



## **TEIS Newsletter- The newsletter of ARTESOL Teacher Education Section**

*July 2007 Volume 1 Number 1*

*A periodic newsletter for ARTESOL members*

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Networking Booth at Southern Cone TESOL Convention

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### **From the Chair**

Alicia Artusi [aliciartusi@infovia.com.ar](mailto:aliciartusi@infovia.com.ar), Chair

Cecilia Chiacchio [cechia@ciudad.com.ar](mailto:cechia@ciudad.com.ar), Chair-elect

*Welcome ARTESOLERS to the first TEIS Newsletter. We would like to thank those who contributed to this first issue: professional writers, teachers and teacher educators from our country and from abroad, who showed their interest and encouraged us to develop this idea. We also want to thank the ARTESOL Committee for their trust and support.*

*This first newsletter bears the purpose of networking and sharing teaching experiences among teachers of English. We hope you enjoy the articles and look forward to your contributions for the next issue.*

*Our special thanks to the editors Marcela Jalo and Eladia Castellani and to our secretary Amalia Marcovesky for their time and work devoted to make this interest section come true.*

Keep in touch!

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### **From the editors**

Marcela Jalo mljalo@ciudad.com.ar

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*Thanks for all your interesting contributions! We were surprised at the number of articles we received. There will be a second issue in November 2007. Keep in touch and send us an article with your experience in the ELT world.*

- **The Top Six Things to Teach Our Students**

In this article, Bill Bowler suggests the six ideal content aspects of the English language he considers English teachers should deal with in their classes: love for the foreign language, multiculturalism, effective learning strategies and integrative skills, vocabulary development, and practical grammar rules.

Bill Bowler is the author of a number of ELT coursebooks. He is co-series editor – together with his wife Sue Parminter – of the Dominoes graded readers OUP, UK.  
*Read the article at [LINK](#)*

- **Dealing with Classes with No Textbooks**

Gregory Manin and Alicia Artusi present their views on how to deal with a class with no textbook or course material, a situation that occurs several times during the school year. This article provides some practical ideas to aid teachers deal with classes with no textbooks. You will find activities for the first week of classes, activities to engage students' multiple intelligences, and foster cooperative learning.

Alicia Artusi and Gregory Manin are authors of a multi-level coursebook series for teenagers called *Engage* published by Oxford University Press, U.K and are currently writing an ECCE book for Greece.

*Read the article at [LINK](#)*

- **Words that open up new worlds: literature in the EFL class**

Literature has often been seen as a cryptic treasure available to a few learned ones, but since it proved to be an attractive and effective learning tool in the classroom it has become to be reckoned as another expression of culture accessible to all of us. So why not try some rewarding activities in your classes?

Cecilia Chiacchio is Professor of English and American Literature at Universidad Nacional de La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

*Read the article at [LINK](#)*

- **Humanising ESP classes**

Implementing humanistic activities in an ESP class can not only help to modify the classroom atmosphere turning it into a safe and common ground environment but also to enhance language learning. In her article, Gabriela Tavella provides some activities and the results of her analysis of the affective impact on her students.

Gabriella Tavella is an English teacher, Universidad Nacional de La Plata and MA in Professional Development for Language Education, Leeds Metropolitan University, UK.

Read the article at [LINK](#)

- **Tips for Writing Essays at University**

When faced with academic writing, university students may have some discouraging beliefs about how to express their opinion in black and white. Silvia Enriquez deals with some of these misconceptions and provides useful tips based on her own teaching experience.

Silvia Enriquez is a graduate teacher of English and teaches English Language III at Universidad Nacional de La Plata (UNLP). She is Coordinator of specific training courses at Escuela de Lenguas, UNLP.

Read article at [LINK](#)

- **Different Literary Materials in the ELT classroom**

Students' different learning styles challenge teachers' creativity. How can we reach all of our students? In this article, Mercedes Vernet suggests a set of strategies to approach different materials around Stevenson's classic *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*.

Mercedes Vernet teaches English at primary and secondary levels in La Plata, Buenos Aires, and English literature at the Universidad Nacional de La Plata.

Read the article at [LINK](#)

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## Full articles

- **The Top Six Things to Teach Our Students**  
**Bill Bowler**

In teacher training visits to different countries, I am frequently asked to prioritize the ideal content of English classes. Here, therefore, is my summary of the key things that I personally feel we should be teaching our students:

### 1) To Love English

Whatever else we teach students, we should certainly teach them to love the language. A positive, fun feeling to our English lessons will stay with language learners for the rest of their lives. A teacher can kindle the flame of inspiration in students' hearts, or kill a subject stone cold dead. Better to be remembered by your former students in future years as a warm and inspirational teacher, rather than a cold-blooded killer.

## **2) To Learn About Different Cultures**

Teaching culture is part of language teaching. I certainly don't think we should be promoting either North American or British culture as 'superior' to other cultures around the world. However, I do think that including some multicultural information in our English classes is a very good idea. If we teach students about different cultures through English, then we are preparing them to be citizens of the world, and helping to dispel ignorance and prejudice too. That surely – especially given the current political and religious divisions in our world – must be a good thing. Students of course should take a proper pride in their own culture, and be able to teach others about it through the medium of English, too.

## **3) Effective Learning Strategies**

Teaching students in the short term learning skills – such as how to use a dictionary or a grammar reference book effectively, or how to evaluate their own progress in English accurately – is really important if we want them to end up as independent learners in the long run.

## **4) A Balance of Skills**

'Do you speak English?' is the key question – and students need preparation and rehearsal time in order to speak confidently. But we also need to help students deal with listening, a very unnatural classroom activity when based on an audio CD or cassette since no body language, facial expressions, or lip-reading are present to support the listener with visual clues. These days too, reading and writing are newly important because of the Internet and its webpages, emails, and chat rooms. (Maybe we can encourage students to read more with that end in mind.) All in all, an even-handed approach to skills work, naturally integrated rather than artificially separated, is what is needed.

## **5) Systematic Vocabulary Development**

At lower levels, vocabulary is to my mind perhaps even more important for communication than grammar. (You can always use vocabulary + body language to get the meaning of your message across.) At higher levels, dealing with the relationships between words – through a focus on collocation, word families, affixes, false friends, homographs, homonyms, and homophones – seems to me as important as teaching sets of new words in themselves.

## **6) Grammar in a Communicative Context**

Grammar is a useful shortcut. Babies learning their mother tongue have about 8-12 hours a day of exposure to L1 and the chance to remain silent for 13-19 months. They can acquire language in a relaxed, stress-free way. Learners of English as a foreign or second language don't have that luxury. Their number of hours of English per week is limited and the pressure on them to use language actively, rather than just being able to recognize it, is greater. Yet grammar is – for me – like a bottle of medicine: a spoonful at a time is good for students; a whole bottle downed in one go can have a negative effect. We should also never forget that whereas many teachers love grammar, most students hate it. I recommend quickly exposing students to language patterns, with a chance for them to

work out rules of form and use, before they utilize language in a communicative context. It's best, I feel, to avoid lecturing the students about decontextualized grammar items. Simple 'rules of thumb', appropriate to the students' level, are I believe preferable to over-detailed lists of rules, exceptions, and exceptions to the exceptions.

## BIODATA

Bill Bowler is the author of a number of ELT coursebooks and supplementary materials for upper primary, secondary, and adult students. He is co-series editor – together with his wife Sue Parminter – of the *Dominoes* graded readers (Oxford University Press), which combine colourful and lively stories with integrated activity and project pages.

- **Dealing with Classes with No Textbooks**  
**Gregory J. Manin    Alicia Artusi**

There are several times during the school year when you as a teacher have to deal with a class with no textbook or course material.

*During the first week of classes* you may have to allow some time for students to obtain the textbooks or other necessary material. Another reason might be that you need to spend some time assessing the class before deciding what material is most suitable for the course.

*During the year* there may be times when you need to vary the activities to re-engage students in your class, or you need to fill in the last five minutes of your class with something meaningful, but short and fun. There may be times when the class atmosphere is too low or energetic due to a particular social situation, so you need to change your plans and switch to another kind of activity.

*After finishing* the coursebook or class material the students are left empty-handed, and once more they are expecting you to make something happen in the class.

Here are some activities to prepare for, manage and capitalise on the 'no-book' situation.

### Activities for the first week of classes

*Activities to engage students' multiple intelligences:*

'Multiple' stresses the idea of several human capacities. 'Intelligences' stresses the idea that everyone is intelligent in one way or another. The idea of catering for differences in a mixed-level class goes in the same direction as the multiple intelligences theory by focusing on each person's individual ability and capacity. Taking advantage of, rather than ignoring, the fact that differences exist in any classroom can lead to a good beginning for all the students.

#### **Sounds around me (auditory)**

##### **Fill in, compare and discuss**

It sounds awful: *Car alarms sound awful to me.*

It sounds beautiful \_\_\_\_\_

It sounds cool \_\_\_\_\_  
It sounds melancholy \_\_\_\_\_  
It sounds scary/creepy \_\_\_\_\_  
It sounds energetic \_\_\_\_\_

### **The world** (kinesthetic-linguistic)

#### **Find your missing half**

The river that runs through London is.....	an art gallery
Oscar Wilde was .....	the Thames
The largest desert in the world is .....	the electric light bulb
Tate Modern is .....	the 1980s
Mercury is the .....	a writer
The cell phone was invented in .....	Antarctica
Thomas Edison invented....	the smallest planet in the solar system

### **Noughts and crosses with words** (linguistic)

Make true/false sentences about you and other people with the horizontal words.

Make questions for a partner with the vertical words.

Make negative sentences with diagonals.

The class is divided in two halves and one group picks out a word for the other group to use in a sentence/question. If right, the group scores a point. If wrong, the other group has a chance to score.

have    make    take (verbs)

happy    sad    lonely (adjectives)

lyrics    tea    dawn (nouns)

### **Variation**

You can use the same game with words usually confused: all-whole/ interesting-interested/  
a few- a little/ man-men/etc

### **Word dice** (mathematical)

Make up a dice with some verbs: A. turn, B. make, C. go, D. come, E. take, F. get

Use a number dice for the prepositions: 1- down, 2 up, 3 on, 4 off, 5 across, 6 in

Students are divided into two groups. One student from one group walks to the front and throws both dice. Example: turn -1 . The group has to complete a grid (see below).

The first group to fill in the grid is the winner.

Grid 1

to refuse \_\_\_A1\_\_\_ (turn down)

to find \_\_\_\_\_ (come across)

to invent \_\_\_\_\_ (make up)

Grid 2

depart \_\_\_\_\_E4\_\_\_\_\_ (take off)

stop trying \_\_\_\_\_ (give up)

recover \_\_\_\_\_ (get over)

### **Fairy tale characters**

Use characters from fairytales or folk stories to practice some vocabulary, idioms or grammar.

Example: Who do you think has done the following:

- helped an old woman to cross the street?
- washed the dishes?
- prevented a bank robbery?
- polluted the town's waters?

Spiderman  
Cinderella  
Batman  
The Joker

The same can be done with TV cartoon or computer game characters: Billy and Mandy, Lara Croft, Scorpion, etc

### Map your life (spatial)

- Show a world map.
- Ask students to choose a place in the world.
- Ask them to draw the country selected.
- Ask them to visualize and write inside the country shape what they are doing/did/will do in those places.
- Students circulate and get together by continents.
- They read their descriptions, experiences and the rest of the students guess the country.

### Guess the story (Interpersonal)

- Make students work cooperatively in groups to guess a story.
- Give the following words as clues to guess the story the word 'skeleton in the closet'

Where does the expression 'skeleton in the closet' come from?

Guess the story behind the expression from the following clues. The story dates back before the 1830s.

English physicians - human bodies  
learn

law- doctors- cadavers  
restrict -use

body skeleton - in the  
closet - hide

After students made their guesses, compare their versions with the true story.

*English physicians were eager to learn more about the human body but could only use the body of a dissected animal to do research till the Anatomy Act was passed in 1832. Some people say a doctor dissected only one human cadaver during his career. He prized the skeleton highly and didn't want to dispose of it. Yet the law and public opinion warned against keeping it where it could be seen. So the prudent doctor hung his skeleton in a dark corner in his closet. Needless to say, his patients suspected he had a skeleton in his closet. From this literal sense, the phrase expanded to indicate hidden evidence of any kind.*

### Acting Feelings (Intrapersonal)

Sit in a comfortable position, breathe deeply and gently. If you want you can close your eyes or simply relax.

Brainstorm words of emotions and write them on the board. Add some other words:

*cheerful caring fascinating grateful attractive creepy huffy charming  
trustworthy touchy wild low hungry eager tired powerful insensitive*

### Complete the sentences using the words on the board

I'd like to be more .....

I'd like to be less .....

I'd like to feel .....

When I'm .....(cheerful)..... I ....(listen to music).....

My favourite place in the world is/feels like .....

A best friend is .....

I can't stand people who are .....

A student reads aloud one sentence and those students who share the same feeling stand up/put up their hands.

### Naturalistic -kinesthetic

Give five groups a list of words. Ask the groups to order the words in categories and find the student holding that category.

Group 1:	a cow	a chair	paper clip	a plane	a designer
G2:	a pilot	a sofa	an elephant	paper	the underground
G3:	a ship	a cupboard	an eraser	a monkey	a plumber
G4:	a hen	a sharpener	a car	a bookcase	a nurse
G5:	a table	a stapler	a train	a dentist	a sheep

Students holding the categories should have:

animals      furniture      stationary      forms of transport      professions

### Conclusion

The needs of any given class aren't always predictable, so always be prepared with extra / alternative activities. Have a Resource Box with CDs, cartoons, poems, articles, dice, playing cards and so on. Always have a pair of scissors handy for making slips of paper, shapes, or any other thing that brings variety to the class, And always keep your adaptability and sense of humour on hand – you never know when you might need them.

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## BIODATA

Alicia Artusi and Gregory Manin are authors of a multi-level coursebook series for teenagers called *Engage* published by Oxford University Press, U.K and are currently writing an ECCE book for Greece.

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- **Words that open up new worlds: literature in the EFL class**  
**Cecilia Chiacchio**

According to Clifford Geertz, culture is a body of knowledge in constant evolution, consisting of values, beliefs and meanings that people create in unique social circumstances. Like art, myth and ritual, language conforms to a system of significant symbols, and plays a double role: it is a *manifestation* of culture and a vehicle for the *construction* of culture. So to guarantee effective communication one must learn the linguistic rules that structure a language, the way in which those rules are to be used (WIDDOWSON,1978:3) and, as importantly, the culture of the target language.

Thus, the literary text becomes an invaluable tool in the EFL class: it follows the codes of the language and of the culture, provides aesthetic pleasure and encourages the development of imagination. Also, though fictional constructions, literary texts are authentic in the sense that they have not been written for the EFL class. They are rich examples of language use and usage according to the variants of the participants and of the communicative contexts.

In spite of the place it was given in the past, almost as a cryptic treasure available to only a few learned ones, literature has become to be reckoned as another expression of culture (culture with a small c), like film, music, painting or cartoons, accessible to all of us. So why not try this rewarding experience in our EFL classes? The following activities have been designed for different levels of EFL learners, originally for groups of twelve-fifteen students but adaptable to both smaller and larger groups.

### Activity one

Level: Elementary, Higher elementary.

Abilities: All.

Linguistic items: Simple past, simple present, parts of body

1. Listen and read the following poem by Carl Sandburg.

*I sang*

*I sang to you and to the moon  
But only the moon remembers.*

*I sang*

*O reckless, free-hearted  
free-throated rhythms.  
Even the moon remembers them  
And is kind to me.*

2. Write the verbs in the right column and answer.

	PAST		PRESENT
<i>Sang</i>		<i>remembers</i>	
		<i>is</i>	

What did the poet do in the past? Who did he sing to? Who remembers the song now?

3. Answer.

How did the poet sing? The poet uses compound words which include parts of the body. What are these parts of the body? What can the combined words mean?

Heart. What qualities do you relate with the heart?

Throat. Speakers and singers can be tight-throated or free-throated. What does that mean? What does "free-throated rhythms" suggest?

4. Speaking and writing.

The poem is suggestive but does not give us details about the events. Discuss these questions and then write two paragraphs about what happened to the poet.

Who is the poet addressing?

How does he probably feel?

What happened between them?

Does the poet expect any reaction from the addressee?

5. Something about the poet!

Teachers bring some information about Sandburg and tell students to prepare questions about the poet. Students then interview "the poet".

### **Activity two**

Level: Intermediate, upper intermediate

Abilities: Reading, speaking and writing.

Linguistic items: Passive voice, vocabulary on music and education.

1. Read the beginning of a short piece by Joan Vanden Heuvel. The story was sent to *Weekend All Things Considered*, Paul Auster and National Public Radio's programme, as part of a call for true stories to be read on-air (National Story Project) in 1999.

*I was eighteen years old and attending the University of Wisconsin when my younger brother was awarded a music scholarship to St John's Military Academy. On a beautiful fall afternoon he was scheduled to perform in his first concert. Orders had been issued from home that I would be attending the event. My parents arranged to pick me up in front of Langdon Hall at 11 A.M. and drag me along to Delafield with them. The thought of sitting through a high-school band concert was definitely no my idea of a good time.*

## 2. General understanding.

Answer.

- When did all this happen? Who is telling the story?
- How did she feel about attending her brother's concert?
- What is her attitude towards her brother?

These questions may precede the actual reading, functioning as focus questions to guide the reading.

## 3. Focus on language.

- What do these verb forms have in common? Why does the narrator use them?

*... my younger brother was awarded a music scholarship to St John's Military Academy.*

*On a beautiful fall afternoon he was scheduled to perform in his first concert.*

*Orders had been issued from home that I would be attending the event.*

Procedure: this could be complemented by an exercise to provide the right verb form.

## 4. Focus on vocabulary.

Identify the words connected to music and to education. Can you add any? [brainstorming].

## 5. Deeper understanding.

Read the text again and answer.

- What does the term *beautiful* suggest in *On a beautiful fall afternoon*? [students should identify the sense of waste of time felt by the narrator. In such a beautiful afternoon she could be doing something closer to her *idea of a good time*].
- What terms in the excerpt suggest military discipline? What does the narrator mean by using them? [Military Academy, orders issued, My parents arranged to pick me up and drag me along..., suggest that she feels under a military regime by having to do what her parents tell her]

## 6. Speaking

Does starting university create in Argentine students similar feelings of independence and maturity?

## 7. Writing.

Imagine what happened during or after the concert. Write the end of the story in 100 words.

## 8. Team work research and speaking.

Students prepare a short talk on the National Story Project in the USA and propose a similar project for Argentina.

## Conclusion

Literature has often been understood as a “break” from language, a recreational spot amid the linguistic analysis. We are convinced that, on the contrary, literature is rich both in its linguistic and cultural implications and that when language and literature are divorced in the EFL learning process, a central part of the target language and culture is missed.

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- **Humanising ESP classes**  
**Gabriela Tavella, MA**

This article intends to show how the implementation of humanistic activities within an ESP context helped to change the class atmosphere and thus, enhance language learning. This experience was carried out with two different groups of university students who were studying to become tourist guides.

These students had generally had negative experiences in their previous contacts with the language. Most of them had generated terrible affective barriers towards learning the foreign language. Thus, my challenge as a foreign language teacher was even greater. I had, on the one hand, in Lozanov's terms, to desuggest those negative experiences which blocked their learning and on the other hand, to provide them with alternative paths to confront their foreign language learning.

I started with the hypothesis that humanistic activities, those that “deal with enhancing self-esteem, becoming aware of one's strengths, seeing the good in others, gaining insight into oneself, developing closer and more satisfying relationships, becoming conscious of one's feelings and values and having a positive outlook on life” (Moskowitz, 1999, p. 178), could help reach my objective. Their systematic use was “not to the *neglect* of the target language, but to the *enhancement* of it” (Moskowitz, 1999, p. 178).

Consequently, I decided to implement a variation of Circle Time with my adult students with the idea that these activities could have an affective and cognitive impact on my ESP students. The affective aim was to know each other better, to develop deeper group bonds so that every single member of the class could feel safe to use the target language in that particular environment. The cognitive aim was to further develop students' oral skills. I

thought that students would find it motivating to talk about themselves but this could only be done if the appropriate atmosphere was created. "So communication which satisfies these deep, innate needs develops from sharing about ourselves while others actively listen to us, showing understanding and accepting us as we are" (Moskowitz, 1999, p. 178).

Every day before getting into the proper content of the lesson, I selected one "humanistic activity". Some of the activities I used were:

- a. Completing unfinished sentences such as ...
  - I ...
  - We ...
  - I never ...
  - I usually ...
  - I always ...
  - On Saturdays/ Sundays , I ...
  - Tomorrow, I'm going to ...
  - I like people who ...
  - My weekend was ... because ...
- b. Completing unfinished sentences and writing them on a piece of paper. Students draw one paper from a bag and guess who wrote that particular sentence.
  - I could not live without ...
  - I'd like to ...
  - Yesterday, I ...
  - Next week, I ...
- c. Every student writes an interesting question that they would like to ask to someone in the class. Then, a question round is carried out.  
Variation: Students are asked to write one question in the present, another one in the past and another one in the future. These questions are then asked among the members of the class.
- d. Another activity, which I did for the first time in one of Philip Prowse's workshops, is finishing incomplete sentences about a partner. It is a pair work activity.  
I have been implementing several variations of this same exercise for many years considering my students' language level. I can now say that it has always had a very deep affective impact in my students.  
Students finish sentences such as:
  - I love ...
  - I hate ...
  - My favourite ... is ...
- e. Each student in the class writes one True and one False sentence about themselves. Music is played, learners stand up and mingle. When music stops, they look for a partner and he/she guesses which sentence is the true one and which is the false one.  
Optional: students may share the information they have just known with the rest of the class.

- f. The teacher draws her/ his lifeline on the blackboard she/ he tells about the most important events in her/ his life. Students are allowed to ask questions. Then, students themselves draw their own lifelines and they share it with a partner.
- g. This is an idea taken from Sion's book (2001, p. 60): students have to share with the class something revealing about their home, their town, their province and their country.

When carrying out these activities, I was careful not to press students to write about something very personal from the start. I was conscious that some of my students were not going to be willing to expose themselves in front of a group to which they had not yet developed strong ties. Even though I could say that as they got used to these activities, more personal things were revealed and it resulted in a really anxiety-free atmosphere which openly favoured language use.

Some activities were directly connected to a particular linguistic content that they were to develop or that they were developing. For example when I introduced my own lifeline, students were about to start reading biographies of first settlers in town. When choosing unfinished sentences, I sometimes wanted to revise a particular structure or verb tense. Writing questions also had a linguistic aim in mind as students might need to use questions as ice-breakers before starting a guided tour.

#### Self- Esteem in Adults

In order to know the impact that these changes had had on my students, I gave a questionnaire to two different groups of students that had worked systematically on this type of approach. A total of 20 students answered the questions the first year, and again 20 students answered the questionnaire the second year. The questions asked were the following:

- a) Have you experienced any changes in your language classes compared to your previous language learning experience?
- b) Were they positive or negative?
- c) Which were the most positive aspects of the changes?
- d) Why?

The questionnaire was a mixture of open and closed questions but the answers I wanted to collate and interpret were those which arose from the open questions.

What I intended to do was to quantify the qualitative data in some way (Nunan, 1992, p. 145) I tried "to conduct a key word analysis, generating categories from the statements made by respondents" (Nunan, 1992, p.146) so I grouped the responses to questions c) and d) under the following categories:

- I. Classroom dynamics
- II. Classroom atmosphere
- III. Group Bonds
- IV. Language use and development
- V. Personal development
- VI. Confidence to speak in front of the class

	Classroom dynamics	Classroom atmosphere	Group bonds	Language use and development	Personal development	Confidence to speak in front of the class
<b>1st year</b>	5	1	4	19	2	4
<b>2nd year</b>	12	2	4	13	1	9
<b>Total</b>	17	3	8	32	3	13
<b>%</b>	42.5	7.5	20	80	7.5	32.5

32.5% of the questioned students mentioned the fact that they felt more confident to speak in front of the whole class. I would have connected this to classroom atmosphere but only a 7.5 % of the students explicitly mentioned this aspect as a positive point of the course. They mentioned instead classroom dynamics as an asset, 42.5% of students explicitly stated this item. We may infer that learners might be using “dynamics” and “atmosphere” indistinctly. 80% of the class considered that they had improved their language use. This means that most of the students were aware of their linguistic improvement. We can conclude that the changes implemented connected to classroom atmosphere and classroom dynamics had a direct effect on language development. Not all students could realize that their academic achievements were connected to the classroom environment; though a 42.5% mentioned this aspect as a benefit.

Following Nunan (1992, p. 147), I decided to further group the answers “according to whether they referred to language/ learning, the learner, or the climate/ environment of learning.”

Classroom dynamics, classroom atmosphere and group bonds were considered under the heading *the climate/ environment of learning*; language use and development under *language/ learning*; and personal development and confidence to speak in front of the class under *the learner*.

	Language / Learning	The Learner	The Climate / Environment of Learning
<b>1st year</b>	19	7	10
<b>2nd year</b>	13	15	15
<b>Total</b>	32	22	25
<b>%</b>	80	55	62.5

80% of students, i.e. 32 out of 40, mentioned language/ learning as a positive aspect of the course; 55%, i.e. 22 out of 40, considered aspects connected to them as learners: motivation, active involvement, confidence, relevance of the content; 62.5%, i.e. 25 out of 40, considered the classroom environment as a means which favoured communication in the foreign language.

Conclusion:

It could be said that the environment is seen as an important means to favour foreign language development but language is always at the forefront. This backs the idea that

humanistic language teaching does not “mean ignoring the main task of learning the language but rather integrating activities which support language by favourably predisposing the learner. It means developing an atmosphere conducive to the learning process and making the learning relevant to the learner” (Arnold, 2001).

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- **Tips for Writing Essays at University**  
**Silvia C. Enríquez**

Writing is a skill that any university student should handle because it is necessary for academic and professional life. It is important to acquire this ability, and to realise that the lack of it can be a source of limitations – and even embarrassment – in our career. It is therefore important to learn how to express our ideas adequately in writing. For any professional, adequate expression means, above all, being able to say what we need to say clearly and economically. This would be enough for anyone who is not a professional writer, but of course we should all try to write as best as we can. Writing well is always an asset for a professional, and a necessity for trainee teachers or translators of English. Here are some tips to help you do it well. You will notice that many of them can also apply to other types of academic writing.

We must first be aware that, leaving aside the fact that we are writing in a language that is not our own, all the rest of what we know from writing in our mother tongue can be used, from logical organisation to information and text structure.

One enemy of our progress in this skill is our own disbelief in our ability to write well. There are several wrong beliefs that can be particularly discouraging:

- *“I don’t know how to write an essay!”* This, of course, may be true, but in any normal class you are taught to do things before you are asked to do them yourself. You will be able to learn through theoretical explanations given in class and complemented by some bibliography, and through model essays that you will be asked to read. Once you have begun to write essays, do not forget your notes and bibliography about essay writing and go back to them periodically, or every time you have a doubt, to be sure that what you write always has the characteristics of an essay. It is also extremely important to read published essays if you want to understand how writers write them in real life. If you only had a description it would be much more difficult to write a text that can be called an essay in actual practice.
- *“I’ll never write like the authors they ask me to read. I’ll never write well”*. The truth is that you do not have to write like them. Very frequently students are asked to read texts written by professional writers which are intended to be a model of good writing. It must never be thought that the teacher who does so expects students to write like them, because this would be extremely unrealistic. Teachers ask students to read these texts for another reason: they provide them with many opportunities to learn what good writing is, and what can be attained in this field. We all learn from other people’s experience and examples in any field of life, including writing. It would be impossible to know what a good text is, and to write one ourselves, if we did not begin by reading good texts written by others.
- *“I should be able to write well from the beginning”*. This is absolutely false. There is almost nobody in the world who can write a perfect piece in the first attempt. Writing is always a process, even for professional writers, and obviously even more for a student or anyone who does not intend to take up writing as a career. Many times, what you might call “a text that went wrong”, or “a disaster”, is actually what should be called a draft, a first attempt that has to be improved in later versions. Any normal human being has to write several drafts to get satisfactory results, and this happens even with experienced authors.
- *“In my exams I’ll have to write a certain number of words within a time limit, so I need to train myself in doing this. I’ll make a point of always writing as if I were in the final exam.”* This is also a popular misconception among students. It is precisely because you must perform well in a few hours to pass courses that you need to train yourself by practising writing with as much help as you can before you are evaluated. Because writing is a process, we need to go through it often enough to acquire the ability to do it well in any circumstance, including when there is a time limit. But to do this we need to have learnt to find the best words and the best way to say things, and we can only do this if we take our time to look up words, ask for other people’s opinions or re-read drafts on a different day. You should also forget about controlling the length of your text, and write for as long as you need to say what you think to the full. You must do this for as long as it is necessary for you to write acceptably, which is the only way in which you will do well under pressure. Besides, writing a limited number of words in a limited amount of time and without any help can be a frequent requirement of professional life, and you need training to do it well.

Writing well is partly a question of trial and error, of finding ways of expressing ideas that work for each of us personally. This is why you will always get the best results if you go over the same text as many times as it is necessary to make sure that you have been able

to say what you wanted. Leaving each text you write aside after the first attempt and beginning a new one will never give the same results.

When we write, we only have one reason, which is always the same: we have something to say. It stands to reason, then, that we must take care of our ideas in the first place, both chronologically and in order of importance. For this, we must analyse the topic until we have formed a personal idea that we can write about. This is how this can be done:

- When you are given a topic you might begin to think about it by asking yourself: *what can be said about this topic?* Yet, this will very probably lead you to find only ideas that have already been developed by others, which is not what you are supposed to write in an essay. There is another, better question, that will help you much more: *What do I think/have to say about this topic?* An essay is a personal text, and if you do not ask yourself a personal question you will not be collecting the right kind of ideas.
- It is not enough to have one idea, you have to develop it and make it solid, especially when you are writing an argumentative text. This is why you must analyse your opinions and ask yourself questions. The most important question is always: *Why?* That is, *why what I think should be true?*. This must be done so that you can go more deeply into the topic. Other useful questions are, among many others: *how does this happen? How often does this happen?*
- Your text must contain, above all, ideas. Therefore, don't make a plan that contains few ideas and a collection of examples for them. Examples must only be used when ideas are not clear without them, but not in other cases. The same happens with illustration. Using both of them without a purpose is a mistake.
- The fact that you must develop your ideas means that there must be some degree of originality in what you say, but of course this does not imply that you cannot make use of other people's knowledge or findings about the topic. Therefore, build your ideas also by finding information about your topic and drawing on your own previous knowledge and experience.
- By the end of this process you will have drawn your own conclusions and must decide on an organisation for your text. You must always remember that one cannot decide on a structure and then try to flesh it out with ideas. This can only work for our wrong question: "what can be said about this topic?" What must actually be done is to find the best possible organisation for our ideas, making sure that they are clearly and fully expressed. It would be a gross mistake to distort or clip our ideas to make them fit into a ready-made pattern.

Having done all this, you should be ready to write a text that will reflect the work you have done, and one that will be interesting to readers because it is genuinely yours.

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- **Different literary materials in the ELT classroom. Some strategies to reach all students**

Mercedes Vernet

The aim of this article is to present a set of strategies to approach different literary materials dealing with Stevenson's classic *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* – a rock song, an abridged version of the novel and a scene from a film. They are planned to be used in four periods of forty or thirty minutes in a class of about ten intermediate students.

Some of the objectives of this plan of strategies are:

- to provide students with an authentic opportunity to use the language communicatively;
- to develop the four skills;
- to develop critical thinking and linguistic, visual, auditory, intra and interpersonal intelligences;
- to get them to appreciate each literary material;
- to stimulate students' imagination and creativity.

#### Plan of strategies

During the first period, we will work with a rock song by Iced Earth called "Jekyll and Hyde," which will be a bridge into the reader. Being the least telling of the materials selected, it becomes the perfect trigger for the analysis.

What's the reason for me to be this way  
I'm lying on the floor  
I've broken through some door  
I don't know how I came to this  
There is blood lust in my eyes  
And someone in my mind saying

I have forced you here  
I'm hiding, right here inside you  
Trapped in here so long  
You'll find me growing in every man

Who is this that speaks to me  
Tearing down my mind  
My reality  
This must certainly be the one  
What will I pay for this  
This evil synthesis!

I'm out of control  
Evil takes my soul

I can feel you inside me  
You're not stronger than me  
I won't let you  
No, you can't have me!

I won't let you destroy me

You took away my life  
With your wicked seed  
If you're able to take control  
You'll bring damnation upon my soul

First, we will listen to the song without knowing its title so that students' imagination is not determined by their schemata. Students will listen for gist, identify the two characters and describe the singer's feelings. How does music reinforce the description? (10 minutes)

Next, students will be given the title and the lyrics. They will listen again and identify the referents of the pronouns. In pairs, they will describe each character orally. (5 minutes)

Having described both personalities, we will all discuss the relationship between them. This gap of indeterminacy (Iser, 1971) can be filled with the clues available in the song and the students' schemata. (5 minutes)

Later, students will imagine a dialogue between them that will start with Hyde's comment on the second stanza. A pair will perform the scene for the rest. (15 minutes)

I expect students will have recognised Jekyll's battle against evil. So, they will predict its result. (5 minutes)

As the song provides mainly Jekyll's point of view, students will write Hyde's interior monologue as homework.

For the second period, students will have read chapters 1 to 7 of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, adapted by Rosemary Border. I have decided to select this version of Stevenson's classic because the writer maintains many elements from the "world" created by Stevenson: the three distinct narrative voices, the narrative sequence, images of darkness, the mystery around Hyde's appearance, etc.

First, students will describe the narrator and identify its point of view with Utterson's. Then, in pairs, they will make a list of the strange events that puzzle him (e.g. Jekyll's will). (10 minutes)

Later, they will guess what is not told and provide some explanation for those bizarre events. (5 minutes)

In small groups, students will imagine Jekyll's fate after Hyde's body is found. Has he escaped from Hyde? Has Hyde murdered him? Where is his body? They will design the front page of a newspaper and include an article reporting what happens to Jekyll. So, they will provide an alternative point of arrival, a postlude (Pope, 1995). (15 minutes)

For the third period, students will have read chapters 8 and 9. First, we will discuss the light Lanyon sheds on the mystery. Have all students inferred that Jekyll and Hyde were one person? Is it a satisfactory explanation? (5 minutes)

Now, students will imagine what would have happened if Jekyll had not "welcomed" Hyde, as he admits in his confession. Students will describe Hyde's alternative personality. This activity of narrative intervention (Pope, 1995) will explore alternative consequences of the use of the drug. (10 minutes)

Students will provide a new title for the story and explain to a partner why they have chosen it. After sharing ideas, students will design the cover for their own title and write a blurb for the back cover. (15 minutes)

For the fourth period, students will have seen the film directed by Victor Fleming. Our aim will be to see how a different medium interprets the novel and to analyse the different devices available to the film maker to project his own “reading.”

We will watch the first scene showing Jekyll’s transformation into Hyde. It opens with a close up of the letter Jekyll is writing to his fiancée, suspenseful background music heightens our emotions when words such as “risk” and “death” are being written down. Then, we see Jekyll’s fiancée woken up by a nightmare. Close ups of Jekyll’s hands closing doors and windows and preparing the potion are shot. Music becomes more intense when Jekyll drinks his steamy potion and tries to keep control of the experiment but he falls to the floor. Images of water; Beatrix drowning; Ivy rising; Jekyll riding and whipping horses which later become his two women, follow one another in Jekyll’s mind, accompanied by violent music. Clumsily, Hyde, gasping, stands up and goes to a mirror. He explores his face, hands, body with short, quick looks and movements, accompanied only by diegetic noises. He approaches the mirror and says with a whispering voice “Can this be evil, then?” A sinister laughter is heard.

We will pay attention to the elements that contribute to foreshadow the appearance of evil. I expect students to acknowledge elements like: location (Jekyll’s underground laboratory), framing (abundance of close ups), lightning (darkness), sound (scary music and silences), editing (quick, violent succession of images of the two women recalled by Jekyll), facial expression and body language (short, quick movements suggesting bestial behaviour), Beatrix’s nightmare, Hyde’s sinister laughter. They will discuss these elements in pairs and then as a whole class. (15 minutes)

Students will reflect on the role played by the women in this scene and all through the film. Why have they been added to the film version? (5 minutes)

Later, students will imagine a short meeting between Ivy and Beatrix, for example when Ivy goes to Jekyll’s and asks for his assistance. They will write down the script for the scene. (10 minutes)

Finally, I will ask students to reflect on all the materials they have worked with and compare their different approaches to *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Which is their favourite? Why? (5 minutes)

### **Closing reflection**

I have tried to select a variety of literary materials and to provide a set of strategies to approach *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* which attempt to reach all students with their different learning styles. Through the different activities planned, I have stimulated the development of the four linguistic skills and their different intelligences, appealing to different senses. Students will have used the language as a means to communicate ideas, feelings, impressions. Above all, I hope students will have enjoyed working with each literary material and developed their creativity and imagination.

### **Literary materials used**

Song

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**Adapted version of the novel.**

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