakespeare makes intensive use of *direct address to the audience devices*: vocatives, imperatives, direct questions. These devices contribute to secure audience attention and involvement in judging the merits of the performance, to signal a desire to please the audience and to break the illusion and fiction of a fourth wall.

> Like or find fault; do as your pleasures are:
> Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war.
>
> (*Troilus and Cressida*: Prologue 30-31)

> To which if you with patient ears attend,
> What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.
>
> (*Romeo and Juliet*: 13-14)

Epilogue

Examining Shakespeare's prologues has helped to spot their outstanding features and their dominant functions. Yet, it has also highlighted two situations that deserve attention and further exploration. The first concerns power relationships, the second hinges on the importance attributed by Shakespeare to prologues.

As pointed out in the preceding sections, all the prologues provide information to guide the audience so that it becomes fully aware of the distinction fact-fiction. They also aim at keeping attention directed to a thematic end because the story itself is considered complex. Thus, the prologues instantiate an asymmetrical dyad and indicate an interaction of this type: "As the Prologue I am an expert and am empowered to instruct you about the course of action to follow and the way in which you should interpret the play". But the prologues also construct another asymmetrical dyad when they beg attention or humbly promise to make efforts to please the audience. Now the members of the audience are, apparently, the ones in power. Nevertheless we cannot help putting a question related to this promise: is it a sincere compromise to please the audience or is it rather simply a time-saving dramatic device used as a shortcut by which the dramatist saves time? This instability of power relationships is probably best understood when the conditions of the public theatres for which Shakespeare wrote are brought to the fore. A platform stage without either scenery or curtain, protruding into the pit and surrounded on three sides by a group of boisterous standing spectators who paid for admittance and were not well-versed in history or in classical matters seem to account for the need to coach the audience, for the demand of attention and the promise to please the audience.

If we move back to the beginning and consider Bottom's argument about the importance of prologues, then we cannot help asking ourselves about the significance attributed by Shakespeare to them. In an age when plenty of other Elizabethan and Jacobean dramatists used prologues extensively and, simultaneously, some voices were highly critical of the device, Shakespeare was sparing in his use and even seemed to shy away from them. This low number, the fact that his prologues are not appended to second parts, that the plays they precede are varied in genre and belong to different periods of his career seem to suggest that Shakespeare wanted to indicate that playwrights could dispense with the prologue. So at this point we may ask ourselves if the Bard agreed with Bottom on the power of prologues to "make all well" or if he thought with Hamlet that a prologue was simply "a posy of a ring".

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Literature in Teacher Education: modelling e-competencies
(A Room of One's Own Presentation)

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Abstract
This paper examines the e-competencies framework proposed by Cobo Romaní (2009), as well as SITE and UNESCO guidelines for ICT Teacher Education. It then introduces the findings of a questionnaire administered to some pre-service Teacher Education students in Rosario, regarding the extent and characteristics of their online activity. Finally, it reviews the work implemented in Literature classes, discussing its impact to model effective development of e-competencies in new learning environments

Literature in Teacher Education: modelling e-competencies
Education today: theoretical guidelines
The changes in access to information and generation of knowledge associated with the developments in technology have revolutionized the world of work and prompted agencies worldwide to set out the requirements education should meet in our times.

The *Partnership for 21st Century Skills*, for example, organises the skills, knowledge and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life into the *Framework for 21st Century Learning* (2009), which brings together the following components, interconnected in the teaching and learning processes

- ✓ core subjects and 21st century themes
- ✓ learning and innovation skills
- ✓ life and career skills
- ✓ information, media and technology skills

Similarly, the *Education Council* (*European Commission* 2007)[20] identifies "eight key competences", which are considered to interlock, with a number of themes that are applied throughout them, such as critical thinking, creativity, initiative, problem-solving, risk assessment, and decision-taking.

- ✓ communication in the mother tongue
- ✓ communication in foreign languages
- ✓ mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
- ✓ learning to learn
- ✓ social and civic competences
- ✓ sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
- ✓ cultural awareness and expression
- ✓ digital competence

Cobo Romaní (2009) proposes the term e-competencies to include "a set of capabilities, skills and abilities to exploit tacit and explicit knowledge, enhanced by the utilisation of digital technologies and the strategic use of information", thus embracing cognitive abilities and technical proficiencies. Beyond the use of any specific ICT, they involve "the proficient use of information and the application of knowledge to work individually and collaboratively in changing contexts" and are constituted by the interaction of e-awareness, technological literacy, informational literacy, digital literacy and media literacy, which are characterized as follows.

E-awareness concerns the "capability to understand and adopt the lifelong-learning paradigm and the use of ICTs as a medium to facilitate individual or collective development of knowledge, skills and new capabilities in both social and professional life" and also includes legal and ethical behaviour

Technological literacy refers to the "ability to interact with hardware and software, as well as productivity applications, communication devices and management applications" It also "embraces understanding of the opportunities and potential risks of the Internet and communications via electronic media for activities such as networking, sharing information, collaborating, etc."

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[20] The European Commision uses the term competence rather than competency, which has been respected in this paper.

Informational literacy "means the ability to read with meaning, to understand critically and - importantly – to evaluate, connect and integrate different information, data, knowledge and other sources."

Digital literacy involves "using technology for information and knowledge in order to access, retrieve, store, organise, manage, synthesise, integrate, present, share, exchange and communicate in multiple formats, either textual or multimedia."

Media literacy relates to "the comprehension of how the media works, how it is organised, how it is evolving towards new formats, platforms and ways of communication and interaction and, finally, the understanding of how and why it produces meaning (constructs reality) as well as the social, legal, economic and political implications."

The development of e-competencies, Cobo argues, needs to be underpinned by a transformation of the teaching and learning paradigm. We need to re-think the curriculum, value informal learning, devise innovative and flexible forms of assessment, among other steps, and while the scope of such a project is multidimensional and concerns policy-making, he recommends a bottom-up approach in which the consideration of teachers and students views is paramount.

It can be seen that Cobo's framework, though taking ICT competency as a starting point, integrates most of the competencies outlined both in the *Framework for 21st Century Learning* and in the *European Commission*'s report. Technology is no longer perceived as either content or tool, but as a driver for change in the teaching-learning process that will bring about a movement "from teacher-centred, lecture-based instruction to student centred, interactive learning environments" (Khvilon & Patru, 2002).

Clearly, pre-service teacher education plays a crucial role to achieve this goal. *The Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education* (Thompson et al, 1998) recommends that, in order to develop effective ICT teacher education, technology should be introduced in context and infused into the entire teacher education programme, and that students should experience innovative technology-supported learning environments in their teacher education programme.

As a framework for teacher knowledge for technology integration, Mishra and Koehler (2007) put forward the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) model, which has three main components: Content, Pedagogy, and Technology, the interactions among which yield Content Knowledge (CT), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), Technological Knowledge (TK), Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), Technological Content Knowledge (TCK), Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK), and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK).

It is our contention that effective teacher education for the 21st century should not only foster the students' development of e-competencies, but also model the use of learning environments supported by technology, guided by the TPCK model.

Literature in Teacher Education: putting theory into practice

Given that a number of studies challenge the scientific validity of the popular labelling as "digital natives" of those who were born in the 1980's and onwards (e.g. Bennett, Maton & Kervin, 2008), and suggest that even if young people are technologically savvy this "does not necessarily mean they want to use these technologies constantly and in all the contexts of their lives" (e.g. Kennedy et al, 2009), I decided to start the 2011 academic year by administering a survey via a Google form to my 2nd and 4th year Literature students in two EFL Teacher Education programmes in Rosario. (see full questionnaire in Appendix 1). A total of 36 students (all female) responded, 24 of them under 25 years old, and 12 aged 26 or over. On the whole no significant differences were observed between these two age groups or between state and private institutions, so findings will be reported for the total of respondents.

It can be seen that their amount of online activity (How much time do you spend online?) justifies classifying most of the students as digital natives.

	Less than one hour a week	Between 2 and 5 hours per week	Between 6 and 10 hours a week	More than 10 hours a week
Frequency of Internet access	4	19	10	3

However, their traditional use of the web (What do you do online?) contradicts that assumption, since the most frequent activities are email interaction, downloading materials and academic work.

	mails	Games	ook for Info. - personal	ook for info - school	ead (known people)	ead unknown people	rite (personal)	rite (school)	ownload	pload (others)	pload (own)	ampus
Il the time	5			4					0			
ften	8		0	7	5		0	7	5			1
times		4			5	5	7	3	1		3	
ever		8								8	9	

The last aspect of the survey concerned their use of Web 2.0 technologies. With the aim of obtaining concrete responses, actual tools or service providers were included in the options rather than Web 2.0 activities such as blogging or podcasting. Not surprisingly, collaborative writing tools (associated with academic work) were used to a certain extent, while blogging and social bookmarking platforms were virtually unknown. Predictably, though, the social network Facebook appeared as a really popular choice.

	PBW orks/ Pbwiki	Wik ispaces	Go ogle Docs
I'm a frequent user to do things myself	1	2	7
I'm a frequent user to check what others do	0	3	3
Used it occasionally	3	8	12
Heard about it but never used it	4	12	10
Never heard about it	28	11	4

	Bl ogger	Po sterous	Wo rdpress	Fa cebook	T witter	De licious	Dii go
I'm a frequent user to do things myself	1	0	0	18	2	0	0
I'm a frequent user to check what others do	0	0	1	9	3	0	0
Used it occasionally	7	1	0	4	4	2	0
Heard about it but never used it	18	3	3	5	26	6	6
Never heard about it	10	32	32	0	1	28	30

Other services included in the options regarded podcasting and digital storytelling (*Voki, Voicethread, Podomatic, Podbean, BBC Podcasts, Itunes, Xtranormal, ToonDoo*) but of these only *BBC podcasts* had been used occasionally – probably also academically.

The results showed that these students did not fit the stereotype of the "digital native", whose characteristics include a high level of digital aptitude, a culture of sharing information and literacy in multiple media. It was therefore challenging to model learning in new environments for them to progress in the development of e-competencies.

I have been using Social Networking Sites (SNS) since 2009 (see Amez 2009 and 2010 for a description of these experiences) in addition to the institutional VLE. In 2011 I set up a space for the classes mentioned on the free SNS *Spruz*, which provides a moderately customisable network in terms of appearance, where subgroups can be set up, and all members' blogs are brought together. In addition, members can upload and embed photos, embed videos from social sites (uploading of videos is not allowed), and personalise their pages in terms of features and colours, though not of design.

On the *Spruz* homepage I provided the RSS feed for the *Delicious* tag chosen for each subject, and on my personal page included links to my *Twitter* and *Goodreads* (social book sharing site) account. I created a blog category for topics related to Technological Knowledge and Technological Content Knowledge, available from the beginning of the year. The posts combined personal tips with videos available online on the following issues*: Looking for and assessing information online, Tagging and social bookmarking, Netiquette, Useful Web 2.0 tools and Twitter tips.* I also put together some tutorials on Blogging on *Spruz* in particular (adding links, images and videos). Students were invited to read them at the start, and later directed to the ones required to complete a certain task. Tutorials for other tools were made available when necessary to carry out an activity.

Reading journals were the focus of the first term, and instructions were provided to tag and categorise the compulsory posts. In the case of 2nd year, prediction activities were made in a collective *VoiceThread*, the input for which was a series of covers for *The Great Gatsby* and a reader's review of the novel on *Goodreads*; the journal was completed through "traditional" personal posts. In the case of 4th year, four personal posts were assigned, with the invitation to make one of the posts a podcast on *Audioboo* and embed it in their blog, or to tweet part of their reading process in lieu of a post; a *Photovisi* collage of *To the Lighthouse* covers was the input for the initial post. The students were encouraged to read and comment on other journals.

All classes participated separately in some forums in their VLE, which required them to compare some theoretical materials with a literary text. Students kept a record of the activities they carried out by filling in a collaborative spreadsheet on Google docs. In the second term, in addition to forums and another journal, activities will include digital storytelling and social bookmarking on *Diigo*.

Although the year is in progress at the time of writing this paper, and no final assessment of or by the students has been made, I am extremely pleased with the results so far. A number of students chose to do one of the optional activities (Twitter was the most popular), and most of them took pains to look for, select, integrate, produce and share materials in multiple formats, and to interact among themselves.

In these classes, innovative technology-supported learning environments have been modelled in the context of one subject, where, through the application of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge, teachers-to-be have developed a number of e-competencies. It is to be hoped this experience will encourage them, on graduation, to make their own classrooms student centred, interactive learning environments.

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Appendix 1

My online activity

Could you please fill in this form asap? It will help me plan the work for the year.

* Required

Class *

[2nd year]

Institution *

[IES "Olga Cossettini"]

Age *

[ ]

How much time do you spend online? *

- ○ Less than one hour a week
- ○ Between 2 and 5 hours a week
- ○ Between 6 and 10 hours a week
- ○ More than 10 hours a week

What do you do online? *

	Never	Sometimes	Often	All the time
Check and write emails	○	○	○	○
Play games	○	○	○	○
Look for information (personal reasons)	○	○	○	○
Look for information (school work)	○	○	○	○
Read material published by people I know	○	○	○	○
Read material published by people I don't know	○	○	○	○
Write (personal reasons)	○	○	○	○
Write (school work)	○	○	○	○
Download material	○	○	○	○
Upload material created by others	○	○	○	○
Upload my own material	○	○	○	○
Use the institutional campus	○	○	○	○

Do you know the following? *

Backdate your answer to March (i.e. before our first class together)

	Never heard about it	Heard about it but never used it	Used it occasionally	I'm a frequent user to check what others do	I'm a frequent user to do things myself
Facebook	○	○	○	○	○
Twitter	○	○	○	○	○
Blogger	○	○	○	○	○
Posterous	○	○	○	○	○
Wordpress	○	○	○	○	○
Delicious	○	○	○	○	○
Diigo	○	○	○	○	○
Voki	○	○	○	○	○
Voicethread	○	○	○	○	○
Podomatic	○	○	○	○	○
Podbean	○	○	○	○	○
BBC Podcasts	○	○	○	○	○
ITunes	○	○	○	○	○
Xtranormal	○	○	○	○	○
ToonDoo	○	○	○	○	○
PBWorks/PBwiki	○	○	○	○	○
Wikispaces	○	○	○	○	○
Google Docs	○	○	○	○	○

First name (optional)

This is an optional response

[ ]

[Submit]

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Combining CLT and CALL in the English Language II Classroom

Sub-theme: The Role of TICs in the Communicative Classroom

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Abstract

The purpose of this presentation is to show how we have blended Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT); and how we have incorporated this combination into our English Language II classes. We will show how through the use of different CALL devices it is possible to engage our students in activities that comply with the three main principles of (CLT); namely, the communication principle, the task principle and the meaningfulness principle.

Introduction

Harmer (2007) states that one problem when trying to define Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is that its meaning and the way in which its principles (the communication principle, the task principle and the meaningfulness principle) can be applied are not clearly defined (p.69). However, one major strand that has been central to CLT since its beginnings is that if students are involved in meaning-focused communicative tasks, then they can develop what Hymes (1972) has termed "communicative competence". Nowadays, t*he rapidly growing advances in Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) have led to novel and multiple ways in which language teaching and learning can be carried out (Beatty, 2003, p.1).* In fact, thanks to the use of Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) it is possible to make use of different Internet materials and *multimedia resources that can encourage interaction and can prompt our students to use their knowledge of English to carry out* communicative and meaningful tasks. In this session, we will show how we have made use of CALL devices to engage English Language II students of the School of Languages, National University of Cordoba (UNC), in different communicative activities related to a subtopic of the unit 'Work', which is the first unit of the subject. First, we will refer to different CALL materials, such as the overhead projector, DVDs and audios that have been used in class to foster communication and interaction among students. Second, we will show how we have made use of resources such as forums, wikis and quizzes available in the Virtual Classroom on Moodle to design online communicative activities. Finally, we will refer to the implications of such activities for both, English Language teaching and learning.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The advent of CLT has brought about a huge shift in our conception of the teaching and the learning of foreign languages, causing important changes in the way we teach, and consequently, in the way our students learn. This approach focuses on the importance of language functions as language is seen as a means of expressing functional meaning and as a way of catering for speakers' communicational needs. The teaching of language forms, grammar and vocabulary is combined with the training on how to use these language forms "in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes" (Harmer, 2001, p.84). Moreover, exposure is considered vital. The more opportunities students have to be exposed to the language, the better their knowledge and skills development will be.

The goal of language teaching in CLT is to develop Hymes' (1972) "communicative competence". This theory views languages in relation to communication and culture and it is "a definition of what a speaker needs to know in order to be communicatively competent in a speech community" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.159). Canale & Swain (1980) have offered a more pedagogical analysis of communicative competence. They claim that for students to achieve communicative competence they need to master four different areas: 1) Linguistic competence: the focus is on sentence-level language with attention to form (i.e., the grammar, the phonology, the lexicon of the L2, etc.); 2) Discourse competence: the focus is on discourse above the level of the sentence (i.e., language organization, rhetorical markers, ways of showing relationships in extended oral and written texts, etc.); 3) Sociolinguistic competence: The focus is on manipulating language as appropriate to a specific context (i.e., situation, participants, roles, shared knowledge, etc.); 4) Strategic competence: The focus is on compensating for weaknesses in any of the other three competence areas (i.e., manipulating language as necessary to cope with breakdowns in communication, to repair miscommunication, etc.). Taking this goal into account, supporters of CLT claim that, in order to achieve communicate competence, second language learners need to have the opportunity to 'take part in meaningful

communicative interaction with highly competent speakers of the language, i.e. to respond to genuine communicative needs in realistic second language situations' (Canale & Swain, 1980, p.27). Thus, activities in CLT should be realistic enough so that students get really involved in the activity since "plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty opportunities to use it are vitally important for a student's development of knowledge and skill (Harmer, 2007, p.69).This is why the most typical activities in CLT are the ones which encourage communication, such as games, puzzles, role-plays, information gap activities and surveys. Littlewood (1981) distinguishes between "functional communication activities" and "social interaction activities". The former includes tasks such as "comparing sets of pictures and noting similarities and differences, working out a likely sequence of events in a set of pictures, discovering missing features in a map or picture […] and giving instructions […]" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.166). The latter refers to activities that include "conversation and discussion sessions, dialogues and role plays, simulations, skits, improvisations and debates" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.166). What these activities have in common is that they all create a desire to communicate and a meaningful purpose for communicating, which makes them very motivating because, instead of thinking about the language forms, students are worried about content, about communicating successfully.

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)
In the 1980s, while CLT was becoming part of mainstream language teaching, different educational technologies started to be applied in the field of language teaching. This led to the development of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), a term coined by the interested participants in the 1983 TESOL convention in Toronto. Beatty (2003), one of the authorities in the field, defines CALL as 'any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her languages' (p.7) whereas Chapelle (2005), another leading authority on computer-assisted language instruction, defines CALL as 'the broad range of activities associated with technology and language learning' (in Brown, 2007, p.200).
CALL is employed in and out of the classroom. "Materials for CALL can include those which are purpose-made for language learning and those which adapt existing computer-based materials, video and other materials" (Beatty, 2003, p.8). In either case, the introduction of CALL materials in the language class has aided learning in multiple ways. Research has showed that computers are needed in the language classroom and that CALL "can substantially improve achievement as compared with traditional instruction" (Meich, Nave & Mosteller, 1996 in Beatty 2003*).*
At the moment, much research is studying the advantages and disadvantages of computers in providing communicative tasks which foster learning. In fact, different technological devices such as video, television, audio CDs, the Internet and computer software can aid language teachers pursue communicative goals in the classroom. Brown (2007) points out that CALL materials are particularly useful for nonnative-speaking teachers since a wide array of authentic written and oral texts are available at the touch of a key. Moreover, CALL materials have moved from a behaviourist instructional design to a constructivist design since they "have gone from an emphasis on basic textual gap-filling tasks and simple programming exercises to interactive multimedia presentations with sound, animation and motion video" (Beatty, 2003, p.11). These advances in Information Technology have led to the introduction of typical communicative activities such as online quizzes, puzzles and games. Another breakthrough related to CLT and CALL has been the introduction of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). CMC refers to "communication by email, bulletin boards, chatlines within MOO (Multi-user domains, Object Oriented) environments" (Beatty, 2003, p.62). CMC offers learners different opportunities to interact with others and engage in negotiations of meaning using the second language. CMC together with different CALL resources available in our teaching environments can be used as the means to engage our students in tasks which are meaningful and highly motivating.

CLT and CALL Blended in the English Language II Class
At the School of Languages, National University of Cordoba (UNC), we have made use of a series of CALL devices to engage English Language II students in different communicative activities related to the subtopic "Skills and experience in work" from the unit 'Work', which is the first unit of the subject. The use of the overhead projector, audio CDs, and the Moodle platform have helped us design communicative activities in and out of the classroom.

Overhead projector
The overhead projector has become a very useful tool when teaching large classes at the School of Languages. Thanks to this device it is possible to listen to, watch and even interact with online

multimedia websites in class. When introducing the unit on "Work", for example, we made use of the overhead projector to model set expressions useful when expressing an argument and to show pictures of different people at work. First, students listened to the BBC audio teaching how to present an argument in English taken from www.bbc.learningenglish.com. After listening to the audio, students were asked to check the functional expressions they had written down with the rest of the class. Finally, the chart with expressions from the ELT website was displayed on the screen to make students check and revise the functional language needed for discussions, a typical Language II communicative activity. The overhead projector was also used to make students work in pairs to compare and contrast two pictures from the *Think in English* magazine showing an usher and a clown at work. After some minutes, two students chosen at random were asked to do the task out loud, the rest of the class commented on their classmates' work trying to use the set expressions learned from the BBC activity. Finally, the students were asked to guess the meaning of the verbs "to usher in" and "to clown around" derived from the professions they have just described. This last puzzle prompted an engaging debate among students.

Audio CD
The third activity consisted in a "job quiz": students were asked to listen to five monologues taken from the *Think in English* magazine and guess the unusual job being described. After listening to each monologue, students were asked to share their views with other classmates trying to use the functional expressions to put forward and argument learned at the beginning of the class. Students then listened to the speakers a second time and this time they noted down details about the qualities, qualifications and requirements needed for the job. Finally, students discussed their answers with the teacher and the rest of the class.

Moodle
Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is a 'free, Open Source software package designed using sound pedagogical principles, to help educators create effective online learning communities' (Dougiamas, n.d.). Moodle was created in 2002 by Martin Dougiamas, a WebCT administrator at Curtin University, Australia. Moodle is widely used around the world with more than 50324 platforms in 212 countries.
At the School of Languages, Moodle is becoming more and more popular among teachers of the different subjects. We have discovered that this VLE can be used to foster different language skills and to promote the use of English for communicative purposes. For example, to offer students further practice on the subtopic "Skills and experience in work", we have designed two CLT tasks on the Language II Moodle platform (see Figure 1). First, students have to watch an NTDTV news reports on the "Best Job in the World" featuring Beth Southall starting his job as a "caretaker" of the Great Barrier Reef Island in Australia. Then, by using the Moodle resource *forum*, students have to express their opinion about the job (see Figure 2). Second, depending on their career choice, students have to jointly write a *wiki* either on "Being a teacher of English" or "Being a Translator". In order to carry out this activity, students need to make use of the forum activated for such purpose.

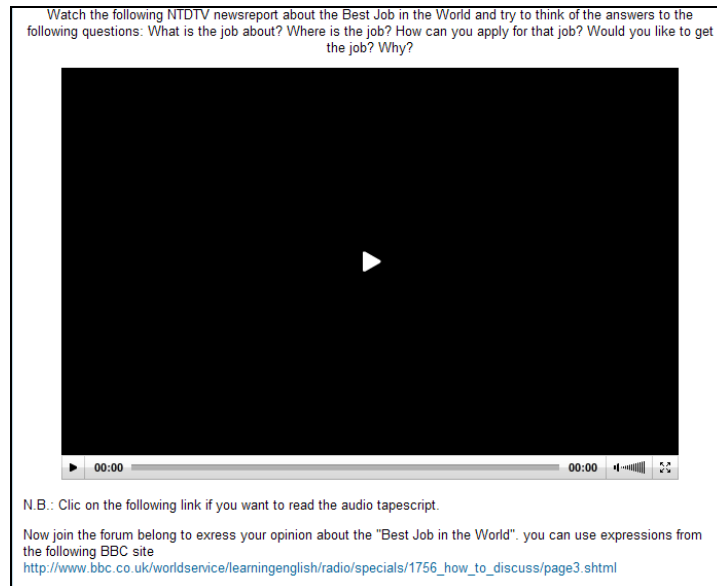Figure 1. Moodle communicative activities on work.

Watch the following NTDTV newsreport about the Best Job in the World and try to think of the answers to the following questions: What is the job about? Where is the job? How can you apply for that job? Would you like to get the job? Why?

N.B.: Clic on the following link if you want to read the audio tapescript.

Now join the forum belong to exress your opinion about the "Best Job in the World". you can use expressions from the following BBC site
http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/radio/specials/1756_how_to_discuss/page3.shtml
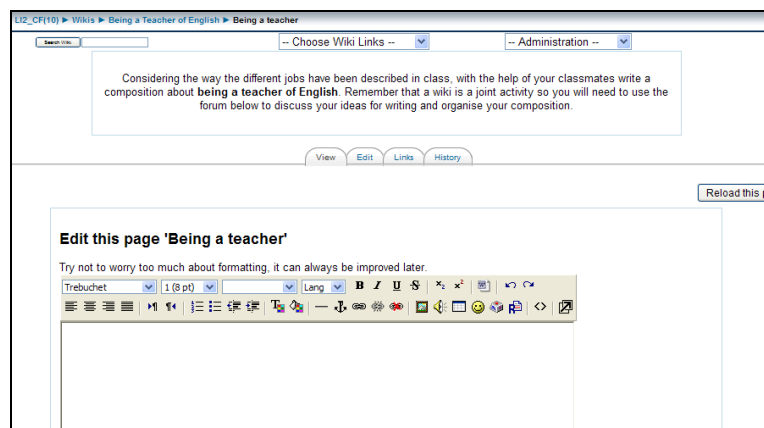
Figure 2. A Moodle forum.

Figure 3. A Moodle wiki

The Teacher's Role

Our role as educators is vital, since we should act as mediators between knowledge and student's learning. In the project described in this paper, the teacher integrates technology-based materials with face-to-face classes so as to introduce the content of the subject, making use of blended learning methodology. Their role in this context should be to support their students' performance and assist learning, not to direct it (Tharp, 1993). The instructor functions as a guide, as a facilitator and a monitor during the students' learning process. Their aim should always be that the student becomes an autonomous and independent learner. One of the most important functions the teacher needs to perform in this virtual classroom is to keep interaction and participation on track by providing clear guidelines and by encouraging the sharing and exchange of ideas. This also involves contributing further knowledge and experience, facilitating harmonious collaboration and checking the students' performance at all times.

The Learner's Role

In the English Language II virtual platform, the student is expected to learn "by doing": trying, making mistakes, and reflecting on and learning from their own mistakes. The students participate actively, since they interact, explore, cooperate and correct themselves and among one another, which makes them feel involved in their own learning process and make them reflect on it. Technological tools make interaction possible and foster learning. All participants share in the learning and the responsibility for furthering discussion. Students bring to the discussion previous knowledge and experiences they have gained through reading, listening, and interaction with others outside the class.

Final Remarks
In this paper we have tried to show how we can apply CLT principles and ideas by using different CALL resources to create communicative and interactive activities in order to help our students improve their language skills. The effectiveness of CALL materials has been widely proved. It is up to us now to introduce these new resources and to make the most out of these new assets in language learning.

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A Communicative Perspective on Teaching the Hypothetical-Real Textual Pattern

Subtheme: Discourse practices and communicative language teaching

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Abstract

We are studying the characteristics and teaching of the Hypothetical-Real pattern which may be identified by its lexico-grammatical constituents. We focus on the use of epistemic modality represented by modal verbs and lexical expressions used to indicate conjectures. In this paper, we describe a technologically-mediated pedagogical intervention to teach the pattern to ESP university students of English I at the F.C.A. (U.N.C). We believe this communicative approach to be operable beyond university or tertiary education levels.

We are presently studying the nature, characteristics and teaching of the Hypothetical-Real pattern. This pattern is signaled (Winter 1977), and may be easily identified, among other constituents, by its characteristic lexico-grammatical constituents. In our study, we focus on the use of epistemic modality conveying possibility, necessity and prediction and represented by the use of modal verbs and some lexical expressions, mainly adjectives, participles and adverbs used to express conjectures or lack of certainty (Halliday 1970, García Gonzálvez 2000). The objective of this paper is to present a pedagogical intervention to teach this textual cultural pattern to ESP university students of English I at the School of Agricultural Sciences (U.N.C.). In our School, English is taught in a forty hour four-month course which is basically an ESP reading comprehension course. Its goals are focused on all the components of communicative competence ——grammatical, discursive, functional and strategic; therefore, we combine the teaching of organizational aspects of language with its pragmatic use in authentic and meaningful situations; in our case, the students' need to read scientific papers. The teaching materials have been especially produced for this purpose. However, given the current student profile as well as the variety of learning environments that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provide and given its many benefits, the chair has decided to use audio-visual tools to maximize the students' exposure to the pattern. This presentation will show both a preliminary plan of a sequence of pedagogical activities designed to enable the students to identify the pattern and to provide some practice for its recognition followed by a presentation class mediated by ICTs following the tenets of the bimodal (reading and video comprehension) approach (Murphy 1996, Delmas et. al 2003). First, the textual pattern will be characterized, then the intervention will be outlined, and finally the presentation class will be analyzed accounting for the use of bimodality and ICTs in this context. We believe this approach could be useful beyond university or tertiary education levels.

Reading comprehension depends, among other factors, on the understanding of textual structure in which propositions combine to form culturally recognizable patterns. According to McCarthy (1991: 161) "finding patterns in texts is a matter of interpretation by the reader, making use of clues and signals provided by the author." These patterns are not easily or intuitively recognized by inexperienced readers who are studying English as a foreign language. This fact motivated our research on textual structure, currently on the Hypothetical-Real Pattern (H-R).

At present, we are teaching this textual cultural pattern to ESP university students taking the English I course at the School of Agricultural Sciences (Universidad Nacional de Córdoba). In our School, English is taught in a forty hour four-month course which is basically a reading comprehension course. The objective of this presentation is to share a research progress report on the recognition of this pattern. First, the textual pattern will be characterized, then the intervention will be outlined, and finally

the presentation class will be analyzed accounting for the use of bimodality, that is, the use of both oral and written texts, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in context.

The Hypothetical-Real pattern belongs in what Hoey (1979, 1983, 2001) refers to as culturally popular textual patterns due to their frequency of occurrence in academic discourse. Several studies have dealt with the characterization of this pattern, for example Winter 's (1974, 1977, 1994 in Coulthard 2001), Williames' (1984 in Hoey 2001), among others.

In the Hypothetical-Real pattern there is a recurrent binary relation between what is known and what is not known, is controversial or could be defined as hearsay or simply as reported. The clause is construed as true, real, in the absence of modality markers, whether lexical or grammatical, or in the presence of evidential linguistic constituents, as for example when the author employs assertive signaling expressions, such as the simple present or past tenses, verbs like "demonstrate", "confirm", "prove" or adverbs like "indisputably", "obviously".

On the other hand, modals or any other signals of suspension of fact (such as second type conditionals, adverbs such as "arguably", "apparently", among others) will be construed as *hypotheticality* of some kind (Winter 1994 ibid), which implies that the real clause is presumed to be either explicit nearby or implicit.

In academic discourse we are concerned with epistemic modality, i.e. with the theoretical possibility of propositions being true or not true (including likelihood and certainty) as indicated by the author's choice of language. Though modality has largely been investigated in connection to oral and written discourse, there is no reference to research related to academic papers in the specific domain of the Agricultural Sciences. Modality is defined by Cameron (2007:75) as the "resource speakers and writers use when they are staking claims to knowledge: it allows them to formulate different kinds of claims (e.g., assertions, opinions, hypotheses, speculations) and indicate how committed they are to those claims."

Our research is based on a corpus of scientific articles of the Agricultural Sciences of approximately 200,000 words which has been analysed both manually and by means of electronic software —— WordSmith Tools (Scott 1999)— in order to determine the frequency of occurrence of the selected lexical elements and to obtain information about their collocation to verify whether the selected items function as signaling devices for the detection of the pattern.

The ultimate goal is to help novice non-native English students discover this pattern. This attempts to add a further perspective to their approach to reading specialized texts: a clause-relational perspective. We have designed a methodological sequence to introduce the pattern and to provide them with enough practice to enhance its detection. The teacher acts as a mediator by drawing the students' attention to both lexical and grammatical signals and to relevant concepts.

The aforementioned pedagogical sequence consists of a pre-test, a presentation class and practice activities and a post-test. Both the presentation class and the practice activities to focus the learners' attention on the learning problem are based on abstracts which were chosen considering that it is in the Abstract and in the Results and Discussion sections of the research article (RA) that the pattern is more frequent (Varttala 2001). The class was mediated by technology following the bimodal approach. We will presently refer to this introductory lesson in detail. We have also submitted a survey to the students to evaluate self-perception of their own progress as well as to assess the efficacy of the teaching intervention.

Pedagogical Intervention

This section will deal with the pedagogical sequence of activities aimed at developing students' ability to identify conjectures and assertions within the frame of the Hypothetical-Real textual pattern.

These activities were presented to a group of 50 students whose proficiency level of English is heterogeneous, although in general they can be said to have a basic command of the language which loosely corresponds to levels A1 and A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. In the last two years, and based on the principles of bimodality (Murphy 1996, Delmas 2003), we have introduced some video-comprehension activities in order to introduce the teaching point and motivate students by using technologically mediated materials. The use of ICTs can help teachers create attractive pedagogical tools which increase students' interest and level of motivation. However, using these technological devices in the class poses a challenge for teachers as it implies both the design and adaptation of materials and their integration to the constructivist conception of teaching and learning the chair subscribes to.

As part of the syllabus of our subject, the students were introduced to the meaning and use of modal verbs in general when working with the class book published by the chair. The initial step to find out whether our students were able to recognize the pattern intuitively or based on their previous knowledge was to administer a pre-test in the form of a question: "Which of these statements is a

probability?" This pre-test was contextualized in a mock-test given a few days before the first term-test. At this stage we introduced a video which contained instances of epistemic modality to convey probability. Students were given a photocopy with video-comprehension activities which included prediction questions, comprehension exercises and an awareness-raising task. Two statements extracted from the video script were provided and students were asked to decide whether they were instances of certainty or probability. By using this video, we intended to raise students' attention to the topic to be learned and to present attractive technologically mediated materials which paved the way for the following step of the pedagogical intervention.

The pedagogical activities devised were presented in a 120 minute-class by means of a Power-Point presentation and a set of copies with the activities to be completed in class and at home. Due to time constraints, the basic level of proficiency of our students to read full RA and based on the literature on the subject, we decided to work with abstracts to contextualize the use of epistemic modality within the H-R pattern.

The class consisted of the analysis of two abstracts related to the students' knowledge domain. This presentation and practice class included pre-reading, content-related and awareness-raising activities aimed at the identification and comprehension of the pattern. For both texts, the pre-reading activities consisted of some discussion questions based on students' background knowledge on the topics to be dealt with and some prediction tasks. The activities proposed for the first abstract were, to begin with, a set of questions on the content of the text on soil-vegetation relationships in different ecosystems in Brazil. Then, students were asked to answer two other questions, namely, "Which of these three statements is an assertion?" "Which is a conjecture?" and "How do you know?" These were followed by three statements extracted from the text: two of which were assertions and the other one, a conjecture. Students' answers were shared with the whole class. After discussing the linguistic signals that allowed them to give the right answer, we presented some lexical–grammatical clues that would presumably help students identify conjectures such as modal verbs and expressions, lexical verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Afterwards, we proposed some expressions used to signal assertions. A similar sequence of activities was used for the second text, with content questions followed by others for students to reflect on the degree of certainty of some statements and the characteristic linguistic clues signaling conjectures and assertions. This second set of activities was also discussed with the whole group with a two-fold objective. On the one hand, we aimed at informally assessing students' understanding of the nature and characteristics of the pattern and on the other, to take full advantage of the different contributions students made to the analysis. Another abstract with a similar set of exercises was assigned as homework at the end of the class.

After applying this pedagogical sequence, a post-test was administered in the context of the second term-test. In this instance, students were asked to underline examples of assertions and conjectures and to highlight which textual clues helped them identify the pattern's constituents. In order to obtain information about students' impressions about their own ability to recognize the pattern, its typical linguistic signals, the usefulness of the teaching sequence and the classes themselves, we designed a survey that was administered after the post-test. Based on the positive experience gained from the use of a survey with similar characteristics during the research of the Problem-Solution pattern, we believe the results of this survey will allow us to compare the students' insights into how well they can identify the pattern and their actual performance in the post-test.

Conclusion

The conception of a sequence of tasks with the purpose of awakening the students' awareness regarding a pattern of high frequency in scientific articles is not a simple undertaking. This is so particularly if we take into account the level of linguistic competence of our students who need to be trained to recognize the signalling devices. In spite of the fact that in the absence of evident lexical signals, background knowledge should be resorted to in an effort to retrieve the meaning of the communication with precision by finding the relationships intended by the author, we have only concentrated on evident signalling so far.

The teaching strategy presented here has practical pedagogical applications since we have tried to systematize the presentation of the pattern and, thus, to provide a clearer picture of how it is signalled to enhance the students' reading efficiency.

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Are British people British enough?
A new outlook on the meaning of identity in the UK

Sub-theme: Cultural awareness in the communicative class.

Edith Díaz Yurko
Verónica Sanchez

"An unequal spread of justice will damage the people and cause pain. Give justice and equality to all."
(Benjamin Zephaniah - 2000)

Abstract
In recent years, the inclusion of cultural issues in the syllabus of English Language courses has acquired greater importance. Dealing with cultural aspects in the classrooms involves understanding and accepting differences, as well as being flexible and tolerant.
The main objective of this paper is to share with the audience different pieces of literary texts that depict current issues dealing with British identity. In addition, it is our aim to help participants realize the importance of working with authentic texts and of raising cultural awareness among their students.

Introduction
It is often put into question whether the concept of Britishness is waning in strength and durability and whether the UK's national identities are going to end up with the kingdom. But that is an exaggeration. It has also been considered controversial a recent policy to debate aroud the country about what it means to be British on the 21st Century and how it would affect British people to have a national day, taking the American as an example. Debates have certainly paved the way for a better understanding, tolerance and inclusion. So, what is it to be British? Can we say that a 25-question-test (which enables foreigners to enjoy British citizenship) guarantees a candidate British identity? Is the presence of millions of Muslims in the UK putting at risk British identity? The aim of this paper is to discuss cultural aspects that depict British identity and to have the opportunity to put forward ideas on traditional and new concepts of Britishness.

Multicultural Britain
Following James O'Driscoll, in 1995 he wrote: "In the 20th Century, Britain is experiencing record levels of both immigration and emigration. This means that the cultural backgrounds of people living in Britain are chaging fast and becoming increasingly varied. This is one reason why 'multiculturalism' is a hot topic of debate in Britain these days". In fact, the 2001 census showed that there were 88% of white British, 1.8 % of Asian Indian, 1.3 % of Asian Pakistani and approximately 9 % of other cultures living in the UK. But what do these figures tell us about British identity? The presence of some Asian cultures in Britain and in Europe seems to be threatening the feeling of British citizenship and has recently raised the idea of an identity crisis. Back in 2005, Tariq Ramadam, a professor of Islamic Studies at Oxford University, could foresee that "Living together and building a truly multicultural society does not mean merely being satisfied with the existence of communities of faith or juxtaposed cultures, whose members ignore each other, never meet and remain enclosed within their own universe of symbolic reference points." Seen from this perspective, contemporary Britain is experiencing constant change and adaptation in what concerns its identity. New perspectives have been widely accepted in order to depict a new global community, visions that have to do with the breaking of barriers and the sharing of a tolerant outlook on the other and the future. Ramadam concludes with the idea that a multicultural society should combine "the three dimensions of common citizenship, cultural diversity and a convergence of values within a constantly enriching dynamic of debates, encounters and collective engagement."

Authentic Material to reflect on British identity
This utopian goal of a multicultural society, as Ramadam mentions, has been taken up by different writers, singers and well-known people. The issue of identity or the quest for it is present in various types of texts, for example, literature, news articles, current governmental regulations, etc. Above all, this shows the importance of the concept in everyday life. With this idea in mind, texts from different sources will now be shown so as to explore personal understandings of cultural awareness in the EFL classroom. As English Language teachers, we believe that it is our responsibility to make students aware of these aspects. "Integrating the teaching of language and culture in the classroom brings about issues related with learner identity, stereotyping, empathy, cultural bias and prejudice" (Porto).

All these aspects are significant for students to learn as part of the global community. And if teachers are interested in focusing their lessons on language and culture they should also get immersed in the learning of culture. As Patrick Moran puts it, "teachers need to be learners of culture in order to teach culture."

<u>1) What does it mean to be British?</u>

In response to the question: "what does it mean to be British?" which appeared on an online forum, people shared their own ideas. The following extracts can be exploited through comprehension questions, discussion and research.

> a) British is a nationality, which applies to people who are born, brought up or taken naturalisation in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. British is a piece of paper stating your nationality. There is no thing as a British culture. The only cultures in Britain are English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish and immigrant culture. **Sally Jayne, UK**

1) Geographically speaking, what is Great Britain? And what is the UK?
2) What "immigrant cultures" are there in the UK?

> b) I would say that to be British it means having a right of serving and providing speeches for freedom. Different races are involved and this is what British is all about. we are multicultral. **Liam, newcastle, UK**

3) Mention the "different races" that make up Great Britain.
4) Expand the idea of a "multicultural" society. In what ways does it apply to Great Britain?

> c) Red Post boxes. Red buses. Number 10. The Queen. British Bull dogs. Sunday Roast. Black Cabs. The Beatles. Bowler hats. Loral and Hardy. Stiff upper lip. London. The Union Jack. Parliament. Guy Fawkes. British Ale. Margaret Thatcher. Charles Darwin. The internet. Britannia. Fish and Chips. Seaside Holidays. Blackpool. The BBC. The Church of England. Churchill. Lord Sugar. Sir Paul McCartney. Queen. The 80's. CHAVs. Council Estates. Patrony. **Mary, Colchester, UK**

5) After reading the list above, which terms are you familiar with?
6) Provide information on each of the terms above.
7) Add five more items which you consider distinctive of Britishness.
8) Even though the UK is part of the European Union, they have kept their local currency, instead of adopting the Euro. Can you think of any other example which depicts British reluctancy towards changes? (Teachers may encourage students to think about ideas such as driving on the left-hand side of the road, using different systems of measurement and resisting to adopt central European time).

<u>2) Life in the United Kingdom Test</u>

"The Life in the United Kingdom Test" is a test for individuals seeking Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK or naturalization as a British citizen. The entrants have to answer 24 multiple-choice questions based on various topics such as driving a car, unemployment benefits, family, religion, work, festivities and holidays. These are two questions as examples:

> 1. Which of the following is not proof of identity?
- Benefits book
- Recent gas bill
- Letter from a friend
- Home office document

> 2. Which is the largest police force?
- The Welsh Constabulary
- Liverpool and Leeds Constabulary
- Bristol
- The Metropolitan

These questions show elements which represent British identity and individuals willing to remain in the UK should be familiar with them. In fact, applicants need to "have the knowledge of culture-specific

items, that is, British objects, society and values" (O'Driscoll), which they gain after having gone through the official handbook. Yet, we ask ourselves if the brand new citizen feels in any way more British after having passed the test or if this test is just enough to make a candidate feel truly British.

Using the test in an EFL class: Students may try to guess the answers first and then they may have the chance to do some research. The teacher may guide the web search emphazising that there are some aspects which are particularly different between the students' culture and the British one.

3) David Cameron's Speech on Multiculturalism

The British Prime Minister, in a meeting of world leaders in Germany, critized the policy of multiculturalism. An extract from the speech has been selected in order to point out Cameron's main views on Britain's current situation. Contrary to the viewpoints mentioned above, Cameron describes Britain's multicultural society in negative terms, that is to say, as a society that has failed to include other cultures fostering a collective identity.

"In the UK, some young men find it hard to identify with the traditions practised at home by their parents. But they also find it hard to identify with Britain too, because we have allowed the weakening of our collective identity. Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. We have failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong".

When working with this extract, teachers may encourage students to compare and contrast the Prime Minister's speech to the views given above. In addition, they may reflect upon the reasons underlying Cameron's message.

4) Poem: "The British"

Poet Benjamin Zephaniah was born and raised in Birmingham, England. Jamaican by descent, he combines elements of diversity and inclusion in his work and fights passionately against all types of discrimination. Plurarism of this century is embodied in his person. In his poem "The British", Zephaniah compares the inhabitants of the British Isles to the ingredients of a recipe. He ironically uses verbs such as: take, remove, add, mix, combine, sprinkle and serve in order to highlight the history and evolution of Britain. "All ingredients are equally important", he states. Celts, Vikings, Angles, Nigerians, Japanese and Palestinians among others are added to the "melting pot". It is not surprising that Zephaniah used this metaphor since "the ingredients all blend together, each making their contribution to a single overall taste" (O'Driscoll) of Britishness.

The British

Serves 60 million

Take some Picts, Celts and Silures
And let them settle,
Then overrun them with Roman conquerors.

Remove the Romans after approximately 400 years
Add lots of Norman French to some
Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Vikings, then stir vigorously.

Mix some hot Chileans, cool Jamaicans, Dominicans,
Trinidadians and Bajans with some Ethiopians, Chinese,
Vietnamese and Sudanese.

Then take a blend of Somalians, Sri Lankans, Nigerians
And Pakistanis,
Combine with some Guyanese
And turn up the heat.

Sprinkle some fresh Indians, Malaysians, Bosnians,
Iraqis and Bangladeshis together with some
Afghans, Spanish, Turkish, Kurdish, Japanese
And Palestinians
Then add to the melting pot.

Leave the ingredients to simmer.

As they mix and blend allow their languages to flourish
Binding them together with English.

Allow time to be cool.

Add some unity, understanding, and respect for the future,
Serve with justice
And enjoy.

Note: All the ingredients are equally important. Treating one ingredient better than another will leave a bitter unpleasant taste.

Warning: An unequal spread of justice will damage the people and cause pain. Give justice and equality to all.

Taking pedagogical implications into consideration, this poem can be exploited from the point of view of lexis (particularly working with verbs of cooking and nationalities) and discussion (topics like inclusion, diversity, discrimination and equality can be dealt with).

Conclusion
The authentic material that has been presented in this paper is just part of the great amout of material available on the topic of British identity. It has been our aim to present a variety of texts ranging from personal opinions and official documents to influential people's viewpoints. Besides, we have intended to show only few activities that can be carried out in the classroom.

We conclude this paper with the feeling that the increasing ethnic diversity of British society today means it is difficult to define what makes someone British. However open and inclusive the British may become, one thing is certain: "the British are stubbornly conservative about anything which is perceived as a token of Britishness" (O'Driscoll). Whether obstinate or patriotic, the British cling to aspects which are distinctively theirs and different from Europe and the world.
And yet, the future of Britishness remains to be proved plural and in constant change. Multiculturalism is not an easy task. As Tariq Ramadam asserts, multiculturalism "can only be achieved through education, by looking outside of oneself and taking the risk to open up to other cultures, ideas and values, all of which are part of the difficult but exciting challenge of our time".

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Activities to promote the use of different types of arguments and argument schemes in the written production of the argumentative text in English

Subtheme: Methodological implications: Cognitive learning and communication

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Abstract

This proposal deals with the description of the activities designed for the period in which the students participating in the implementation of the research project *El texto argumentativo en inglés: su producción escrita* (Universidad Nacional de San Juan - 2011-2012) receive instruction in the production of the argumentation phase of an argumentative text. These activities pay particular attention to the different types of arguments, underlying argument schemes and schematic representations of this phase.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework upon which our work is based integrates elements from two approaches in argumentative studies: Toulmin Model (1958: 94-107) and van Eemeren's and Grootendorst's Pragmadialectical Theory (van Esmeren *et al* 2006: 95-108; 153-156). The former theory is appropriate for analysing the internal structure of argumentation with its six functions ─ *data* (D), *claim* (C), *warrant* (W), *backing* (B), *qualifier* (Q) and *rebuttal* (R); the latter allows the evaluation of the other component of argumentation, i.e. the frame and its elements ─ theme, textual place, protagonists, argument types, phases, difference of opinion, standpoints. Of all its elements, we have concentrated on the argumentation phase and, within this, on the types of arguments and types of argumentative schemes (i.e. the relation underlying the standpoint and the arguments used to support it) and their representation by means of schemes. This integrated approach favours, in our opinion, the student's production of the argumentative text since he/she learns the different elements and functions to be considered while writing this type of texts, and uses a wider variety of types of arguments and of argument schemes.

With respect to the six functions described in Toulmin's Model, we will concentrate on the *data* and the *claim*, to which we will refer by *arguments* and *standpoint*, respectively. They are the obligatory elements for an argument to be such. With respect to the pragmadialectical theory, we will focus on the argumentation complexity, the types of arguments used and the argument schemes available for use.

The *standpoint* is an oral or written expression of a positive or negative position with respect to a proposition, thereby making it plain what the speaker or writer stands for. The term *data* (*arguments*), according to Toulmin, refers to the facts appealed to as a foundation for the *claim* (*standpoint*). They consist of a series of expressions jointly used to justify or refute a proposition. Argumentation for or against the standpoint can consist of only one explicit reason ─ known as *single argumentation* ─ or it can have a more complex argumentation structure, in which the defence of the standpoint may be made by means of several reasons, which can be alternative defences of the standpoint. They can be unrelated, known as *multiple argumentation*, or interdependent and mutually reinforcing ─ *coordinated argumentation* ─ or elements of a serial chain of reasons that support each other ─ subordinative *argumentation.* Multiple argumentation consists of alternative defences of the same standpoint presented one after the other. These defences do not depend on each other to support the standpoint and are, in principle, equivalent strong to do so. Coordinative argumentation consists of a combination of arguments that can be taken together to conform a conclusive defence of the standpoint, i.e. the constituent parts of the argumentation are interdependent. They can be so in two ways. Sometimes they are dependent because each argument is too weak to constitute a solid defence of the standpoint (E.g. 3.a. below), or they can be interdependent when a second argument is added to another to reinforce it and prevent from possible objections to the first (E.g. 3.b.)

Examples of argumentation:

1. *Single argumentation:*

Standpoint: You can't have seen my brother at a disco last Friday.
Single argument: He was in bed because he was ill.
2. *Multiple argumentation*:
Standpoint: You can't have seen my brother at the disco Blue Night last Friday.
Argument 1: The disco was closed last Friday.
Argument 2: My brother was in Mendoza last Friday.
3. *Coordinated argumentation*:
a. Standpoint: The excursion to the mountains was a success.
Argument 1: The bus was very comfortable.
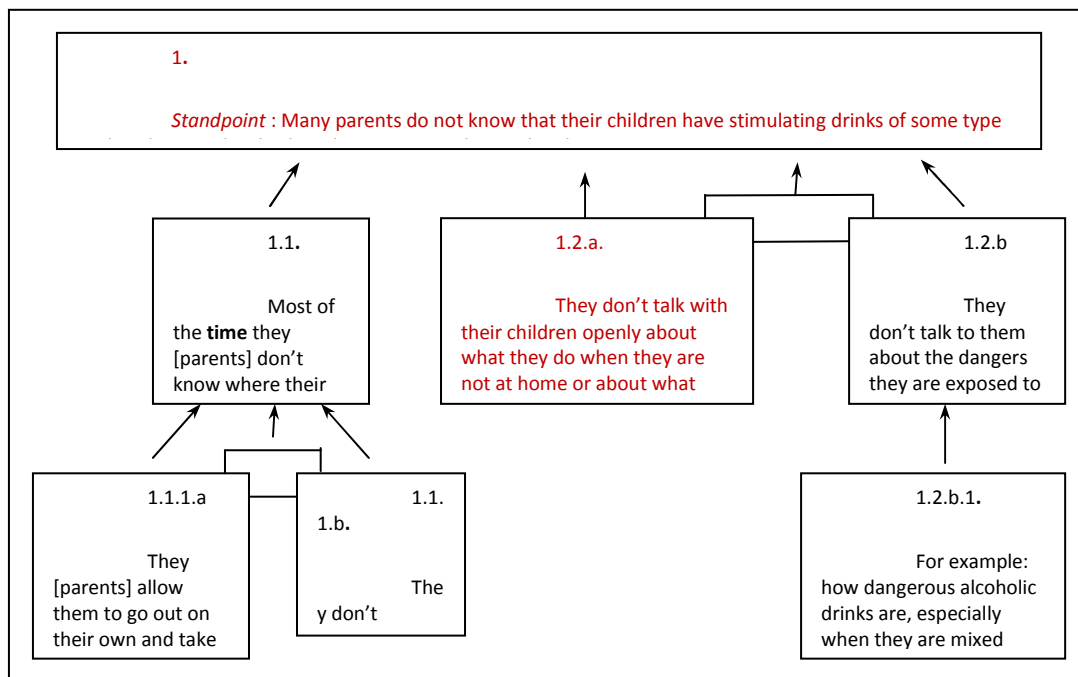*Argument 2:* On board service was excellent.
Argument 3: The hotel was cosy and comfortable.
b. Standpoint: The only choice we had was to go to the disco Talishka last Friday.
Argument 1: All the other discos were closed.
Argument 2: We had arranged to go out that night.
Representation of argumentation

Scheme 1: Multiple, coordinative and subordinative argumentation

Finally, the term *argument scheme* accounts for the internal organization of each individual single argumentation. Argument schemes pertain to the kind of relationship between the explicit premise and the standpoint that is established in the argumentation in order to promote a transfer of acceptability from the explicit premise to the standpoint. They are more or less conventionalized ways of achieving this transfer. There are three main categories of argument schemes: 1) *causal argumentation*, a subtype of which is the *pragmatic argumentation* 2) *symptomatic argumentation,* subtypes of which are *argumentation by example* and *by definition*, and 3) *argumentation based on a comparison or analogy*. The pragmatic argumentation mentioned above results when, in the standpoint, some course of action is recommended, usually by means of the modal *should,* and the argumentation consists of a summary of the favourable consequences of adopting that conduct.

The schemes of these relationships are represented as follows:

Y is a truth of X, because: Z is a truth of X, and: Z is symptomatic of Y.	*Y is a truth of X, because: Z is a truth of X, and: Z is an example of Y.*

Schema 2: Symptomatic relationship

Schema 3: Symptomatic relationship by example

Y is a truth of X, Because Y is a truth of Z, and: Z is comparable to X.	*Y is a truth of X, because: Z is a truth of X, and: Z causes Y.*

Schema 4: Relationship based on a comparison or analogy

Schema 5: Causal argumentation

Examples:

1. Symptomatic relationship

Zach is certainly irresponsible. He will drive his friends home after the disco and, yet, he is drinking heavily.

Standpoint: Zach is certainly irresponsible.

X: Zach

Y: Zach is irresponsible

Z: Zach is drinking heavily although he knows that he is driving his friends home after the disco.

(Symptom of irresponsibility)

Z is symptomatic of Y

2. Symptomatic relationship by example:

Parents don't warn their children about the dangers they are exposed to when they go out with their friends on Friday or Saturday nights. For example: they don't tell how dangerous it can be to mix alcoholic drinks with other substances.

Standpoint:

X: Parents

Y: They don't tell their children about the dangers on Friday or Saturday nights.

Z: They don't tell how dangerous it can be to mix alcoholic drinks with other substances.

Z is an example of Y

3. Relationship based on a comparison or analogy

Standpoint:

Her second marriage was doomed from the start. She married a man exactly the same as her first husband: jealous and possessive:

X: Her second marriage

Y: It was doomed from the start.

Z: Her first marriage

Z is comparable to X

4. Causal argumentation

Standpoint:

Zach is a constant headache for his parents. He takes their car without permission and literally disappears with his friends for two or tree days in a row.

X: Zach

Y: Zach is a constant headache for his parents.

Z: Zach takes their car without permission and goes out with his friends for two or tree days in a row.

Z is the cause of Y

5. Pragmatic argumentation

Teachers, mainly secondary school teachers, should keep their distance in the classroom, because in this way they can be objective and maintain discipline and this, in turn, brings about good results in education.

X: Teachers, mainly secondary school teachers

Y: They should keep their distance in the classroom

Z: they can be objective and maintain discipline and this, in turn, brings about good results in education.

Y leads to Z

Activities

The activities included below have been devised for the teaching of the different types of arguments and argument schemes and for the practice that will follow.

The main objectives the students are expected to achieve are the following:

1. Knowledge and use of the four different types of argumentation according to its structural complexity: single, multiple, coordinative and subordinative.

2. Knowledge and use of the four different types of argument schemes according to the underlying relationship between the arguments and the standpoint: causal, symptomatic, and based on a comparison or analogy, and their subtypes.

3. Writing the argument section of a text defending or refuting a standpoint given, in agreement with the indicated types of argumentation and types of arguments schemes.

4. Writing the argument section of a text defending or refuting a standpoint given in agreement with the schematic representation of the argumentation.

Activity 1

A. Reading of a model argumentative text, discussion of its contents and identification of its canonical categories: opening stage, standpoint (claim or thesis), argumentation and conclusion.

B. Identification of the arguments used and determination of the relation they have with the standpoint.

(This activity is done with the different argumentative texts that result from the use of the different argument schemes. The first text analysed with the students includes the causal argument scheme, which seems to be the most naturally used and easiest to grasp.)

Activity 2

Revision of the four types of arguments and the three argument schemes and their variations by means of a PowerPoint presentation.

Activity 3

A topic close to the students' activities or interests is brought into the classroom. Our example is about the issue of adolescents and young adults having different types of drinks — sometimes mixed with stimulants of some kind — before going dancing to a disco. The introduction of the topic can be done by means of a video, a piece of news or a special text interesting enough to appeal to the students' interest and raise a discussion among them.

After the discussion, during which new vocabulary may arise, the students are invited to propose standpoints on the topic. Some of them are chosen and written on the board.

Examples:

1. I think that the problem of young people drinking and taking stimulants before going dancing is an issue that affects many, but not all, teenagers in most societies.

2. It is true that many adolescents take stimulants or drugs before going out but I think that this is not known by all the people, their parents in particular.

3. Most teenagers take drugs or stimulants mixed with alcoholic drinks in order to be in a better mood when they go out.

Activities to be done about these standpoints:

1. Read the following examples and identify the standpoint and the argumentation. Then do the following:

1.1. Determine what type of argumentation they present according to the complexity of its structure.

1.2. Determine the type of scheme underlying the argumentation. Discuss your answer with a partner.

a) I think that one of the causes of college students' failure in their studies is that some professors resort excessively to the use of photocopies in their courses and do not explain their contents in the classes.

b) It was quite obvious that we would not see each other in Buenos Aires. First of all, you never gave me a phone number to call you when I got there; second, we didn't arrange any day for our meeting there; last, and more important, you never told me in what hotel you would stay.

c) In my opinion, the students' failure in their studies is not that they go out too much or that they spend a great deal of time at their computers for purposes other than academic. There are a lot of young adults that have done the same and, yet, have succeeded in their studies.

2. With a partner discuss about the arguments that can support the standpoint given below and then do the following:

2.1. Write three arguments in *multiple argumentation* and determine the scheme underlying it.

2.2. Write two arguments in *coordinative argumentation* and determine the scheme underlying it.

Standpoint: I think that the problem of young people drinking and taking stimulants before going to dance is an issue that affects many, but not all, teenagers in most societies.

3. Add new arguments to the argumentation obtained in the previous activities so that one or two arguments are supported by at least another one (subordinative argumentation).

4. With one or two partners discuss the standpoint given below and then support it by means of a) causal argumentation, and b) pragmatic argumentation.

Standpoint: It is true that many adolescents take stimulants or drugs before going out but I think that this is not known by all the people, their parents in particular.

5. Study the representations given below and fill in the boxes accordingly.

A.
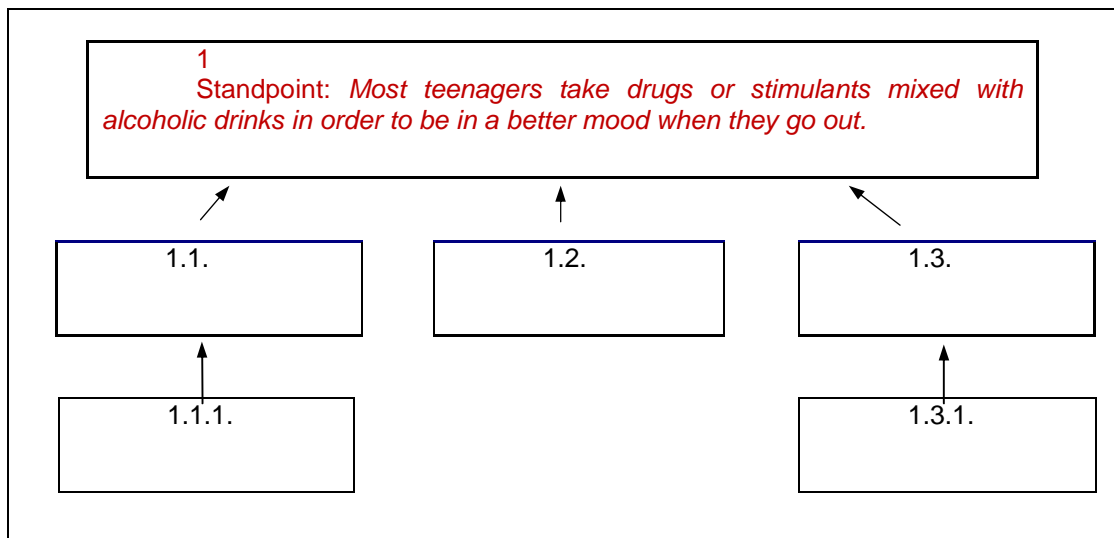
B.

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Cognitive and Communicative Approaches: Can They Successfully Converge?
Methodological implications: Cognitive learning and communication

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Abstract
This presentation will examine how relevance and strategic involvement of learners – two common features of cognitive and communicative approaches – strategically combine to enhance learning. A case study of a successful EFL learner will show how factors such as memory, language and motivational strategies plus neurobiological sustained motivation interrelated to achieve learning outcomes.

1 Introduction
The 1970s saw a world-wide shift towards teaching methods that emphasised communication, This trend originated as a result of two related concerns. One was discontent with the essentially code-based view of language teaching found in the approaches most widely practised at that time (audio-lingualism and the grammar-translation method); the other was the desire to develop course design structures which were more flexible and more responsive to students' real world communicative needs. The writings of Wilkins, Widdowson, Candlin, Brumfit, Johnson, and other British applied linguists led to what came to be called as the Communicative Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Since its inception, CLT has passed through a number of different phases. In its first phase, a primary concern was the need to develop a syllabus that was compatible with the notion of communicative competence. In the second phase, CLT focused on procedures for identifying learners' needs. In its third phase, CLT focused on the kinds of classroom activities that could be used as the basis of a communicative methodology. However, according to Cook (2001, 214-215), "there is surprisingly little connection between the communicative style and SLA research, the exception being some claims of task-based learning based on psychological and educational research". In Cook's view, "CLT assumes little about the learning process, apart from claiming that if the right circumstances are provided to the students, something will happen inside their minds".
Since the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a trend for increasing numbers of researchers and theorists to focus their attention on SLA as an internal, individual cognitive process – one that takes place in a social setting, to be sure, and can be influenced by variation in that setting and by other interlocutors, but a psycholinguistic process, nonetheless, which ultimately resides on the mind-brain. We may now wonder what the cognitive correlates and components of learning are, and to what extent these are affected by instructional manipulations, and different learning conditions. Answers to these questions concerning the influence of cognitive learner variables on second language acquisition, and on the development of effective second language instruction, are a subject of major interest to both SLA researchers and those involved in second language pedagogy alike.
The question still remains, then, whether the two approaches can somehow converge to help students become more effective learners. In our current situation in Argentina and in many other countries in the world that have an English as a foreign language (EFL) setting, globalization has raised the need for many executives in multinational companies to communicate efficiently with the head office, clients, suppliers and peers not only in England or the United States but also in India, Singapore, China and other countries. This communication, undoubtedly, takes place in English, the language of globalisation, and a functional "work English" which does not move beyond the basics is no longer enough to meet the current needs. The analysis presented on this paper addresses the issue of the convergence between cognitive approaches and CLT by examining what they have in common and how one may supplement the other one. The case study presented in the paper highlights the interrelationship among communicative competence, cognitive aspects of L2 learning, L2 instruction and the main social cognitive factors underlying the subject's motivation. It also deals with the issue of the neurobiology of sustained motivation and attentional effort and their impact on the subject's memory processes and learning results.

2.L Literature Review
Cognitive theory has influenced SLA theory and SL pedagogy for many years now. However, very few ideas from cognitive psychology had been adopted in second language acquisition research and theory until some authors such as Chamot and O'Malley (1990) and Oxford (1990) bridged the gap and showed how the thinking in cognitive psychology could be useful for application in second language acquisition.

More recently, both theoretical research into SLA and SL pedagogy have shown renewed interest in the role of cognitive variables and also in the cognitive neurosciences perspective. Articles on attention, memory, and automaticity, learnability and language processing have increasingly appeared in the major SLA journals in the field and several books have been written reflecting in part the rapid pace of development of the relatively new fields of cognitive science and cognitive psychology. The writings of Schmidt, Pulvermüller & Schumann, N. Ellis, Robinson, Stevick, Birdsong, DeKeyser, Ullman, Anderson and Ushioda among many others deal with the issues of attention and awareness, neurobiological mechanisms of language acquisition, explicit and implicit learning and many other cognitive variables.

Motivation stands out among the cognitive variables mentioned by many of these authors. As we know, motivation is such a central but intangible concept that it is necessary to understand its subcomponents in order to give a clear answer to the question of how one can create, foster and maintain motivation throughout the learning process. The motivational framework created by Dörnyei and Otto (Dörnyei 2001) comprehends all the pre-existing motivational theories. In this framework there are three motivational phases, the pre-actional, the actional and the post-actional phases. In my view, the framework includes the various elements that CLT and cognitive methods have in common: needs analysis, psycholinguistic processing by means of meaningful communicative activities, risk-taking, willingness to communicate and use of strategies to create stronger retention and sustain motivation till communicative competence is reached.

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), if we analyse some of the communicative activities of CLT, we can find that many of them seek to engage learners in the use of cognitive and other processes that are important factors in second language acquisition and this reveals, in my view, one of the links between both approaches. Another connection is needs analysis. In CLT, determining an individual's motivation for studying the language is a key factor in the success that individuals can achieve in the learning process, especially in the case of adults, who are driven by a sense of purpose and goal. In cognitive models, it is crucial for learners to have a very clear perspective of their needs and goals, to select from incoming information what is relevant to them so as to encode it into long-term memory by means of using several strategies through the activities they perform so as to be able to retrieve the information from their memory when necessary.

We may argue then that psycholinguistic processing and meaningful learning are some of the characteristics shared by both approaches. Activities such as group work, task-work, and information-gap have as the ultimate aim the attainment of communicative competence. Meaningful learning is another characteristic in common. According to Brown (2007) meaningful learning "subsumes" new information into existing structures and memory systems, and the resulting associative links create stronger retention.

Other characteristics in common are autonomy and strategic involvement. In Brown's view, in CLT students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through raising their awareness of their own styles of learning (strengths, weaknesses, preferences) and through the development of appropriate strategies for production and comprehension. Such awareness and action will help to develop autonomous learners capable of continuing to learn the language beyond the classroom and the course. In Brown's words, in recent years language-teaching methodology has seen a dramatic increase in attention to what he calls the "strategic investment" that learners can make in their own learning process. The learning of any skill involves a certain degree or "investment" of one's time and effort. Strategies are, in essence, learners' techniques for capitalising on the principles of successful learning.

With respect to risk-taking and willingness to communicate, in CLT, learners are encouraged to learn from their errors. By going beyond what they have been taught, they are encouraged to employ a variety of communication strategies. Brown (2007) states that the concept of willingness to communicate combines the concepts of self-confidence and risk-taking. These concepts are at the same time related to "self-efficacy", a person's belief in his or her ability to accomplish a task. If learners develop self-efficacy, then they are ready to take those necessary risks. They are ready to try out their newly acquired language, to use it for meaningful purposes, to ask questions, and to assert themselves.

Concerning the neurobiological perspective, according to Schumann, Crowell, Jones, Lee, Schuchert & Wood (2004), variable success achieved in late language learning is closely related to brain plasticity. The gradual loss of plasticity in the different brain areas can explain deficits in late language learners. However, positive emotional appraisal of language learning situations fosters the activity of neurotransmitters such as dopamine and acetylcholine which promote the formation of new assemblies as they enhance synaptic plasticity. Dopamine is released in anticipation of rewarding experiences, and this is related to goal setting and resources assignment in order to obtain a reward.

Acetylcholine enhances memory and its efflux is the result of sustained attention to a task. The case study depicted in this paper summarizes the concepts discussed above.

3. Method

The information I will present has been taken from the research I did on a case study. I have extracted the most important data from it in connection to the topic dealt with in this paper. The case study attempts to provide relevant evidence for some of the factors that may have contributed to the success in the attainment of a high level of proficiency of a late L2 learner in an EFL setting. These factors include: deep sustained motivation, attentional effort, memory processes and their neurological underpinnings, learning style, use of language learning strategies and L2 instruction. I interviewed the subject of the study, a 33 year old executive, in 2007 while performing a language audit. At that moment he was already at C2 level. He falls into the category of the few exceptional L2 adult learners in the corporate world who have been able to attain a high level of proficiency, even though they started learning the language in adulthood.

3.1. Subject

LT holds a degree in Business Administration and several postgraduate courses in Argentina and abroad. At the time of the interview, he had been recently appointed Finance Manager of the oil company he works for. L.T. has a history of high achievement. He grew up in a monolingual middle class family and he attended a state school. His father died when he was a child and he had two uncles, one of whom, apparently, served as a father figure for him. L.T. had been brought up seeing that the men in his family were successful professionals. (His father had been one, and his uncle was a very successful professional who worked for a multinational company, spoke English very well, travelled all over the world and excelled in his profession.). In addition, his mother had always told him "you have come to this world to make the difference".

L. T. started learning English for the first time when he was 25 years old. He explained that up to that moment he knew that speaking English was important, but that he had had some other priorities, having especially focused on his university studies and his job. In January 2002, Argentina was going through a very difficult political and economic time, and he was working for an international bank where many people had been dismissed. He feared he might be dismissed as well. It was precisely at that moment that his uncle told him that at the end of that year the company where he was working was going to recruit young professionals for a trainee program, but, that, in order to apply for the job, he needed to have a very good command of English. He asked him if his level was good. It took L.T. less than a second to tell his uncle that he would apply for the position. It was a promise. That was the beginning of a learning process that entailed two phases. In the first one he went from level 0 to level 3 (High Intermediate) in one year studying with an Argentine teacher in Argentina and in the second one, after having studied for several more years in Argentina, he lived in the USA for one year and he finally attained level 5 (Advanced).

3.2. Data Gathering Instruments and Procedure

Four instruments were used: an international level certification, an interview questionnaire, a learning styles survey and a learning strategies questionnaire. The international level certification chosen was BULATS (Business Language Testing Service, a Cambridge Esol diagnostic test), an interview questionnaire for a semi-structured interview, the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (Oxford 1990) and the Perceptual Learning Style Preference Survey (Reid 1984).

4. Results and Discussion

The case study analysed in this research had posed two questions. One concerned the main motivational influences underlying the subject's motivation in an EFL context. The second entailed the interrelationship among motivation, cognitive aspects of L2 learning and L2 instruction. From the theory reviewed and the analysis of the data, it emerges that:

1) With respect to motivational influences, L.T. had a deeply rooted belief of self-efficacy and showed a very high degree of self-determination to accomplish the pre-actional, actional and post-actional phases that led him to success. He set clear goals, valued the culture of the foreign language he was learning and his family environment contributed to his goal. At the same time, the goal itself (achieving an intermediate level of English) was highly relevant for his job opportunities, given the critical economic situation Argentina was undergoing in 2002. Together with his teacher, L.T. designed an action plan of 600hs to be accomplished in one year to take him from level 0/A1 in CEF to level 3, he put aside competing action tendencies, monitored his own process closely and used strategies in line with his learning style. Finally, he evaluated the action outcomes and formed positive causal

attributions, which reengaged his motivation and allowed him to further develop his knowledge and skills until he reached an advanced level of proficiency (level 5/ C2 in CEF).

2) L.T used many language learning strategies in line with his major auditory and individual learning preferences. The language learning strategies he used the most were metacognitive and cognitive ones. Metacognition serves as a guide for choosing, monitoring, combining and evaluating approaches for learning languages. With respect to self-regulation strategies, L.T. used them to maintain motivation until he was able to achieve his aim. L.T. received both form-focused instruction and communicative training during his intensive one-year program. Explicit learning, focus on form and communicative activities are necessary to store information in long-term memory and to acquire a high level of communicative competence both in an EFL and ESL setting. L.T. received the type of L2 instruction that reflects the above characteristics. His self-study method was also in line with the type of L2 instruction described above. We may conclude that one of the main characteristics of successful adult learning is the fact that it does not happen just implicitly.

3) From a neurobiological perspective, we assume that L.T. may have released both dopamine and acetylcholine when he made the neural connections necessary to take in, process and store information in the brain and retrieve it when he needed to communicate. By doing so, he may have enhanced neural plasticity that allowed him to overturn biological restrictions.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, as we have seen, the latest versions of the communicative approach and the cognitive methods may converge on how the students' perception of their learning goals, the fact of learning from their errors, developing self-confidence and self-efficacy and using strategies to their fullest potential contributes to their success in the learning process.

With respect to future research, as Birdsong and Paik (2008) have pointed out, much more research will be necessary to understand deeply the biology and psychology of motivation and attentional effort so as to transfer that knowledge to practical implications in the teaching-learning process of foreign languages. In addition, the constructs of metacognition, self-efficacy, self-determination and autonomy are also fundamental targets for further research. Teachers have a crucial role in promoting them among their learners, especially in the case of late learners.

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Helping our Students Become Irony-aware and Bridge the Cultural Gap

Subtheme: Cultural Awareness in the Communicative Class

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Abstract

This presentation seeks to evince that irony is so ingrained in the British culture that it has become a "must" for language teachers to make students irony-aware in order to grasp its nuances in written and spoken discourse. To this end, the concept and categorization of irony will be revisited and contextualized. Subsequently, techniques will be suggested for students not to become irony-victims and succeed in interpreting the underlying messages native speakers intend to convey.

Introduction

It is certainly ironic that we have chosen irony to be discussed at a Conference which focuses on Communicative Language Teaching and Learning since irony is what many times impedes real communication. However, it is for that very reason that we believe our students should become irony-aware. The British love irony and they have exerted preponderant influence on other English speaking countries. Therefore, irony is ubiquitous. It is not only in literature but in the streets. It is even the theme of popular songs such as Alanis Morissette's "Ironic" (1995) whose lyrics begins:

> An old man turned ninety-eight
> He won the lottery and died the next day
> It's a black fly in your Chardonnay
> It's a death row pardon two minutes too late

Irony is definitely the core of the Brits' sense of humour. In fact, my first encounter with irony in real life was on a bus. I wanted to go from London to Edinburgh. For some reason, many people had the same idea at the same time. So the bus was literally crowded. The driver took his position behind the steering wheel and shouted: "Sit! Everybody sit down!" It was evident that there were more passengers than places available. So an enchanting young man answered swiftly and in perfect RP: "I'd love to!" Of course, we all laughed except the driver who stared at him, but only then did he realize that he could not depart. He took the matter seriously and used his radio to ask for another coach. Ironic, isn't it? What was meant as a joke did the trick.

Irony here was brought about by the superimposition of two semantic contexts: what was stated –the passenger's remark- and what was intended-the passenger's intent was to poke fun at the driver's silly command. Hutcheon defines irony's "ethos" as the ruling intended response achieved by a text (1985:55). The intention is inferred by the decoder from the text itself. The ethos is the overlap between the encoded effect (as desired by the producer of the text) and the decoded effect (as achieved by the decoder). The ethos can be playful or belittling; critically constructive or destructive.

The anecdote I told you happened many years ago but I could never forget it because it was my first realization of how irony plays its vital part among the British and how terribly true is what David Lodge says when he points out that "an ironic remark is recognized as such in the act of its interpretation" (1992:179). In other words, irony is effective as long as the receiver perceives the incongruity in meaning(s) intended by the sender. If the receiver fails to realize so, then, communication is jeopardized.

According to White quoted by Culler, Irony is one of the basic rhetorical structures by which we make sense of experience. "It juxtaposes appearance and reality; what happens is the opposite of what you expected." (Culler 1997:73). It is defined as "a subtly humorous perception of inconsistency, in which an apparently straightforward event is undermined by its context so as to give it a very different significance". (Baldick 2008:174)

It is very close to sarcasm since both involve saying the opposite of what you mean but irony is much more subversive and fun since sarcasm intends to hurt (*The Economist*, December 16th 1999). Therefore, the speaker or writer expects to be understood. However, ironists sometimes seek to be understood by a few- those who can follow them- and do not care about the others who are left outside and remain in ignorance of the intended message. Irony is sometimes used at the readers' or

the listeners' expense. So many people, when hearing or reading an ironic remark, may not realise that it is intended to be a joke. Perhaps that is the reason why irony is such a favourite among British diplomats. "It allows them to tease foreigners, without foreigners realizing that they are being teased". (Ibid) It is also highly favoured by the media, which utilizes irony to say what they would not dare say directly. For instance, when President Obama was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace, Ben Feller referred to him as "an American president, lauded for peace just as he escalates the long, costly war in Afghanistan" (The Huffpost World, Oslo, 12/ 10/ 2009). Clearly, the semantic contrast between what is said and what is meant is not the only function fulfilled by irony. According to Hutcheon, its major role –on a pragmatic level- is that irony judges. Though shrouded in the complimentary expression "lauded for peace", Feller's remark signals evaluation that conceals latent mocking blame.

Theoretical Background

You may be asking yourselves: what can be done to breach the cultural gap and instil the need to understand irony both in class and outside the context of the class? Our conviction is that students should be required to perform activities to detect this rhetorical device and escape from becoming the naïve victims of irony.

Muecke (1975) explores the concept of irony's victim in detail. "The typical victim of an ironic situation is essentially an innocent. It is the person who blindly assumes that something is or is not the case, or confidently expects something to happen or not to happen; he does not even remotely suspect that things might not be as he supposes them to be, or might not turn out as he expects them to." (p.30)

Additionally, he distinguishes between the object of irony and the victim of irony as follows: "The object of irony is what one is ironical about" (Ibid. 34). It may be a person (including the ironist himself), an attitude, a belief, a social custom or institution, a philosophical system, a religion, a whole civilization, or even life itself" (Ibid. 34).

As for the victim, it could be said that irony creates a community of all those who can get it. It would seem, then, that those who do not *get* irony are, as a result, its victims. Booth (1974: 222) lists five "crippling handicaps" which will lead a person to be a victim of irony:

1) Ignorance, which can happen when intelligent readers are overconfident even in unfamiliar ground. They have too much distance from the subject or a lack of familiarity with the genre.

2) Inability to pay attention, which is a consequence of being bombarded with information. This information overload causes us not to be prepared for a piece of irony when we encounter it.

3) Prejudice, which occurs when a particular piece of writing infringes your norms so that you become a victim of your own prejudices and this results in your inability to detect irony.

4) Lack of Practice, which is simply being the victim of inexperience.

5) Emotional Inadequacy, which entails being either overly sentimental or aloof towards the written or spoken text.

Irony in different fields

Undoubtedly, irony is so ingrained in English Literature that we can hardly read a book without encountering instances of this rhetorical device. Take as an example the opening lines of "Travels with my Aunt" by Graham Greene (1969). It reads as follows:

> "I met my Aunt Augusta for the first time in more than half a century at my mother's funeral. My mother was approaching eighty six when she died, and my aunt was eleven or twelve years younger. I had retired from the bank two years before with an adequate pension and a silver handshake. There had been a take-over by the Westminster and my branch was considered redundant. Everyone thought me lucky, but I found it difficult to occupy my time. I have never married, I have always lived quietly, and, apart from my interest in dahlias, I have no hobby. For those reasons I found myself agreeably excited by my mother's funeral."

In this short extract Greene shows us how British writers introduce irony all the time, turning what is expected to be a very sad situation into an "agreeably excited" experience. This type of structural irony implies "flattering the readers' intelligence at the expense of a character" (Baldick, 2008:174).

There are countless examples of brilliant writers who use irony humorously. To give you a little taste of it we may quote some cases of verbal irony where there is a discrepancy between what is said and what is meant (Baldick, 2008:174):

> "In Beverly Hills they don't throw their garbage away. They make it into television shows." - Woody Allen

> "He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends."- Oscar Wilde

Or this marvellous sharp exchange:

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary." - William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway)

"Poor Faulkner. Does he really think big emotions come from big words?" - Ernest Hemingway (about William Faulkner)

Politicians also love it:

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play; bring a friend . . . if you have one." - George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill
"Cannot possibly attend first night, will attend second . . . if there is one." - Winston Churchill, in response.

The ethos in all these examples is a mocking one.

And let us include part of the hilarious acknowledgements of a book that utilizes irony right in its title: "My Family and Other Animals" by Gerald Durrell:

"My grateful thanks to: Dr Theodore Stephanides. With typical generosity, he allowed me to make use of material from his unpublished work on Corfu, and supplied me with a number of dreadful puns, some of which I have used.

My family. They, after all, unconsciously provided a lot of the material, and helped me considerably during the writing of the book by arguing ferociously and rarely agreeing about any incident on which I consulted them.

My wife, who pleased me by laughing uproariously when reading the manuscript, only to inform me that it was my spelling that amused her.

Sophie, my secretary, who was responsible for the introduction of commas and the ruthless eradication of the split infinitive" (Durrell 1956:10). In these lines it is evident that Durrell himself chooses to be the victim of his highly ironic "Speech for the defence", with which he starts his successful autobiographical novel.

Types of irony

In all these examples of verbal irony, the writer's meaning or even his attitude may be different from what he says. But, situational irony may also be funny. It would occur if a professional pickpocket had his own pocket picked just as he was in the act of picking someone else's pocket. The irony is generated by the surprise recognition by the audience of a reality in contrast with expectation or appearance, while another audience, victim, or character has confidence in the appearance as reality and the surprise recognition by the audience often produces a comic effect.

Other writers deploy dramatic irony which describes a situation where one or more characters in a literary work are unaware of a significant fact known by the audience or reader. As an example we can recall the famous Kate Chopin's (1894) "The story of an hour" in which the main character Louise suffers from a weak heart. Consequently, her family takes pains to break the news that her husband has died in a train accident. However, when she is finally told, she locks herself in her bedroom only to realize that she is not in the least sad but elated because she feels free, free as she had never felt when she was married. The rest of the characters believe that she has locked herself up to give free rein to her grief. However, an hour later, Louise's husband comes back from work. He has not been in the train crash. He is safe and sound. When Louise sees him she does suffer the feared heart attack and actually dies. The doctor is summoned and he says that she has died for "joy…for joy that kills". None of the characters could ever possibly find out the real cause of her death, but the writer makes the readers her accomplices. We know better.

Brilliant, isn't it? And we may spend our whole life quoting, but this is not the point. What we want is to acknowledge the importance of this figure of speech in everyday life, in politics and journalism as well as in literature, and to help students grasp and ultimately enjoy irony either when they read or listen to native speakers.This ability to detect irony is sometimes heralded as a test of intelligence and sophistication. When a text intended to be ironic is not seen as such, the effect can be disastrous.

The Economist's article, "A Quiet Joke at your Expense" (1999), narrates a story that will be useful to illustrate the point: When Sir Oliver Franks was Britain's ambassador in Washington after the war, a journalist asked leading ambassadors what they desired in the coming year. "The Russian ambassador mentioned the liberation of colonial peoples; the French ambassador spoke of a new era of international co-operation. Sir Oliver expressed a desire for a small box of crystallized fruit." If this answer is understood literally, then the effect is preposterous. Therefore, to help students perceive the meaning intended should be a must for us, teachers of English, since irony is a phenomenon capable

of being experienced by anyone. For people to be able to share an experience of irony, or for an author to expect a certain reaction to it, its interpretation must become a part of the culture. In fact, non native learners are motivated to read not only for entertainment or information, but because "they want to gain access to a community of readers." (Nunan 1998:72)

How to help our students become aware of irony
So, how can we help our students not to fall into any of these "crippling handicaps" (Booth 1974)? At University or tertiary level, advanced students will most probably be given theoretical information as regards the concept and categorization of irony. Once they get familiar with this device, their advanced level will most certainly allow them to enjoy irony and become watchful in case they encounter it. A particularly interesting assignment that might be given to these learners is to ask them to look for examples of irony in TV series that employ it with certain frequency. For instance, "Dr House", which uses irony and sarcasm all the time so as to hinder House's feelings; "Two and Half Men", whose main characters torture each other with their ironic remarks; " The Big Bang Theory"; the timeless "Friends" and of course "The Sympsons". A whole-class session could later be held so that students can share the examples of irony found. As a follow up, in this class or in a subsequent one, the teachers and students can discuss what helped them detect irony or what prevented them from spotting irony in the series mentioned.
 However, if you work with intermediate or upper-intermediate learners, theoretical aspects will be left aside to focus students' attention on the intended meaning disregarding the name or kind of the rhetorical device being used. Nonetheless, at all levels it is possible to sensitize learners to the charm of irony by designing activities to foreground it. In the case of dramatic irony, the question would be "what if?" For instance: What would have happened if Louise's husband had actually died in the train accident? The answer is obvious: There would be no story or it would be a completely different one.
As for verbal irony, the same could be done providing them with the literal alternative or , with more advanced students, asking them to paraphrase so as to realize how the whole flavour of the text would be lost if this figure were not there. Take as an example the case of the British ambassador and imagine what the effect would have been if Sir Oliver had expressed a desire for peace instead of a small box of crystallized fruit. Then, there would be no anecdote; it would be just another inconsequential conversation among diplomats who do not really believe that they can make any change. It is the incongruity of the ambassador's answer what turns this exchange memorable and makes us smile scornfully imagining how taken aback the Russian and the French diplomats must have been after that ludicrous response.

Conclusions
In short, it is our firm belief that critical analysis as well as exposure will help our students to be on the alert and detect irony when they come across it. Here lies our challenge as teachers. We should provide our students with many opportunities to be in contact with different types of texts which utilize this rhetorical figure in any of its forms. As a consequence, students will certainly become more irony-aware and less prone to fall into misunderstandings, more able to pay attention to the subtleties, more open minded, better prepared to the unexpected and definitely closer to the British culture. In the end, this will give them a sense ofachievement and a feeling of belonging. It will make them more confident and proficient listeners and readers. We may say that the bold ones may even start using irony unconsciously both when they speak and when they write, thus experiencing the satisfaction of becoming victimizers rather than victims.

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The Use of CLT Activities to Bridge the Gap between Cultures

Sub-theme: Cultural Awareness in the Communicative Class

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Abstract

In this session, we will show how we have blended Culture and CLT through the implementation of three main extra-curricular activities at "United English Institute", a language school in Córdoba. We will describe how *English Cafés* with native speakers, *Professional Workshops* and *Reading Contests* and a *Reading Club* can prompt our students to engage in real communicative tasks at the time they become aware of the culture of some English-speaking countries.

Introduction

"Language is […] a window to the culture" and culture is expressed in the language (Moran, 2001, p.35). Through a language, it is possible to learn about the beliefs, customs, traditions and practices of its speakers. Language and Culture are fused and they cannot be taught separately. Therefore, it is the task of an English language teacher to help students both become aware of the culture of the language taught and bridge the gap between their culture and the culture of the different English speaking countries. To face this challenge, a teacher should draw on the different methodologies available in his/her setting to blend language-and-culture in a successful way. Mainstream language teaching has opted for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as the recommended basis for language teaching methodology since the 80s. The major tenet of CLT is that "if students are involved in meaning-focused communicative tasks, then 'language learning will take care of itself' and that plentiful exposure to language in use and plenty of opportunities to use it are vitally important for students' development of knowledge and skill" (Harmer, 2007, p.69). However, "how to implement the CLT principles at the level of classroom procedures remains central to discussions of the Communicative Approach" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.172). In this session, we aim at sharing how we have blended Culture and CLT through the implementation of three main extra-curricular activities at "United", a Language School in Córdoba. First, we will describe how carrying out *English Cafés* with native speakers from South Africa, Ireland, the U.S.A and Australia has encouraged students to communicate in English to get to know about the history, geography, people, celebrations, music and food of the different countries. Second, we will describe how organizing *Professional Workshops* to write a CV, make a phone call and get ready for a job interview can help students "use the right language in the right way according to the expectations of the members of the culture" (Moran, 2001, p.35). Third, we will show the advantages of organizing a *Reading Contests* and a *Reading Club* to engage students in discussions about different literary texts from English speaking countries. Finally, we will refer to the implications of these activities for English Language Teachers.

Language and Culture

"When language is used in contexts of communication, it is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways" (Kramsch, 1998, p.3). Kramsch (1998) claims that language shapes culture in three ways: language expresses, embodies and symbolizes cultural reality. Language is used to express facts, ideas and events shared among the speakers; language creates meanings and experience; and language is a symbol of the speakers' social identity (Kramsch, 1998, p.3). On the other hand, Kramsch (1998) states that "language is also shaped and socialized through culture" (p.6). In fact, cultural conventions dictate the types of texts and the norms of interaction and interpretation to be used in a given cultural context. As a cultural shaping and a cultural shaped artifact, "language is […] a window to the culture" and a key to learn about the speakers of that language (Moran, 2001, p.35). This interdependence between language and culture cannot be neglected in the foreign language class, however, the integration of cultural elements in the class still remains a challenge for language teachers.

Omaggio Hadley (2001) states that the problems of the teaching of culture in the language class can be traced back to three main reasons: lack of class time, insufficient teacher's knowledge of the target culture and the problem of dealing with students' attitudes. First, "the study of culture involves time that many teachers do not feel they can spare in an already overcrowded curriculum" (Omaggio Hadley, 2001, p.346). Second, Omaggio Hadley (2001) suggests that teachers are afraid of teaching about the target language culture because they do not have enough facts about the subject or they feel they are not capable of providing a proper cross-cultural understanding. Finally, the author (2001) states that some teachers neglect the teaching of culture since they want to avoid dealing with the negative attitudes students may have when approaching cultural phenomena different from their own native culture (p.347). These reasons, together with the presumed assumption that language students may not find cultural issues interesting, have made many English language teachers put aside the teaching of culture in the language class.

CTL Activities to Blend Language and Culture

Since the 80s Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been the recommended basis for language teaching methodology in mainstream language teaching. Harmer (2007) states that "the real problem when attempting to define CLT […] is that it means different things to different people" (p.69). In fact, as Brown (2007) puts it "[CLT] is a unified but broadly based, theoretically well informed set of tenets about the nature of language and of language learning and teaching (p.46). For CLT proponents, developing Hymes' (1972) "communicative competence" is considered the ultimate goal of language teaching (in Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.159). To promote learning, CLT practices should involve activities that foster real communication (communication principle), activities in which language is used to carry out tasks (task principle) and activities in which the learners use language in a meaningful and authentic way (meaningfulness principle) (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.161). However, "how to implement the CLT principles at the level of classroom procedures remains central to discussions of the Communicative Approach" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p.172). The implementation of the CLT principles in the classroom is still under discussion, nevertheless, in its various forms, CLT continues to be the preferred approach for most language teachers and materials designers (Richards & Rodgers, 2008).

At *United* we have tried to carry out three extra-curricular activities that promote the CLT principles at the time they help raise cultural awareness: *English Cafés* with native speakers, *Professional Workshops* and *Reading Contests* and a *Reading Club.*

English Cafés

Omaggio Hadley (2001) suggests that one possible strategy for teaching culture is inviting *native informants* since they "can be valuable resources [...] both as sources of current information about the target culture and as linguistic models for students (p.361). At *United* we have adopted this strategy by means of *English Cafés.* The purpose of English Cafés is to provide students with the opportunity to practise English in a relaxed atmosphere, usually a café, where students get the chance to improve their language skills, learn about English speaking cultures and meet other people who share the same passion for the English language. Swan (1985) states that "a great deal of learning takes place in settings which are remote from the situation where the skills or knowledge will ultimately be used" (p.83). *English Cafés* allow students to use English in an authentic situation *w*hile enjoying delicious pastries as well as hot and cold beverages.

The gatherings take place once a month and they usually last two hours. Since the purpose of the activity is not only to cultivate language skills but also to learn about the customs and traditions of English Speaking Peoples, every month different English native speakers from around the world are invited to our meetings to share their cultural knowledge with our students. The meetings take place in a relaxed and natural environment that offers students the experience of using English in a real communicative context. There are no books, no assignments in these meetings. However, before the meetings take place, students are invited to find out about the country, region or city from which the native speakers come from. With the help of their language teachers, students are also encouraged to prepare questions about any issue of their interest (sports, music, hometowns, politics, etc) that they would like to ask to the native speakers. Our guest speakers are also invited to prepare a short presentation about their country to raise questions and topics for discussion in the meeting. Since the common language is English and not Spanish, students have to resort to their knowledge of English and their different communicative strategies to get meaning across without using their mother tongue. Moreover, in order to encourage everyone to speak, students take turns to participate according to their level: beginners take the floor first by asking the informant personal questions, intermediate

students follow with more factual questions and finally advanced students and teachers hold the floor with culture-specific questions. In this way, everyone gets the chance to speak and feel that they can use English for real communication.

So far we have had guests from Ireland, South Africa, the U.S.A and Australia and in all the cases we have been quite surprised by the students' response. With Val, the Irish guest, for example, the students could not help asking her thousands of questions related to Saint Patrick's Day and the ways in which such festivity was celebrated. Val took advantage of the occasion and referred to the symbolic meaning culturally-loaded words such as "leprechaun", "shamrock" and "Guinness". Helen, the South-African guest, impressed her audience by referring to the social situation Apartheid had brought about in her native country. Christina, from Australia amazed us with the history of her country. She referred to the ancient times of Aborigines right through to the colonization by the English. We learnt about the history, geography and culture of Australia. She outlined some key dates and events and informed us about the current situation of Aboriginal people. We were astonished by their works of art. She delighted us with the sound of music of typical aboriginal instruments   such us the "clap sticks" and the "didjeridu". Finally, our guests learnt how to greet Australians employing some common aboriginal phrases. Jessica, our guest from the USA, made a fascinating presentation on the USA and the most common stereotypes associated to each state. We learnt that California is usually regarded as the party state; Texas is regarded as the place where the most educated people are, with the best manners and the people of North and South Carolina are seen as very fashion-conscious by people from their own country.

English Cafés have helped our students and teachers speak English in a friendly and enriching atmosphere that has broaden their minds and helped them appreciate different ways of looking at life.

Professional Workshops

Kramsch (1998) states that "what distinguish people from different cultures are the different ways they use orate and literate discourse types in various speech genres for various social purposes" (p.47). In fact, different discourse types require the use of specific rules and conventions which are shared by members of a certain speech community and which are culturally bound. Knowledge of these culture specific discourse styles can help both young and senior professionals who want to work in an English speaking country. At *United* we provide for different *Professional Workshops* that will contribute, in our view, to this aim. The workshops equip students with the language skills and the genre rules needed to write a CV, make professional phone calls and attend job interviews. We consider that, by helping our students develop the necessary cultural strategies and skills useful to understand and deal with these culture-specific genres, we can help them "use the right language in the right way according to the expectations of the members of the culture" (Moran, 2001, p.35).

The workshops on CV Writing, Phone Calls and Job Interviews are aimed at students with a pre-intermediate level of English and over. The workshops run an entire morning or afternoon and the objective of these sessions is to develop the necessary communicative skills for effective communication in English (oral and written). These sessions are usually structured into four main stages. The first stage aims at activating students' schema about the rules and conventions of the genres in their own culture since, as Omaggio Hadley (2001) puts it, "students often approach target-cultural phenomena from within their own native-language cultural framework". At this stage, then, students are encouraged to take part in an informal discussion which aims at activating students' knowledge of the different rules and formalities involved in CV writing, phone calls and job interviews in Spanish. The second stage seeks to elicit a cross-cultural comparison between the genre rules of the native and the target culture. In order to achieve this, students are prompted to draw on their previous knowledge to make informed guesses about the rules that apply for the same genres in English. The third stage deals with authentic samples of the type of genre studied to help students become aware of both the specific linguistic and cultural features present in the different genres. In the case of CV Writing, students are prompted to analyse different English CVs taken from authentic sources such as dictionaries, writing books and job-application websites. Omaggio Hadley (2001) suggests using videotaped interviews and observational dialogues since they are "excellent for providing natural, authentic linguistic exchanges that include paralinguisitic information as well" (p.365). These two resources are used when dealing with Phone Calls and Job Interviews to show not only the conventional linguistic expressions used in each genre but also to demonstrate conventional language, gestures and other cultural features such as social distance, eye contact, and the like. Finally, the last stage consists of different hands-on activities in which students actually produce the genres analysed. Writing their own CVs, taking part in role plays that mock phone calls and job interviews has helped students put into practice the strategies and skills acquired at the time they use the target language as a means to achieve an end.

Reading Contests and Reading Club
At *United* we have implemented monthly *Reading Contests* to encourage our students to cultivate their imagination and information of the world while at the same time they develop their language skills. Students are invited to borrow books or magazines from the school library and when the book is returned they have to fill in a form with questions about the book. The questions aim at making students find out about the author, summarize the story and provide their own opinion about the book. The higher the level of English the students have, the more complex the questions are. In fact, while beginners and pre-intermediate students are only asked to search for factual information about the author and the plot, higher-level students are prompted to find out about the social, historical and literary time the book was written. This form is placed in a box and every month a raffle is carried out. *Reading Contests* not only extrinsically motivate students to read a book in English but they also introduce students to the world of art in English.

A *Reading Club* is a group of people who converge to discuss a book they are reading. The purpose of the activity is to offer students an opportunity for real conversation while engaging in fascinating literary analysis. The meetings at *United* take place once a month and students are divided and assigned different books according to their level of English. The meetings may take place at the school or at a café and each group has no more than eight members. Each *Reading Club* consists of six to eight sessions. There are pre-reading activities, while-reading activities and post-reading activities. The actual reading takes place at their homes and the focus of the meetings is to share their impressions on the stories. Pre-reading activities include doing research about the author, the historical context of the time the book was written, etc. While-reading activities include the discussion of characters and important events and post-reading activities invite students to reflect on the impact the writer's personal experiences and his/her social and historical context had on his/her work of art.

Conclusion

In this session we have showed how *English Cafés* with native speakers, *Professional Workshops* and *Reading Contests* and a *Reading Club* can prompt our students to engage in real communicative tasks at the time they become aware of the culture of some English-speaking countries. We firmly believe that it is possible to apply some CLT principles to the teaching of culture and that such practice can lead to an enjoyable learning experience.

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Communicative Activities in our Phonetics and Phonology Class

Sub-theme: Discursive practices and communicative language teaching. Diction (phonetics, phonology or "expression") and communicative language teaching.

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Abstract

In this presentation we will share our experience using communicative activities in our "Phonetics and Phonology I" class. We will speak about the role of instructors during such activities and the work done in class moving from guided practice to freer communication tasks in which students are encouraged to speak freely without any kind of script that limits spontaneity. We will finally point out the benefits of these activities and the positive results.

Introduction

With the advent of communicative language teaching (CLT) in the late 1960s, the role of pronunciation in ESL learning became important. CLT meant a shift from specific linguistic competences to broader communicative ones as goals for both the teacher and the learner (Morley, 1991). In the teacher and translator training courses offered at the School of Languages, National University of Córdoba, phonological instruction plays a key role during the first three years of the training that students receive. As phonetics teachers, we face the challenge of helping learners discover the importance of phonology in real communication.

One of the main objectives in "Phonetics and Phonology I", a course included on the curriculum, is that students produce spontaneous stretches of talk making use of correct intonation patterns that fulfil the communicative function students desire to perform. To reach that goal, we base our instruction on Discourse Intonation (Brazil, Coulthard & Johns, 1980; Brazil, 1985), a highly comprehensive model through which we can teach how intonation patterns affect the communicative value of speech. It is when linking theory to practice that CLT comes on stage since our practical work involves students in realistic communication activities which, apart from helping instructors assess whether students are internalizing the contents of the subject, enable students to discover how the adequate use of intonation contributes to the successful achievement of a communicative task.

In this paper, we will first refer to Discourse Intonation (Brazil, 1980; Brazil, 1985) as the theoretical background that supports our instruction. Next, we will present some of the communicative activities we use in our "Phonetics and Phonology I" classes and show how these work as stepping stones to help students unveil the communicative value that intonation has in English. Then, we will speak about the role of students and instructors during such activities and the work done in class that leads to freer communication tasks in which, although students are given preparation time, they are encouraged to speak freely without any kind of script that limits spontaneity. We will finally point out the benefits of these activities and the positive results.

Theoretical Background

Discourse Intonation

The Theory of Discourse Intonation (DI) (Brazil, Coulthard & Johns, 1980; Brazil,1985) provides the framework within which we base our instruction since it presents a comprehensive model of the intonation of the English language. This model recognises four subsystems within which speakers make choices: prominence, tone, key and termination. In this paper we will develop the first two since these are the ones dealt with in "Phonetics and Phonology I". DI holds that speakers break oral discourse into parts, called *tone units*, to organize what they say. Each tone unit can contain one or more prominent syllables. The assignment of prominence is significant because "prominence reflects the *speaker's judgment* that the word in question contains *matter* which, *at this time and in this context*, will be informing." (Brazil *et. al.*, 1980: 41).

According to DI, speakers also make choices within the tone subsystem and that selection is realized in the last prominent syllable of each tone unit (the tonic syllable). The system presented by these authors contains tones which are described as falling and rising tones and a neutral one. Like prominence, tones also constitute a meaningful choice on the part of speakers and they determine

information status in speech which can be presented as new or shared information, and, also, as incomplete, subordinate and most relevant information. Moreover, through the use of tones, speakers set role relationships between them in an interaction and reach communicative goals.

In "Phonetics and Phonology I", which is a subject included in the second year of the teacher and translation training courses, students go deep into the subsystems of prominence and tones and learn how to use them through meaningful communicative activities. Thus, by means of these tasks, learners are allowed to discover one of the main strengths of the system: intonation is seen as discoursal in nature and, as such, it is learnt, analyzed and practiced in context.

Pronunciation Instruction within a Communicative Framework

As from the 80s, pronunciation has come to be considered not just as an isolated skill to be drilled and practiced on its own, but as an integral part of communication that needs to be acquired so that students eventually develop 'first-rate speaking skills' (Morley, 1994: 68) and are able to communicate successfully in the target language. Thus, according to this author, attention should not only be given to the discrete elements of pronunciation, which contribute to students' intelligibility, but also to "general elements of communicability in particular settings" which contribute to the development of what Canale & Swain (1980) called *sociolinguistic, strategic* and *discourse competence* (Morley, 1994: 73). According to Yule (1990), the pronunciation class should combine activities whose goal is both "getting-the-sounds-correct" and "getting-the-message-across" (Morley, 1994: 71), always taking into account that the ultimate goal of instruction is to contribute to the development of students' communicative competence.

However, Celce-Murcia *et. al.* (1996: 28) point out that advocates of this approach have not "developed an agreed-upon set of strategies for teaching pronunciation appropriately". This is why Seidlhofer (2008: 57) believes that the absence of specific methodology can be considered as "an opportunity for teachers to make choices which are most appropriate for the specific learners they are working with". Consequently, in "Phonetics and Phonology I" we make use of speech-pronunciation communicative tasks as tools to help our students discover the communicative value of intonation in English.

Activities

When we started using communication activities as teaching and learning tools in the subject, our first challenge was to think of the reasons our students have for speaking since that was crucial to devise realistic situations that were both "purpose- and desire- driven" (McDonough and Shaw, 2008: 134). Thus, we came up with a short list that suffers modifications every year depending on the group of students and their interests as well as on the contents dealt with in "Language II":

Discussing and negotiating arrangements (plans for the weekend or holidays, buying a present, organizing a party, etc.)

Talking socially to a variety of people and in a variety of places and situations (dominant/non-dominant dominant/dominant non-dominant/non-dominant)

- Asking for assistance, advice or directions
- Discussing and giving their opinions about hot issues

This kind of activities is introduced once students have worked on perception and production of prominence and tones in a more guided fashion. In order to illustrate the manner in which the theoretical support relates to classroom instruction, we present the following set of activities which are generally carried out in class.

A) Giving Directions

Students are asked to give examples of different situations in which they tell directions or give instructions to an interlocutor. Instantly, learners prompt answers such as, instructions of use for a new machine at home, set up instructions for a software programme or the latest web search engine, directions to a lost visitor in our city to find a museum, etc.

In pairs, learners are given a map each that that consists of a simple city design with some buildings and their names. As the aim of the activity is that one of the learners gives directions to the other, they review some useful phrases to reach this purpose like, "Go straight across", "Right at the lights", "Next to the supermarket", "Take the next left", etc. Both students share the information on the map about the starting place and they both know where the lost partner desires to arrive at, but just the dominant partner has the names of the buildings written down on the map. The other classmate's drawing has no building names written down, so that in this way one of the students is the one who has all the information and can perform the role of a dominant speaker.

Next, the conversation begins with one learner asking for directions and the other indicating how to get, for instance, from the book shop to the shoe shop.

In order for learners to take turns to perform a dominant role, students can interchange their maps and, this time the learner who was non-dominant before plays the role of the dominant one and gives directions to a different place. To carry on with the activity in this way, students who are now the dominant ones should change the names of buildings and the starting point as well.

B) A Job Interview

This time learners are asked to form pairs and play the roles of job seeker and job interviewer, respectively. This time they work with an activity from Bradford (1988) where there is a job ad. They are asked to imagine the qualifications needed for the job advertised in the text. After they brainstorm some ideas, they get ready for the role play. One of them assumes to be the candidate and the other one the job hunter. They work with different pieces of information: the job interviewer with a description of the job and some other details he or she may need to inform about at the moment of the interview, such as the working hours or pay, and the candidate with personal information, in which he/she will highlight the qualifications she/he thinks are necessary for the job. In this situation, as well as in many others, there is a clear difference between the roles of the employer (dominant) and of the prospective employee (non-dominant). So, the students are asked to pay special attention to the tones each participant uses because overt dominance on the job hunter´s part may bring about undesirable consequences.

Learners can take turns to perform the two different roles. This time, the class as a whole can suggest possible posts, such as teacher in a kindergarden, library assistant, secretary in a famous health center in the city, etc. This time, learners should work out the job qualities and the personal information of the candidate first, and then, perform the role play.

Finally, students can choose any of the role play situations done so far in this section to act it out for the rest of the class. This stage should help them place themselves more in the situation of the role play and reflect on and monitor their production.

Teachers' and Learners' Roles

Before students start working with the communication activities, facilitators refer to certain aspects related to the preparation of the activities that play a key role to achieve the purpose for which they are used. First, especially during the first times students carry out these activities in class, they are given the situations in advance so that they can go back home and prepare some vocabulary or expressions typically occurring in the given situations. Second, students are encouraged to work in small groups, pairs or threes, since the idea is that everybody has the chance to speak at different points in the dialogue and the number of contributions is balanced throughout the whole activity, although no length is established since we believe that may prevent students from coming up with a realistic dialogue. Third, students are discouraged from rehearsing the dialogue many times or to have a script at hand since spontaneity is a key component of the exercise. Besides, as students are introduced to the intonation of declarative and interrogative sentences, they are also told that all the members in the groups should have the chance to ask and answer questions at different points in the conversation. As regards social relationships, students are given the freedom to choose the roles they want to play in the different situations. Nevertheless, careful attention to tone selection in connection with the role they play in the activity is fostered. Finally, once the preparation time is over, facilitators move around the room listening to the different groups and giving feedback or they sometimes ask for volunteers to role-play the situations in front of the whole class. Since all the groups work on the same or similar situations at a time, when this happens, the rest of the class is encouraged to take a critical stance and contribute with ideas that aim at improving the volunteers´ performance.

Conclusion

The inclusion of communication activities in our Phonetics and Phonology courses has undoubtedly enhanced our classes and this has had positive effects on our students. First, the fact the situations used to contextualize the dialogues are realistic shows our learners that they can put into practice what they learn in real life, outside the phonetics class. As the activities are focused on content, when engaging in them, students have "a desire to communicate something" and a "real purpose for communicating" (Harmer, 2001: 85), which contributes to initiating and maintaining their motivation. Second, asking them to role-play in front of the class contributes to build their self-confidence when speaking in the L2, which is a key attribute for future professionals of the language. Besides, this brings about discussions related to allocation of prominence and tone selection that favors cooperation among peers, contributes to learning and, what is more important, unveils "the enormous importance of pronunciation for successful communication" (Seidlhofer, 2008: 64). However, we should not forget that we are the ones responsible for creating the "right kind of supportive atmosphere

in the class" (Harmer, 2001: 271) so that students feel comfortable and confident, and take the most advantage out of the communicative tasks proposed.

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Learning Styles and IT within a Communicative Approach: From the TTC to the Real Class
Subtheme: Communication oriented activities and tasks.

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We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time
T.S. Eliot, Four Quarters

Abstract
Can the inclusion of different learning styles and the use of IT contribute to the communicative language approach in EFL teaching? This paper discusses the findings and implications of the integration of learning styles and IT in EFL classes within a communicative perspective in language teaching, from the Teaching Training College to the real language classroom. Experiences carried out by teachers and trainees from IPES Paulo Freire and their findings will be shared and discussed.

The Communicative Language Teaching Approach is the theory that holds language is communication and is based on the idea that learning a language successfully implies the development of the skill to communicate real me**a**ning. Thus, its ultimate aim is to develop communicative competence. When learners are involved in real communication, they will employ their natural strategies for language acquisition and this will allow them to learn to use the language meaningfully. It is for this reason that CLTA considers different language skills and fluency as relevant dimensions of communication. Besides, CLT considers that learning is a process of creative construction that involves trial and error. So, how far can the incorporation of **learning styles** and the use of **information technology** contribute to the communicative approach in the learning process of a foreign language? This paper is oriented to share findings and implications of the use of these two "new elements" in the communicative approach when teaching and learning a foreign language at teacher training college**s** as well as at secondary and primary schools. Hence, it will also be an aim to bridge the gap between TTC and students as future professionals, and their training in real teaching-learning contexts. Experiences carried out by teachers and trainees from IPES "Paulo Freire" from Río Grande –Tierra del Fuego **-** will be described and discussed in the light of the methodological trend so as to share the reality of TTC in the furthest south part of the country and the way future teachers start their teaching.

Learning Styles
In order to foster communication when learning a FL, different learning styles must be taken into account. It's a foregone conclusion that learners do not learn all in the same way and that they often choose to use what has become known as a "preferred learning style". The term "learning style" has been defined widely as "A mode of learning-an individual's favourite or best manner(s) in which to think and process information as well as demonstrate learning." (Pritchard 2009, 41) Therefore, learning preferences refer to learners' favoured intellectual approach to learning, which has a great impact on each person's learning progress.
"If a particular approach to learning is encouraged by a teacher, there is a possibility that some pupils will work and learn less effectively than others in the class. For this reason, an awareness of learning styles should make an impact on pedagogy i.e. the ways in which teachers choose to teach, and should help them to a better understanding of the learners' needs, as well as to an awareness of the need to differentiate materials, not only by the level of difficulty but also by learning style."(Pritchard 2009, 42) Moreover, literature dealing with learning styles suggests that learners who are actively engaged in the learning process will more likely achieve success. Thus, the more aware of their learning preferences and of understanding the learning process the learners are, the greater the improvement of learning outcomes will be.
Neuro-Linguistic Programing (NLP) defined by Bandler and Grinder (Frogs into Princes: Neuro Linguistic Programming,1979, 6-7) as a multi-dimensional process involving the development of behavioural competence for communication has identified three particular learning styles as channels for presenting information: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. Visual learners prefer to learn by seeing. They prefer information to be presented in diagrams, graphs, maps, posters and displays. They often

use hand movements when describing or retelling events. Auditory learners prefer to learn by listening. They have good auditory memory and enjoy discussion, lectures, interviewing and listening to stories. They like sequence, repetition and summary. Finally, kinaesthetic learners learn by doing. They are related to physical action and also internal emotions and feelings. They enjoy physical activities, manipulating objects and practical first hand experiences. All students use the three styles of learning to some extent. However, some learners rely greatly on one of them. This over reliance on one style as well as the unwillingness to adopt another one can limit some learning situations and might hinder learning.

Information Technology
Considering learning a life-long process and acknowledging the fact that information explosion is an ever increasing phenomenon, education itself should meet the demands of a wide variety of learners' needs. Therefore the use of Information Technology becomes a crucial tool to meet them. From early age, a great number of young people are hanging out in cyberspace. They are downloading podcasts, competing in multiplayer games, negotiating online identities, playing out digital dreams. Digital media saturate their lives, occupying many hours of each day and shaping what and how they think: Rarely has a phenomenon affecting children and teenagers been so widespread and so powerful yet so poorly understood.

We need to know more about how children choose media experiences; about the impact of adult participation or scaffolding of media experiences on benefits or risks; about the interventions that might buffer negative effects or reinforce positive ones. To study how children use digital media can help to make their learning processes more transparent as well as to give adults a window into how they are thinking and how they develop.

In the 21st century traditional literacies are crucial but not sufficient. A new technological literacy arises. Particularly, in order **to** teach and learn a FL it is highly relevant to consider what students need to be able to do within this new learning context.

The following notions have been adapted from the document "The power of Pow! Wham! by Rima Shore (2008).

As technology increasingly saturates daily experiences, children need to express fluently using multiple media (text, video, graphic design, sound)**,** to use those media to navigate across multiple platforms such as computers, handheld devices, cell phones and iPods. Consequently, this should be done adopting safe and responsible practices, that is to say, using tools effectively and safely.

Critical thinking must not be neglected. Computers allow us to recover and process immense quantities of information from innumerable sources available via the internet, but students must discern which sources are credible or relevant. Critical thinking means taking in many perspectives, filtering out irrelevant or distracting data and evaluating what information is the most relevant according to the task(s) provided.

It is important to understand that what people think, decide, do and create are connected across geographic, socioeconomic and disciplinary boundaries. It is said that gamers learn about how a dynamic set of parts interrelate to make meaning, and how people use and transform systems. As they play, they learn to follow rules and how to deal with winning and losing.

Living in an interconnected world presents challenges to an educational system that has historically downplayed the importance of international context. Today, almost every current issue has a global dimension requiring students to learn innumerable facts not covered in the classroom. Thus, the field is wide open for technological innovation.

Nowadays, there is a collaborative learning dimension building up learning communities. Young people are growing up at a time when knowledge development is a team sport. Many digital activities involve participation online communities and to the surprise of many adults youngsters are increasingly involved in such communities. Digital collaboration prepares students to participate in learning communities.

As children and teens take part in collaborative processes**,** they can try out many different roles: peers, leaders, writers, editors, scientists and critical friends. Among the most important identities they can experience using digital tools are those of designers, creators and inventors. It is said that in the future success will focus on our ability to think and act creatively.

Today's students are using multiple applications and platforms, often at the same time. They are becoming adept at cutting and pasting not only texts but also ideas, images, musical compositions, literary works, video clips and any type of content material. Electronic networking has also led to the unbundling of institutions, bodies of knowledge and even the concept of self. It can be challenging, in this context, for students to experience authenticity and coherence in their learning experiences but there should be persistence in the attempt of finding wholeness in a 'remix' world.

Experiences at TTC level
From inside the TT classroom the communicative approach adopts a major role. The classroom becomes the means of providing plenty of opportunities to use language in meaningful contexts. But what does 'meaningful' mean? Students will find language meaningful only if they have the need to communicate. Moreover, at tertiary level training this need should be grounded on the basis of stirring students' intrinsic motivation. Students should master the target language with expertise, but not for its own sake, they should engage in debates, analyses, expositions and conversations adopting an active and critical role.

We all agree that students learn if they are motivated to do so and their motivation varies depending on what interests them more. They show interest in different aspects of life according to their backgrounds, their learning styles, the way they think and their view of the world among other things. Therefore, considering different interests we are at the same time embodying different learning styles within the FL classroom. In order to do so, the teacher should develop and apply different methodologies, techniques and activities in order to fulfil the students´ learning needs.

As mentioned before, it is highly important to raise awareness among students about the way they learn and their preferences when learning. At teaching training level this conscious awareness will not only benefit students in their own learning instances but also in their future praxis as teachers. Therefore, there must be activities and tasks oriented to raise consciousness on students' learning styles in the FL class.

Let us take real cases in the classroom.
These are samples of tasks developed in the language class at the second year of TTC following the premises of the methodological trend analysed in this paper. Nevertheless, they might be perfectly well graded to different levels and learning contexts.

Within the unit *Secrets of the mind "Left brain – right brain?* students analysed texts related to the function of the brain. They researched on the specific jargon about the subject matter and consulted different sources (medical books, information in the net, newspaper articles, dictionaries, etc.) Then, they worked in pairs asking simple questions such as 'what did you have for breakfast this morning?' as the other waited for the mate's answer. They took down notes of eye movement, if the person answering was directing his/her eyes towards the left or right side. (These movements are spontaneous and involuntary, so there must be movement of some kind when searching for the answers in their brains.) Students drew conclusions about the way their brains function, whether they were more likely to use their left or right hemisphere and the corresponding characteristics applied based on the theory they had explored in previous tasks. As a follow up activity, students answered a on their own styles for thinking processes. As simple as they might seem, these self-awareness activities become crucial for students to understand themselves and therefore know about their own learning styles.

The unit *Food, glorious food* was developed considering differing learning styles. The first task accomplished was a group competition. Each group sent one volunteer to the front who was blindfolded and then given small containers with some items of food and spices inside. They tasted, touched and smelled the items in the containers and while doing so they described taste, smell and flavour for their group mates to guess what they were.

The aim of this task was to use the senses fully resorting to language and communication. In this way students who were more kinaesthetic had instances to explore with their bodies and their senses as well as representing those feelings and sensation**s** through language.

The OHP is a powerful tool which can be used in order to provide input in a more appealing and engaging way, especially for 'visual students'. Colours are exploited fully, images pop up from the screen in a more realistic way and a wide variety of charts and graphs can be utilized creatively. By means of this resource, new lexical items connected to food and healthy diets were presented. Students followed the presentation and interacted by brainstorming vocabulary and ideas.

 'Auditory students' benefited from this activity since they could explore sounds, translate them into mental images and finally they were able to find correspondence between sounds and language, searching for vocabulary or phrases which represented those sounds. The task consisted in listening to extracts of different sound effects connected to food (fried, chopped, stirred, whisked, etc.); liquids (boiled, poured, sprinkled, etc.) and kitchen tools and appliances (microwave oven, dish washer, toaster, coffee maker, etc.). They wrote down words and phrases depicting the sounds they were hearing. Then, they shared what they wrote with classmates and compared.

The role of ITs in the classroom:
The incorporation of ITs in the language classroom is an invaluable tool teachers must incorporate so

as to foster motivation, meaningful learning and consequently, communication.

The power of the ITs in the classroom goes beyond the boundaries of the teaching - learning setting. Having access to the information technology applied to language learning gives students social equity. The underlying belief that we all have access to knowledge and information goes in tandem with becoming active participants of the network community.

Therefore, one suggested activity might be students engaging in a cyber-forum with foreign students. The teacher should monitor their chatting and suggest topics for discussing. In this way, students are having real communication using technology applied to learning. This experience will enrich not only their language and technological competences but also their quality as human beings, since they are exploring and sharing their own and others' culture and realities.

Experiences at Primary and Secondary level

Trainees from the TTC Paulo Freire were given the possibility to deliver a language class at primary and secondary schools applying a communicative language approach**,** considering learning styles and incorporating IT.

They shared their findings and conclusions after their teaching experiences by showing a video of their classes.

Conclusion

Although the incorporation of learning styles and IT in a communicative approach when teaching a FL is gradually progressing, it seems that not all teaching professionals are able to fully visualise the importance of integrating learning styles and IT in their classes. It is necessary to incorporate "these elements" in order to maximize the potential of the communicative approach as well as catering for all students' needs, fostering inclusion and relocating the learner at the centre of the learning process.

All in all, the relevance of CLT should be established from the very beginning and by this we mean from the TTC. If we give teachers to be the possibility to learn a FL within a communicative perspective, by means of ITs and take into account different learning styles, it is quite likely they will apply a similar approach and methodology in their future teaching practice.

Finally, we would like to remark that the aim of this presentation was not to discover innovations in the realm of FLT but to share with you, our colleagues, the work being developed by teachers and trainees at TTC, primary and secondary levels, in the belief that communication is the means for learning a FL and that inclusion of learning styles and Its has become a must to succeed in learning.

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Intercultural Communicative Competence in EFL Textbooks

Sub-theme: Cultural awareness in the communicative class

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Abstract

This paper aims to present the results of an exploration into the way intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is developed in EFL coursebooks currently employed for elementary level General English courses in Córdoba, Argentina. Two locally produced and three international / global textbooks have been examined from an intercultural perspective. The paper reviews the literature and provides some insight into the instructional practices presently deployed for promoting ICC in classroom settings.

1. Introduction

The emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching Approach led to claim that learning a foreign language involves more than mere linguistic knowledge. It also involves command of certain strategies and competences in order to communicate successfully. Since then, the focus of learning has been on developing communicative competence which entails four dimensions, namely grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic and strategic competences (Canale & Swain, 1980 in Byram, 1997). A wide range of communicative activities has been developed in which priority is given to expressing meaning and functions, and developing skill-based learning (Richards, 2006). Van Ek (1986 in Byram, 1997) further expands the concept of communicative ability to include six competences, and adds sociocultural and social competence. Intercultural awareness is an important dimension that foreign language teaching should aim at developing. The purpose of this paper is to analyse how EFL coursebooks which are currently employed for elementary level General English courses in Córdoba, Argentina, contribute to that aim.

2. Intercultural Communicative Competence

Foreign language learning entails the presence of another culture or cultures and an encounter with Otherness. Alptekin (2002) points out that "learning a foreign language becomes a kind of enculturation, where one acquires new cultural frames of reference and a new world view, reflecting those of the target language culture and its speakers." (p.58). Becoming an interculturally competent speaker involves much more than mere awareness of the target culture.

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) can be defined as "the ability to communicate and interact across cultural boundaries" (Byram, 1997, p.7). The intercultural speaker is seen by the researcher as a learner capable of noticing and establishing relationships between his own cultural beliefs, behaviours and meanings and those of his interlocutor's language.

The development of ICC is a multiplex process that involves not only the acquisition of linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse competence but also the promotion of attitudes, knowledge and skills. Byram and Zarate (1997 in Skopinskaja, 2003) distinguish the following features in the development of ICC in a foreign language: "savoirs" (knowledge of Self and Other), "savoir comprendre" (skills of interpreting and relating), "savoir être" (intercultural attitudes), and "savoir faire/apprendre" (skills of discovery and interaction) (p. 11). The Common European Framework of Reference (2001) describes these "saviors" as: declarative knowledge ("savoir"), skills and know-how ("savoir faire"), existential competence ("savoir être"), and ability to learn ("savoir apprendre"). Developing intercultural skills and know-how involves the acquisition of different types of abilities and cultural sensitivity, which are paramount for successful intercultural communication.

It is generally assumed that teaching practices and materials integrate the development of ICC with the acquisition of linguistic knowledge in the foreign language classroom. Liljana Skopinskaja (2003) points out that "textbooks used in foreign language (FL) instruction are primarily designed to facilitate language learning, but they cannot simply do that since language learning is inseparable from its cultural context" (p. 39).Teaching sequences and materials should not disregard the learners' own cultural identity in the development of ICC. Pulverness (2003 in López Barrios & Villanueva, 2007) states that teachers need "to address more thoroughly the kind of cultural adjustment that underlies

the experience of learning a foreign language" (p. 81). Therefore, promoting open-mindedness, tolerance of difference, respect and awareness of divergent and convergent features of the learners' culture and the target culture are crucial in ICC development.

3. The study

This study focused on the analysis of some textbooks currently employed for elementary level General English courses in Córdoba, Argentina. Following the categories provided by Newby (1997, p.7 in Skopinskaja, 2003), these coursebooks have been classified into *locally produced* and *international / global textbooks* since both types of materials are used in the local context. The study involved the analysis of five textbooks, two locally produced coursebooks: *For teens 1* (Corradi & Rabinovich, 2009, henceforth **FT)** and *Top Teens 1* (Villareal & Kirac, 2003, henceforth **TT**) and three international ones: *New English File Elementary* (Oxenden, Latham-Koenig & Seligson, 2004, henceforth **NEFE)**, *Log in Starter* (Llanas & Williams, 2007, henceforth **LI**), and *We can do it! Intro* (Downie, Gray & James, 2007, henceforth **WCDI**). The selection of these two types of teaching materials was not random since we expected this categorization to yield relevant data for the analysis of textbooks from an intercultural perspective.

The present study entailed the analysis of cultural issues conveyed and dealt with through the texts used for reading comprehension and /or language presentation and their supporting images as well as through text–related tasks, which consisted mainly in skills integration activities. The exploration also comprised looking into the Teacher's book of each cousebook to determine the extent to which the promotion of ICC was an explicit aim of the materials. Several classifications have been devised by different authors to account for the cultural content of teaching materials and the extent to which these materials include the target language culture (C2) and / or the source language culture (C1). In order to provide a more detailed description of the intercultural component of the EFL textbooks analyzed, we have followed the classification proposed by Cortazzi and Jin (1999 in Skopinskaja, 2003), which as well as distinguishing the source and the target culture, includes a variety of other cultures in which the L2 is spoken as a second or foreign language. In the analysis, these cultures have been named C1, C2 and C3, respectively.

The main concern of the study was to find answers to the following questions: *How is intercultural awareness raised in EFL textbooks? What kinds of instructional practices do the coursebooks deploy for the development of intercultural communicative competence? What are the most recurrent types of activities offered for that purpose?* The instrument for analysis consisted in a checklist designed to examine two main aspects: the cultural content of the texts and images on the one hand, and the degree of reflection that the follow-up tasks promoted, on the other. So as to determine the former, only five criteria out of the nine proposed by Byram *et al* (1994, pp. 51-52) were employed, namely: *socialization and the life cycle*, *national history*, *national geography*, *stereotypes* and *national cultural heritage*. The decision to include only those five items was based on their perceived suitability for elementary level courses. In other words, it was thought that the language constraints imposed by an elementary level textbook might determine the choice of certain aspects of a given culture.

Since the cultural information given in the reading texts cannot be considered the only source for the development of intercultural communicative competence, it was deemed necessary to include another dimension of analysis. The extent to which intercultural awareness is raised was analyzed as well, taking into account the taxonomy devised by López Barrios & Villanueva (2007). These authors state that cultural reflection as shown in EFL coursebooks can fall into one of three situations. Situation 1 refers to those in which C1 and C2 are treated as two separate entities and no attempt is made at drawing a connection between them. In situation 2, some tasks are offered with the aim of comparing and / or contrasting the cultures and, therefore, attaining the goal of intercultural reflection to some extent. Finally, in situation 3, the teaching materials foster "a higher degree of cross-cultural confrontation" (p. 83).

4. Results

The five coursebooks analysed deal with intercultural issues but they differ in the treatment of the target culture and the links made to the learners' cultural identity. In the three global textbooks (**NEFE, WCDI,** and **LI**), most of the reading texts make references to the C2 by touching upon topics like geographical factors, socialization and the life cycle and national cultural heritage. Describing target culture cities, tourist attractions, the typical family life, and cultural artefacts seems to be the most suitable vehicles for raising students' cultural awareness and promoting the development of ICC. The images supporting the reading texts also aid this process. Images of famous British cities or well-known people from the target culture, for example, serve top-down processing of the texts, in which the reader's schemata interact with the information contained in the text in the construction of

meaning. None of these books present a Culture Section to explicitly introduce or discuss intercultural matters. The only exception is found in **WCDI**, which has a section called "My Culture Dossier" every three units.

In the two locally produced textbooks examined (**FT** and **TT**), the majority of the references in the texts and the images are to the learners' national culture (C1), in this case, the Argentinean culture. The texts include topics and images related to national history and contemporary events seen as markers of national identity and, as it is the case of the three global textbooks, there are also texts depicting socialization and the life cycle, and national cultural heritage. For example, in the coursebook **TT,** the topic of one of the reading texts is a typically Argentinean product. The section is called "Dulce de Leche: an Argentinean invention", and the focus is on the recipe that instructs on how to prepare it. Another example is found in the coursebook **FT***:* in unit 4, lesson 3, learners are asked to read about an Argentinean Judoka, Paula Pareto, Olympics bronze medal in 2008. As to references to the C2, these are scarce, which might be due to the fact that these are locally produced textbooks attempting to give pre-eminence to the local culture through the content of the texts and images. Neither of these books contains a Culture Section or Corner, which results in the total absence of tasks promoting intercultural reflection. Learners may notice the presence of the C1 and, in some lessons, the C2 in the texts and accompanying images, but there is no explicit attempt at making learners reflect on their own or others' cultures, languages and their speakers. The treatment of intercultural reflection may be described as *implicit* or *embedded* in the content of the texts and the supporting visuals.

The books also deploy reading texts that refer to a C3. In two of the international books and the two locally produced coursebooks, a few references to a C3 are introduced. For instance, in the coursebook **LI,** module 4, lesson 14, learners read about typical tourist activities in Cairo in Egypt and how to make an Egyptian ceremonial collar. After performing the reading comprehension activities, learners are asked to write about tourist attractions in their country. Only in the case of the textbook **NEFE**, there seems to be a balanced treatment of C2 and C3. Some examples of references to a C3 are the Okinawans' lifestyles and famous festivals around the world.

As regards the activities, only two of the international textbooks, **WCDI** and **NEFE**, provide text-related tasks which aim at raising students' intercultural awareness and developing ICC. The post-reading stage includes tasks which entail the integration of the reading skill with the speaking or writing skill. Using López Barrios & Villanueva's (2007) taxonomy, only the coursebook **WCDI** fits into a Situation 1 since the reading texts make the learners reflect upon the C1 and the C2 but separately, without having them build a connection between the cultures. For instance, in one of the sections of "My Culture Dossier", learners read country fact files about the United Kingdom and then they are asked to make a similar fact file about their country. The textbook **NEFE** fits both Situation 1 and Situation 2 for its reading texts and post-reading tasks treat both cultures without connecting them in some activities, while some other texts and tasks attempt some comparison between C1 and C2 and encourage a certain degree of reflection. For instance, learners are asked to find similarities and differences between typically British customs and their own customs.

In contrast, locally produced textbooks do not deploy text-related tasks with the purpose of developing intercultural communicative competence. Learners are only asked to read the texts which encompass intercultural issues and perform reading comprehension tasks. Developing linguistic competence and reading skills appear to be given priority. For example, in the coursebook **TT**, in the section Skills Workshop 4, students have to read a text about the province of Entre Rios, answer some reading comprehension questions and perform some writing tasks. The local books **TT** and **FT** and the global one **LI** analysed in this study do not fit López Barrios & Villanueva's (2007) taxonomy, thus calling for the addition of an extra category. Such a category, which we have called *Situation 0,* may serve to encompass materials that make no attempt at promoting reflection on intercultural issues. These materials seek to get the learners to become aware of certain facts about their own culture (C1) or other cultures (C2 or C3), rather than make them compare, contrast or reflect critically upon intercultural topics.

The analysis of the five Teacher's books has also revealed the absence of any explicit mention of the aim of developing ICC or promoting a degree of intercultural reflection. In most of the textbooks analysed, the development of intercultural awareness appears to "unfold as an incidental or marginal process rather than as a planned component part of the development of foreign language competence" (López Barrios & Villanueva, 2007, p. 79). The excessive focus on language forms and reading comprehension as well as the neglect of reflection activities that promote intercultural communication seem to be the emerging patterns found. The exception to this tendency can be found in **WCDI** and **NEFE** since both books incorporate a few activities that aim at raising learners' intercultural awareness and at fostering ICC.

5. Conclusion and pedagogical implications

The development of ICC is an aim that EFL coursebooks would be expected to currently uphold. This small scale study has revealed that that seems not to be the case, given the lack of explicit mention of this goal in either the teacher's book or the students' book first pages. However, the exploration has shown that although there may not be explicit reference to that goal, some of the textbooks attempt some degree of reflection upon intercultural issues and most of them provide some cultural content, with references to the C1, the C2 or a C3.

The EFL teacher needs to be aware of the fact that textbooks can be supplemented as to the degree of reflection on intercultural issues that they promote. Some possible strategies for doing so may be found in books that can be classed under Situation 2 or Situation 3 described in López Barrios & Villanueva's (2007) taxonomy. Textbook analysis in this case can be considered an instrument for teacher learning and exploration.

It is our hope that the present analysis of five coursebooks may have contributed to raising EFL teachers' awareness as to the differences that EFL textbooks may exhibit in this realm, and in doing so, empowered them to make adaptations to the textbook(s) they have selected accordingly.

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Indice de Auores

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DE LA EMBAJADA DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS EN ARGENTINA

La Sección Informativa y Cultural lleva a cabo las actividades culturales,
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También está a cargo de los programas oficiales de
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