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APAC ELT Journal

for teachers, by teachers

APAC's ELT Journal was created as a platform for teachers to share their thoughts and resources, and to help the APAC community stay up to date with the latest developments in the field of ELT - with a local twist.

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A quick note from the editorial team

In the dynamic landscape of education, the last few years have witnessed a rapid transformation, propelled by technological advancements and shifting pedagogical paradigms. Technological integration, diverse learning needs, and global challenges demand educators to embrace innovative methodologies and to be open to change. This new issue of APAC's ELT Journal explores this evolving educational terrain and aims to bring together educators in the world of English Language Teaching to help us navigate these changes together.

We all agree that in order to stay relevant and effective, we as teachers can also embrace change by engaging in ongoing professional development. Attending training events fosters a sense of community, enabling educators to share insights, strategies, and experiences. These events are like our secret weapon, not just about learning the latest trends, but also about connecting with our teaching community. Sharing stories, tricks, and a few hilarious mishaps – because who doesn't love a good teaching blooper? This collaborative spirit does not only strengthen the profession, but it also enhances the adaptability of teachers to the evolving educational landscape.

And this is precisely what we're aiming for with our annual ELT Convention. This year's motto is "Times are a-changin'" (inspired by good ol' Bob Dylan), and all the sessions at this year's event share a common thread: they acknowledge the fact that teaching is an ever-evolving adventure, and that we as teachers are the fearless explorers who have to adapt to the changes taking place by being proactive in honing our skills to inspire and guide the next generations effectively.

So, we hope you enjoy reading this new issue and find some inspiration to keep your teaching game strong!

See you at the Convention in February!

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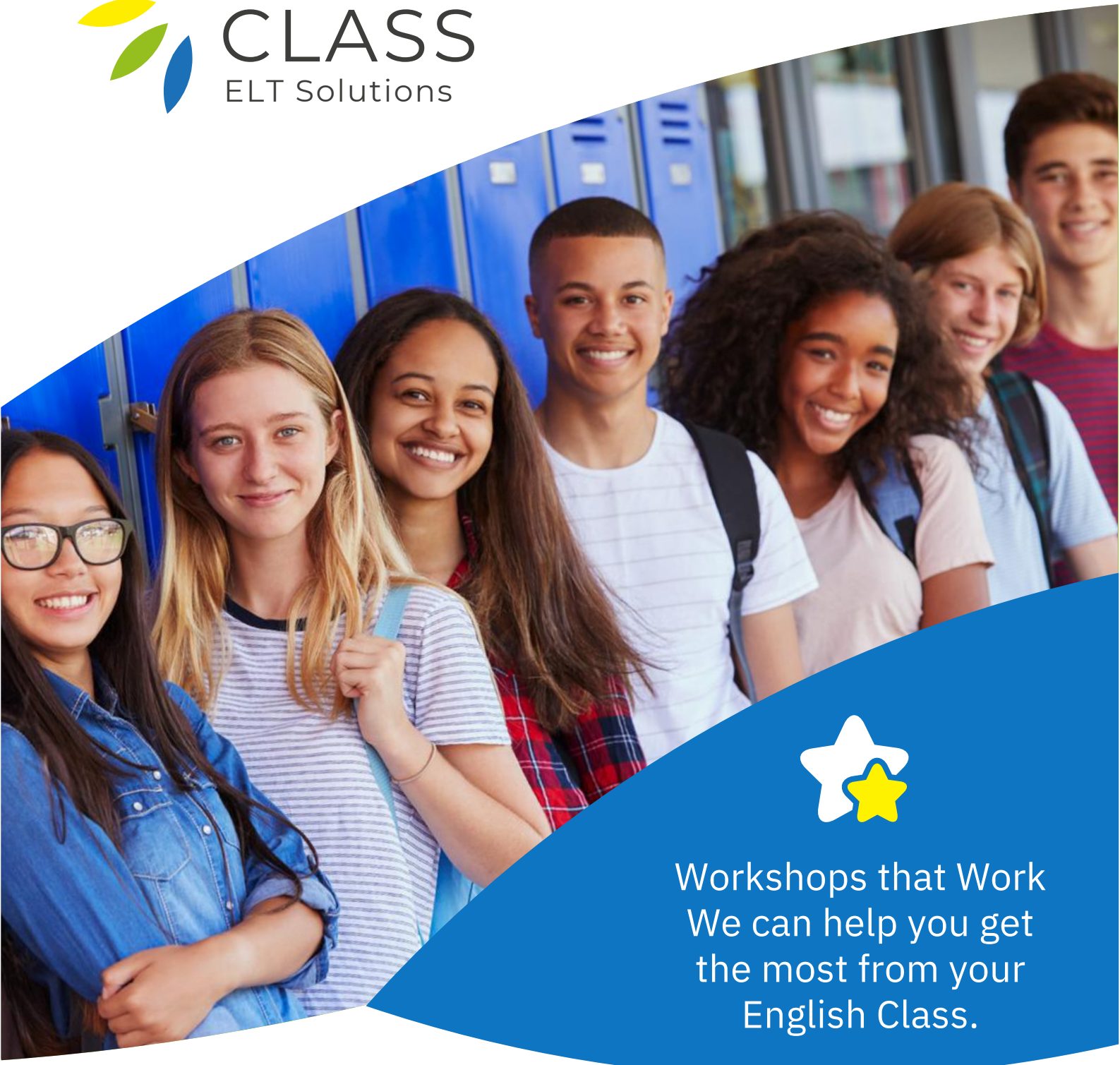

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Research paper

Understanding teachers' plurilingual well-being in context

Caterina Sugranyes, David Soler, William A. Bromberg, and Josep Ma. Ballarin, from Universitat Ramon Llull

Introduction

The past 10 years have witnessed a sea change in how we teach and learn languages. The traditional, monolingual and immersive approach to languages and language learning has given way to a more plurilingual and holistic approach, one in which the whole range of languages and language experiences that learners bring to the classroom are considered pedagogically beneficial. Indeed, research shows that adopting a more plural view towards teaching and learning languages has many benefits: academic performance increases, the self-esteem of learners is encouraged, and motivation and positive attitudes towards learning languages are boosted (Corcoll, 2021; Esteve & González-Davies, 2016; Sugranyes, 2021).

National and international policies on language teaching (Council of Europe, 2020; Generalitat de Catalunya, 2018) have evolved to reflect this growing consensus in favor of plurilingualism. By way of definition, Galante et al. (2022) for the Council of Europe have described plurilingual education as the "pedagogical strategies to critically engage students' repertoires of languages (not only the first language), cultures and semiotic resources for language learning" (p.5). In the case of Catalonia, the proposal of the Department of Education (2018) places language learning at the center of all learning. For this reason, it considers the need for a plurilingual and intercultural model in order to respond to mutual understanding between the various speakers in order to promote tolerance and respect for the difference of the various linguistic communities in the environment. For this reason, only a holistic and integrated learning of the set of linguistic repertoires of the students will make inclusion in the classroom possible.

A vast amount of resources have been published in recent years with the aim of helping teachers promote plurilingual competences among their students (see, among others, Galante et al, 2022; Cummins & Early, 2015). This is accomplished by boosting students' awareness of their own plurilingual identities and supporting and encouraging them as they use the languages they know to learn by forging connections.

Some studies have highlighted the relevance of the plurilingual competence of teachers themselves (Sugranyes, 2021; Young & Mary, 2021; Henriksen et al, 2020), but certain questions with regard to this issue seem to remain unanswered. For example, **must teachers be plurilingually proficient in order to teach and promote plurilingual competences among their students? Are teachers fully aware of their own languages? What relationship do they have with their own languages? Does this affect how they then teach languages?** This article aims to tackle these questions. It does so by posing the concept of plurilingual wellbeing and by analyzing how a group of 15 future primary school teachers who specialize in teaching additional languages (in this case English) understand their own plurilingual wellbeing.

The notion of plurilingual wellbeing stems both from research developed with regard to plurilingual identity and from research on the broader concept of wellbeing. We can describe plurilingual identity as a complex, context-based, plural and dynamic negotiating process between the language(s), the user and the environment through social interaction (Soler & Sugranyes, 2021). Because it's socially constructed, it is also culturally embedded (Cummins, 2001), as it is the result of a constant negotiation and renegotiation of our sense of self in relation to the social and cultural world (Norton, 2013).

We argue, though, that plurilingual identity is not value-loaded, meaning that it is not inherently either positive or negative. It depends heavily on the relations the learner or teacher has with her surroundings and environment and her own experiences with languages. Does plurilingual identity necessarily imply feeling at ease with one's own languages?

Within the framework of positive psychology, wellbeing has been defined as the combination of feeling good and functioning well, by experiencing positive emotions such as happiness and contentment (Huppert, 2009). Recent research has also sought a deeper understanding of the role of wellbeing in specific learning environments by analyzing how wellbeing contributes positively to successful language learning (Mercer, 2021, Khajavy & Vaziri, 2023). For the purposes of this research, plurilingual well-being, then, is defined as the feeling of awareness, understanding and ease with our own languages and with how they allow us to relate to our environment. An approach based on plurilingual wellbeing is one that encourages learners to view their languages as their "own", placing a special focus on this sense of belonging (Cook, 2012). Plurilingual wellbeing relates to positive emotions because it involves overcoming some of the negative experiences of language learning and teaching by strengthening and shedding light on language connections.

Observations carried out both at university with pre-service teachers and at schools with in-service teachers lead us to believe that contributing to plurilingual wellbeing can be an effective way to support plurilingual education, and that teachers' plurilingual well being specifically is a necessary condition for effective learning and teaching.

The context of the study

This study was carried out in a course of the Degree in Primary Education, in a class that is part of the specialization itinerary for students who are training to be teachers of English in primary schools. 15 out of 16 students that enrolled in the course participated in the study (for more details on participants, see Table 1). The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: What relationship do students that are training to be teachers of English in primary schools have with their own languages?

- RQ2: How does the relationship with their own languages affect the way they teach languages?

Data was collected with two different tools and at two different stages: quantitatively by using the questionnaire "Understanding plurilingual wellbeing" and qualitatively through a focus group. The questionnaire "Understanding plurilingual wellbeing" is an adapted and validated version of the PERMA survey of wellbeing developed by Seligman (2011). The questionnaire had 23 questions that explored a range of feelings connected to the use of languages and factors that may affect our wellbeing. All the questions of the questionnaire could be answered in a scale that ranged from 0 to 10 (being 0 not at all and 10 completely). Firstly, the questionnaire was administered to the participants and results were analyzed and then a focus group was developed with the aim of complementing the quantitative data.

Table 01: Participants' age range and spoken languages

Total nº of participants	Age range		Spoken languages by participants	
15	19-21 years-old	9	English	15
	22-24 years-old	3	Spanish	12
	27 years-old	1	Catalan	10
			French	4
			Dutch	1

Results and Discussion

We asked the participants about their comfort and relationship with languages. The responses showed that they generally felt a high level of comfort (average score 1: 8.26) and a positive relationship with the languages they know. This suggests that most participants feel at ease with their linguistic abilities.

In most of the cases, a plurilingual environment was connected to positive emotions. To be precise, participants expressed that they often feel joyful when communicating in a plurilingual environment (a.s.: 8.4) and that when using their plurilingual repertoire they feel positive (a.s.: 8.33) and happy (a.s.: 8.26). This is also reinforced by the general feeling that time goes by very fast when doing something you enjoy in a plurilingual environment (8.33) and that participants easily become absorbed in what they are doing when using their own languages (8.73). Regarding the plurilingual wellbeing of participants, these results suggest a positive correlation between the use of the languages of the participants' repertoire in a plurilingual environment and positive feelings.

There was, however, a slightly lower level of excitement and interest in embracing activities conducted in languages that are not in their linguistic repertoire (a.s.: 7.73). Besides, 6 of the participants expressed that they felt a certain degree of anxiety when faced with the idea of using languages other than their own languages. This is an interesting point, especially considering the overall high comfort level that participants reported having when communicating in their known languages. In a similar line, participants felt that they often receive only a moderate degree of help and support from others when interacting within a plurilingual environment (a.s.: 6.46), showing that in certain situations not enough support is provided to facilitate plurilingual communication.

Finally, some questions of the questionnaire aimed to explore the participants' self perception of their physical health. Although just three of the participants perceived that their health level was lower than 6, it is relevant to mention that no direct relation was found between health and plurilingual wellbeing. This suggests that language wellbeing and physical health may not be interconnected. Moreover, no significant connections were found between feelings of loneliness or being loved and the participants' relationships with their languages. Nevertheless, more data is needed to confirm these latter connections.

In order to complement the data above, participants were asked open-ended questions about what they thought might underpin their significant degree of plurilingual wellbeing. In broad terms, they attributed their results to feeling relaxed and at ease in the learning environment where this study was conducted. The issue of awareness and curiosity with regard to language(s) and language also emerged as significant, as participants felt that they had been made aware of their own language(s) and had been shown ways of using them. It is worth noting that in this group these uses are connected not only to learning English, but also to teaching it. One participant expressed that she felt 'connected to and had become aware of the power of her own languages for doing things' and that she had become more confident about her own languages.

Interestingly, whereas participants did seem to think that having their plurilingual wellbeing affected their plurilingual education and teaching plurilingual competences, they were unsure whether plurilingual wellbeing would condition their language proficiency. Confidence emerged as a significant indicator related to language proficiency. More data is needed to explore this issue.

It could be argued that in order to foster greater plurilingual wellbeing, there is a need to create more linguistically "safe" spaces where participants feel comfortable and at ease, and where their own languages are viewed as powerful learning tools. This is consistent with research developed by Canagragh (2014) with regards to collaborative translanguaging spaces.

Conclusions

This study has probed the relationships that a group of pre-service teachers in Catalonia have with their "own" languages. This has been done with an eye toward helping to define and measure the construct "plurilingual wellbeing", grounded in the literature on plurilingual identity and on psychological wellbeing. While it is true that the sample size was very small, the fact that the participants were future language teachers might be of value because of the relatively high degree of language awareness of the group and the special insights they can provide into how to successfully reconcile some of the contradictions and challenges that can emerge in the context of plurilingual identity. Indeed, developing language awareness to overcome these issues is at the very heart of what we understand as plurilingual wellbeing.

This initial exploration of the concept of plurilingual wellbeing could be of interest to teachers, teacher trainers and policymakers, all of whom are responsible for leading the way in implementing plurilingual education. Further research should attempt to better operationalize this concept and to determine how to improve teachers' relationships with their languages in order to make them more effective plurilingual educators.

About the authors

Caterina Sugranyes

Dr Caterina Sugranyes is a Lecturer in Additional Languages Didactics and Education at the Faculty of Psychology, Education and Sport Sciences Blanquerna at the Ramon Llull University in Barcelona. She is the leading researcher of the area of research of languages and language didactics of the Research group GREDA (Education, Didactic and Learning) at the FPCEE. She is currently the coordinator for International Relations for the Education degrees, and has worked as a lecturer in English, Translation and Interpreting at the University of Vic, and as an English and French language teacher in primary and secondary schools across Europe, South America, Pakistan and India. She works together with teachers and schools and her research focuses on the use and visibility of pupil's' own languages at schools as a way of encouraging overall plurilingual wellbeing at school.

David Soler

Dr David Soler is a Lecturer in Additional Languages Didactics and Education at the Faculty of Psychology, Education and Sport Sciences Blanquerna at the Ramon Llull University in Barcelona. He holds a PhD in Education, a degree in English Studies from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) and a Master Degree in Teaching English. He is a coordinator of the Bachelor's Degree in Primary and Early Childhood Education at the Ramon Llull University. He is currently also the coordinator of the Master's Degree in Teaching in Secondary Schools, Vocational Training and Language Centres. He has worked as a consultant of educational innovation at ESADE Business School and as a Primary and Secondary Education teacher. In his current research, he is focusing on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and plurilingualism.

William A. Bromberg

Will Bromberg is from Washington DC. He has a BA in Government and International Politics from George Mason University and a Master's in International Relations from CIDOB (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona). He has been teaching English at Blanquerna FPCEE for over 10 years and collaborates with the GREDA research group. He also freelances as a translator specializing in academic texts.

Josep Ma. Ballarin

Dr Josep Ballarín is a Lecturer in Second Language Acquisition and Didactics of literacy in first Languages at the Faculty of Psychology, Education and Sport Sciences Blanquerna at the Ramon Llull University in Barcelona. He holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics and Communication (UB), a Master in Applied Linguistics (Indiana University), a Degree in Catalan Studies (UB) and a Degree in Primary Education (URL). He is a researcher of the area of research of languages and language didactics of the Research group GREDA (Education, Didactic and Learning) at the FPCEE. He has been a Director of Primary Education degree at Blanquerna. He has also worked as a lecturer at the University of Barcelona, UOC University, Indiana University, Rice University and University of Cardiff. His research focuses on plurilingualism in the schools.

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Methodology

Game-Based Learning: Let's explore the possibilities of using Board Games in the ESL classroom

Ricard Garcia, from CRP Baix Llobregat II

"Board games offer a variety of benefits that cater to different language proficiency levels, skills and learning styles"

Since the 2020 pandemic breakthrough, many people have found out about board games. They are an excellent tool to get people together, to share, negotiate and overcome challenges. These benefits are not only valid in everyday life. Using board games with the adequate methodology, can turn them into a weapon to spearhead motivation and engagement in our classroom.

They can be an effective and engaging way to enhance language learning. Board games offer a variety of benefits that cater to different language proficiency levels, skills and learning styles.

Many board games simulate real-world scenarios, allowing students to apply language skills in practical situations. This connection to everyday life enhances the relevance and usefulness of language learning.

We are going to see some examples of their use and we will also see the adequate approach we should take in order to make the best of them without the risk of leaving the class with the feeling of "sooo, we played... and now what?"

There are thousands of board games, and out of these thousands, hundreds of them can be turned into learning tools. We have easy games and difficult games, short and long, abstract and thematic, games with cards and games with meeples, games in small boxes and games in large boxes, games with few elements and games with many components. But these aspects do not make a game useful in our classrooms or not. It is the methodology we use what will turn Virus, Catan, Crime Chronicles, Magic Maze or Dixit into powerful learning tools.
How do we use board games in class?

In order to use a game in class, we must make sure we know why we want to use it. What learning goals are we going to achieve by playing with that game?

We must also be aware of the type of class group we have, and also the individuals that make this group. This will allow us to see what aspects of the game we are going to use or who is going to play a specific role in the game. In order to do that, we must get rid of the idea of using a game as an unbreakable unit.

We will often see that using just some aspects of a game is enough for our purposes. But what are those aspects, what are those elements?

Board games have components: Physical elements we use to play the game such as a board, dice, meeples, cards...Board games have mechanics: How do we play a game? What rules does it have?

Board games have a **narrative**: Is there a story that leads us into the game or is part of the game itself? Is there a topic, a theme?

But, do we have to use them all?

Óscar Recio, an English teacher from Mallorca who works in Asturias (@OscarRecio Coll) and is one of the most experienced teachers regarding Game Based Learning, coined a term that is called “Breaking the Box”. He shows that we can use just some or one of those so-called elements of the game in our activity: Maybe we can use the meeples from Carcassonne to ask our students to create a story in stop-motion, or the cards from Dixit to create a treasure hunt. Maybe the narrative rising out of Everdell is valid to work on the topic of forest life.

What can we teach with the help of board games?

1. Vocabulary Building:
Board games often involve specific themes or scenarios that introduce and reinforce vocabulary. Games like Scrabble or Boggle, for instance, encourage players to create words from a set of letters, fostering vocabulary expansion. Secret Code, Virus, Similo, Concept or Ikonikus are very helpful to enrich vocabulary. Games such as Finders Keepers (El Lince) have hundreds of new words to learn which can also be used to create stories.

2. Grammar Reinforcement:
Many board games have rules that require the use of specific grammatical structures. Games such as Taboo or Pictionary can enhance students' understanding and application of grammar rules in a fun and interactive manner. We might use games such as Chronicles of Crime, Unlock or Cat Crimes to practice modals in order to express deduction or obligation.

3. Communication Skills:
Games that require interaction and negotiation, or cooperative games, such as Forbidden Island or Magic Maze or role-playing games that require decision-making can significantly improve students' communication skills. Negotiating deals, describing actions, and discussing strategies all contribute to language development.

4. Cultural Understanding:
Some board games incorporate cultural elements, providing an opportunity for students to learn about different cultures while practicing language skills. Games like The Settlers of Catan or Ticket to Ride can spark discussions about geography, history, and traditions. We can learn history or science with TimeLine, Cytosis or Similo.

5. Listening and Speaking Practice:
Most games often involve listening to instructions, discussing strategies, or explaining rules. This naturally encourages students to use the language in context, leading to improved listening and speaking skills. Chronicles of Crime combines a board with an app where we discover crime scenes and interview people who give us spoken information. We must collect evidence and finally go to Scotland Yard and reveal the culprit.

6. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:
Many board games require critical thinking and strategic planning. Games like Turing Machine, Micro Macro or Risk challenge students to think ahead, solve problems, and articulate their reasoning—all valuable skills for language learners.

7. Teamwork and Collaboration:
Cooperative board games, where players work together to achieve a common goal, promote teamwork and collaboration. This fosters an environment where students need to express ideas and opinions, reinforcing language skills: Forbidden Island, Wolf, Coup, Mysterium, or problem-solving games such as Bureau of Investigations or Sherlock.

If you are planning to introduce board games in your class, start with simple activities as fillers, and move on to finding games that match our syllabus goals. “Break the box” and see how this helps you enhance your lessons.

Incorporating board games into ESL classrooms is definitely a dynamic and effective strategy for language acquisition. The interactive and enjoyable nature of these games not only reinforces language skills but also creates a positive and engaging learning environment.

About the author

Ricard Garcia
Ricard is an English teacher who has worked in Secondary and in Higher Education at Universitat de Barcelona and Universitat Pompeu Fabra. He has also worked as a web editor of edu365 at the *Departament d’Educació* and is currently the head of the CRP Baix Llobregat II (the teacher training centre for Gavà and Viladecans). Ricard has published ESL textbooks for Cambridge University Press, and is a valued APAC speaker and teacher-trainer.

Further resources

Here are some useful links that offer examples, best practices and tips for GBL. Click on the titles to access the resources:

Jueducación
A great site created by proud teacher & gamer Óscar Recio Coll (aka Mr. Wolf) with ideas and resources for the classroom

Teaching With Board Games
@TheBoardGameTeacher's Youtube channel about board games and games and how they can be used as educational tools.

A la luz de una bombilla
An inspiring site designed by Pepe Pedraz to help teachers unleash their creativity and enhance their students' learning experiences.

EF Teacher blog
A blog entry by Erin Walton that encourages teachers to use classic board games in the classroom.

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How can teachers support Equality and Diversity in their classrooms?

How do we prepare children and young people for life in modern Europe? Schools today have the unenviable task of challenging a narrative from wider society that can be divisive and confusing for young children. Who is teaching children to understand, embrace and be part of our beautifully rich and diverse world, and how are we doing it?

Educational institutions and teachers, including language teachers, can help to remove that barrier so that learners can see that 'difference is a positive, not a negative' (Ofsted, 2023). After all, we are all different: none of us is exactly the same; we are all unique. As young people grow, institutions can help them explore their differences so that they feel comfortable in their own skin.

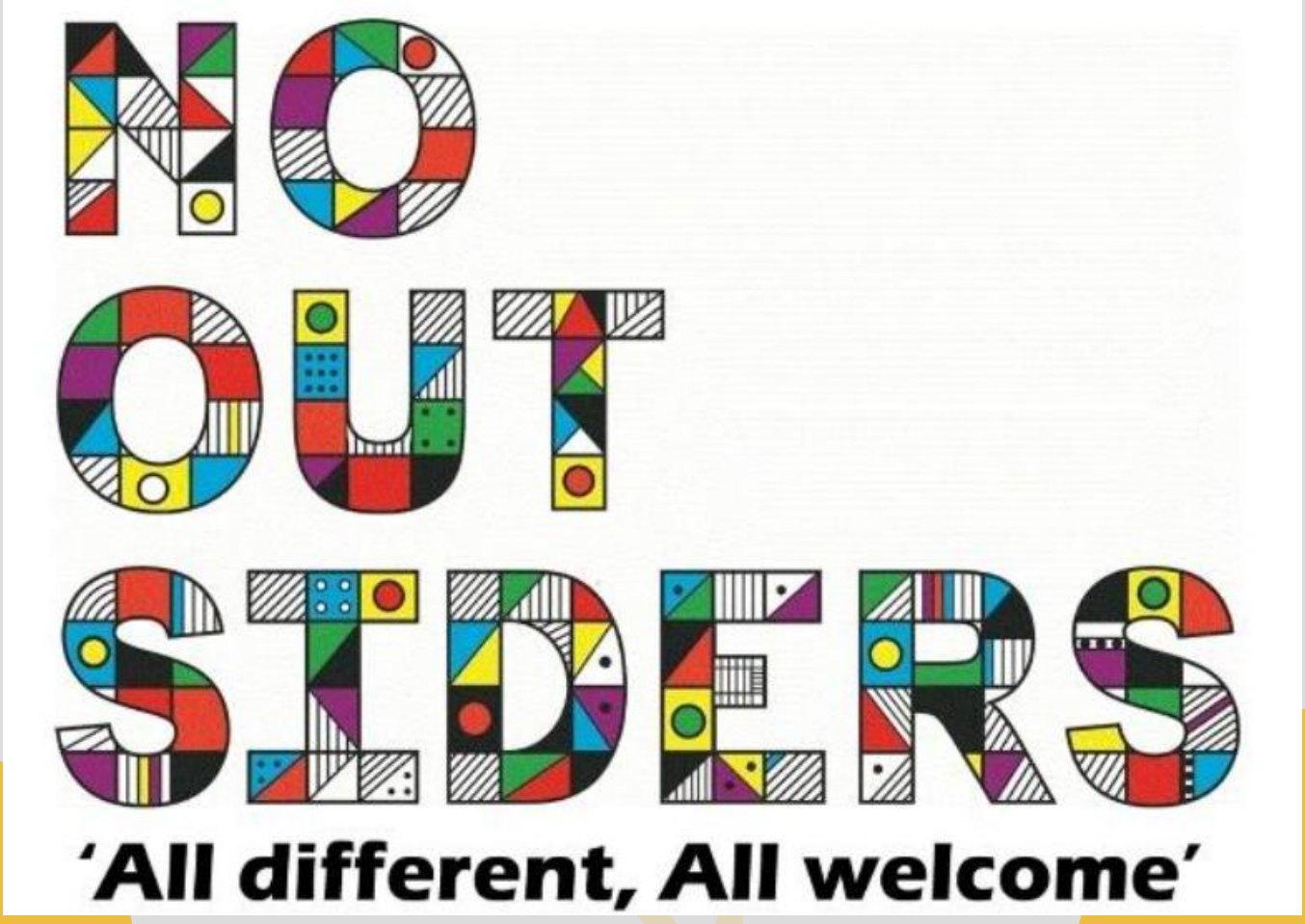
Schools need a clear, inclusive ethos to teach belonging. We cannot control the narrative children hear outside school on social media, from older siblings or in the community but we can control the narrative children hear inside school, and that narrative needs to be very clear and reinforced through everyday language and practice: diversity is a good thing; we are all unique and we all belong.

Educators need a framework, a common language that can be used to talk about equality so that all adults are giving the same messages. Children hear adult conversations; they catch images and hear bits of news programmes that they may not fully understand. Children will ask questions and we should be encouraging them to feel safe in the big wide world.

So how do we teach about differences around the world in an age-appropriate way to young people?

In addition to having a clear message that diversity is a positive, schools need to be using resources where children see themselves. One effective resource is through picture story books with characters of colour; characters with disabilities and with different families; characters with different faith and belief. But just having the books in classrooms and libraries is not enough. Educators need to be clear on how to use these to explore identity, engage children in ideas and reassure children of their place in the world. It's not just a matter of reading stories, although that is important as they can convey important key messages that can counter fear and hostility towards difference. Stories can also become a springboard for children to question and engage in real-world discussions

An example of how resources can be used to talk about differences in an age-appropriate way is the programme "No Outsiders: Everyone different, everyone welcome". This UK-based programme, created by Andrew Moffat (Routledge, 2016; 2018; 2020; 2024) enables teachers and children to explore issues of difference and equality.



What does the 'No Outsiders: Everyone different, everyone welcome' programme involve?

The 'No Outsiders: Everyone different, everyone welcome' programme includes lesson plans for children from Reception to Year 6 using different picture books and a wealth of assemblies in English that are published weekly (free of charge) for schools to use as discussion points to explore equality and what it means in practice https://no-outsiders.com/about-us . Through these plans and resources every child is encouraged to have the freedom and the skills to explore who they are and to know they belong. The programme believes that children and young people should feel proud to be who they are, and also know that they are accepted without judgement. In addition, no child or young person should feel that they have to change who they are in order to fit in. This sense of self and belonging cannot be left to chance. All teachers and institutions can play a role in ensuring that learners' have confidence in who they are, feel they belong and are explicitly taught that difference is a positive. It is important that learners do not feel left out because of the person they are.

The No Outsiders programme uses over 40 picture books to teach about difference and equality. The picture books show different people in stories, and the lesson plans help children understand that no matter who you are, you are welcome in our school. The aim of a No Outsiders approach therefore, is to teach children that we are all different and we all belong here. The UK Equality Act (2010) was used as the foundation for writing the programme.

Evidence of the positive impact of the No Outsiders programme on the quality of education in schools in the UK has been noted by thousands of teachers and head teachers. This short film shows Head Teachers from around the UK talking about the impact of No Outsiders on their school. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSbMS6S2r0Q&t=1s

Why are laws about Equality and Diversity important for teachers and children?

Given that across the globe, various forms of discrimination still exist, laws are an important foundation for teachers to be confident supporters of an Equality and Diversity ethos in their institutions.

In the UK Equality Act (2010), nine protected characteristics are listed. The law states that no one should face discrimination because of their: Race; Religion; Sex; Gender reassignment; Age; Disabilities; Sexual orientation; Pregnancy or maternity; Marriage or civil partnership. This UK-based Act means that teachers can demonstrate to children that they are referenced in law; we can see ourselves in those protected characteristics and the law protects us to be the person we are. The No Outsiders lesson plans do not explore the individual protected characteristics; there is not one lesson on race, a different lesson on religion, and another on sexual orientation. What is discussed in all the lessons, through the picture books used, is difference. All the characters we seen in the books are different and they all play together.

Similarly, Spanish law states the importance of "preserving the minor's identity, culture, religion, ideas, sexual preferences and identity, and language. Non-discrimination of the minor due to these or any other conditions whatsoever, including disability, thus ensuring the harmonious development of their personality" (2018, p.12).

In Catalunya, a number of laws have been approved by the Education department (Departament d'Ensenyament, Generalitat de Catalunya) related to inclusion and diversity as well as equality (e.g. inclusió and diversitat- 17 d'octubre de 2017 s'aprova el decret 150/2017 ; igualtat de dones i homes – Llei 17/2015, del 21 de juliol) whereby teachers and schools can work theoretically and practically to support all students and their protected characteristics, work to overcome different types of discrimination and foster respect for and acceptance of difference. The Education Department also highlights a number of key principles that should underpin the education system in Catalunya, including:

- The recognition of diversity as a universal fact
- An inclusive system as the only possible approach to respond to all students
- Participation and co-responsibility to build a common project based on dialogue, communication and respect

.

To sum up, it is **values, policies** and **practices** to ensure that all people, regardless of their socio-economic and cultural origin and of their innate or acquired abilities, have the same learning opportunities in any educational context, while contributing to create a fairer and more equitable society (Booth and Ainscow, 2002).

How can ELT teachers in Catalunya support Equality and Diversity in their classrooms?

ELT teachers can support the Equality and Diversity laws in Catalunya by becoming aware of the **values** and **policies** that underpin their daily classroom **practices**. In addition, choosing resources and materials that support children's protected characteristics is an essential step. Not using resources that have stereotypes of gender roles or that do reflect differences in race or (dis)ability, for example, is also essential. (*Departament d'Ensenyament*, 2018).

ELT teachers can give a real boost to their practices on equality and diversity issues by signing up to a new and exciting pilot programme specifically for English Language classes which is being launched in Catalunya by the 'No Outsiders: Everyone different, everyone welcome' programme, in partnership with APAC. In signing up, schools and teachers can pilot and give feedback on new Task-based lesson plans specifically for lessons in English. Schools will also be invited to create their own Task-based lesson plans which can then go through the process of being officially endorsed by No Outsiders programme and APAC. Furthermore, schools that sign up to be a pilot school through APAC will be invited to borrow picture story books in English, from among over 40 carefully-selected, quality books in English.

For more information about this pilot and for signing up, attend Andrew's plenary talk at the 2024 **APAC ELT Convention** on **Thursday 1st February at 5pm**, come along to the workshop on **Saturday 3rd February at 10am** or contact us at **info@apac365.org** for more details.

About the author

Andrew Moffat

Andrew Moffat is the founder of the No Outsiders programme and has been a primary school teacher since 1995. He is currently Professional Development Lead at Excelsior Multi Academy Trust (MAT) in Birmingham, UK, a growing trust of seven schools.

In 2017 Andrew was awarded a MBE by the Queen for services to education and in 2019 he was listed as a top ten finalist in the Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize. The inclusion of LGBT+ equality in the No Outsiders programme led to some resistance and sparked much needed national debate on protected characteristics. As a result, Andrew was awarded "Hero of the year" by the European Diversity Awards and "Role model of the year" by Pink News. Today the No Outsiders programme is used in hundreds of UK schools to develop an inclusive culture.

Excelsior MAT lies at the forefront of inclusive education in the UK today, employing Andrew to deliver No Outsiders training across the UK (45 schools visited for No Outsiders training September -December 2023, 2500 teachers trained 10,000 children taught a No Outsiders lesson as part of the training). No Outsiders ethos is central to the inclusive culture at Excelsior MAT. Four of the seven Excelsior schools have had compulsory government inspections in the past three years with evidence of a positive impact of the No Outsiders programme on schools.

Teacher training related to the 'No Outsiders' programme has also had widespread recognition at an international level with Andrew training educationalists and sharing best practice in Italy, South Africa, India and United Arab Emirates.

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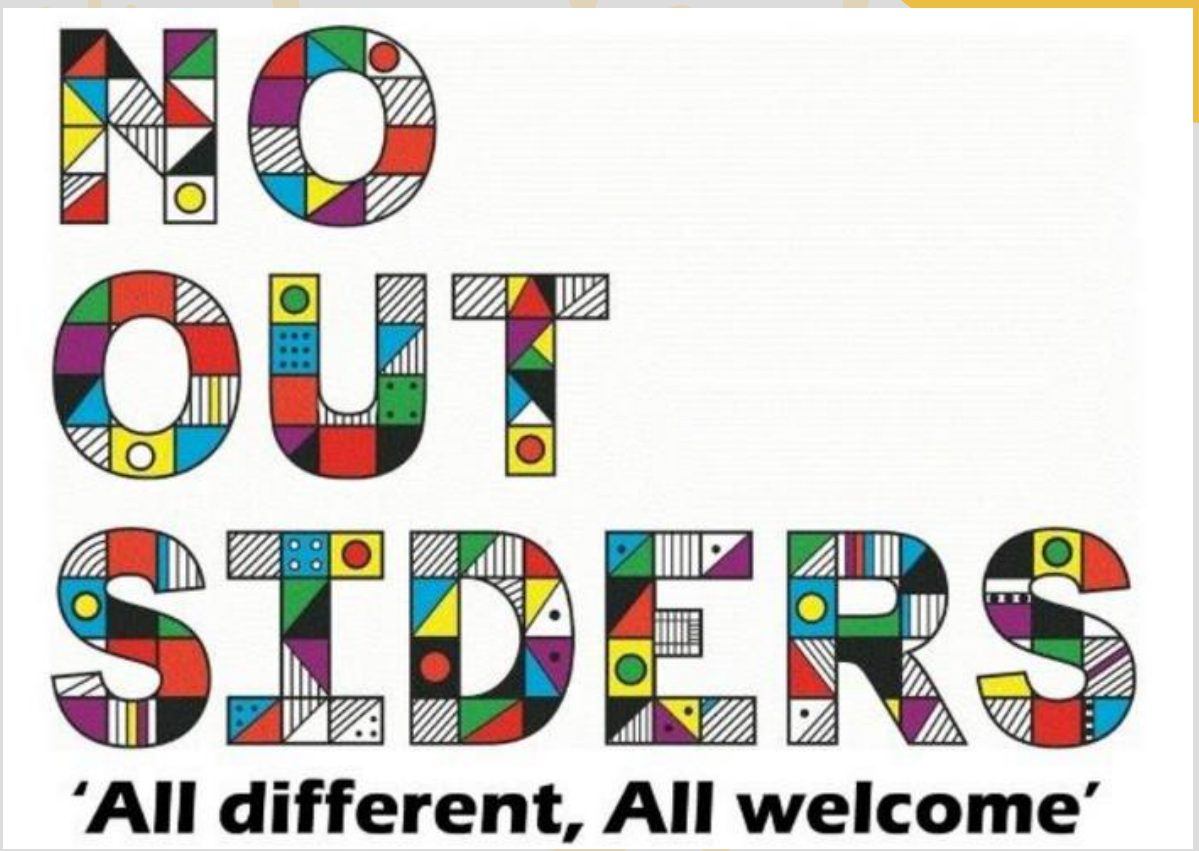

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My favourite animal – A primary unit design Winner of the 2022 APAC Awards

Ignacio Fernández Darna, from Institució Igualada

This article reviews the design and implementation of a CLIL unit using the CAPA model in a school located in Igualada. It is introduced briefly with an explanation of the context of the educational institution, followed by the theoretical framework where the innovative methodology is explained in detail and it can be connected clearly to the examples shown in the Design. Finally, there are some ideas for further development for those who want to put this new way of teaching into practice.

Context

The school where I work is called Institució Igualada. It is one of the schools owned by the organization named Institució. The one that it refers to is placed in Igualada, a town near Barcelona. It is a charter school, which is an institution paid for with public money but is organized by a private group. It offers education from kindergarten to secondary education.

The school offers a bilingual education. Students and teachers speak Catalan and Spanish fluently. It also promotes the learning of a foreign language as is English. Its teaching is through the subject language and content subjects such as Science, History, Arts and Crafts, among others, using methodology CLIL. Students start learning the foreign language from the first year at school and most of them finish school with a level B2.

The innovation proposal had as end users the two classes formed by students of 4th grade. In these classes, there were 20 and 18 students respectively. The majority of them had enough English level (A1) for following the classes, but, some other students struggle more with the language because of diverse difficulties. However, those students had the support of the teacher and their classmates (Marsh, 2000). The subject chosen for the proposal was Science. The reason for this election has been that students had previous experience with the study of this area in a foreign language and most of the objective contents for this grade are very related to the ones learned the previous year. There were two classes of forty-five minutes per week.

Theoretical Framework

CLIL is described as "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Coyle et al, 2010:30). In other words, attention is paid equally to content and language whereas teaching a subject in a foreign language simply only is focused on content. A central aspect of this methodology is the position that teachers and students have in class. As it says by Coyle "the respective roles of the teachers and students are central to CLIL, because its very nature tends to demand more student-centered approaches" (2010, p. 86). Teachers become facilitators of knowledge while students are placed at the center of the learning processes. This is because "teacher and learner are more aware of the inadequacy of mere transmission" (Ball et all, 2016:45).

To apply student-centered learning in a CLIL context, a model can be used. Diana J. Tedick and Roy Lyster have created a model that is useful to focus on content and language and is through student-centered principles. Its name is referred to as The CAPA model and can be used in CLIL classes (2019:12). It is divided into four phases which often follow this sequence: contextualization, awareness, practice, and autonomy. Firstly, the contextualization phase introduces the topic that will be treated in class. Normally, this is done through written or spoken text which includes the language features that the teacher would like to work on. Secondly, it is the awareness phase. At this stage, learners are asked for noticing some language features that were in the introductory text. It includes "awareness in the sense of consciously noticing formal properties of the target language and awarenesses in the sense of developing an analyzable representation of the target form" (p.69). Thirdly, the practice phase continues to develop metalinguistic awarenesses. It allows students to use the target features in meaningful ways, but in controlled situations where teachers can give feedback. Finally, the autonomy phase goes back to the initial topic. It is designed to promote the use of the target language features, but now the focus is on the content.

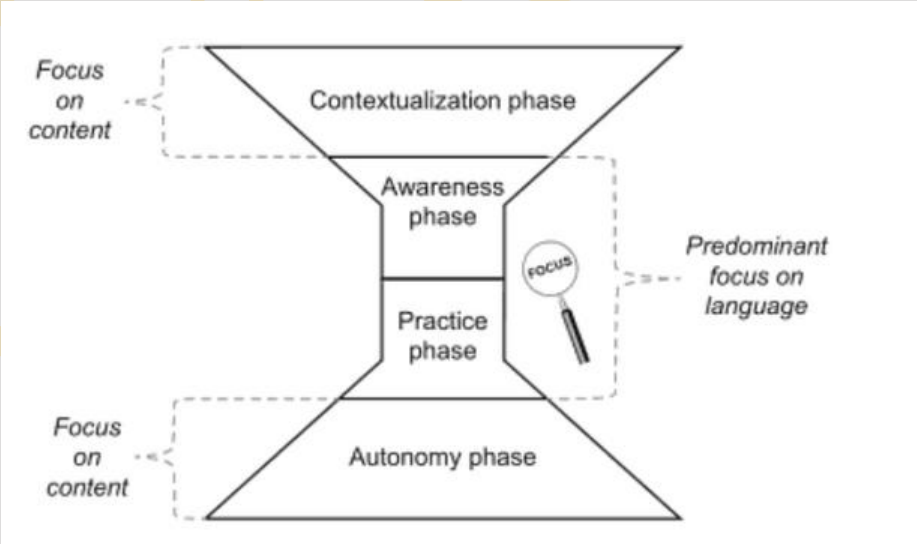

Figure 01: The CAPA sequence, adapted from Lyster (2019)

Examples of Session Design

The Unit Design contains a total of 10 lessons, but in this paper only two examples are included due to space limitations.

Table 01: Lesson 1 - Key points

Lesson 1	
Content objectives	**Language objectives**
• Differentiate between living and non-living things. • Know the main characteristics of living things: born, die, grow, breathe, eat, drink, and feel emotions.	• Vocabulary: grow, living, non-living, reproduce, move, breathe, feel emotions, die, eat, drink. • Structures: can / can't. Positive, negative, and interrogative sentences. Understand the difference and how to pronounce it.
Activities	
Contextualization	• The teacher asks the students to complete a chart indicating what they already know about animals and what they would like to learn more. After that, the teacher plays a video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p51FiPO2_kQ) that explains the main differences between living things and non-living things. • Then, the teacher labels one side of the classroom with *living things* and the other side with *non-living things.* Students stand in the middle of the classroom. The teacher says some examples referred to the topic and students need to move to the correct side of the classroom.
Awareness	• The teacher shows the transcript of the video on the whiteboard and hands a copy to everyone

Transcription from the YouTube video:

- Living and Non-living Things: Things that can grow, move, breathe and reproduce are called living things. Living things can also feel emotions like anger, fear, and happiness. After growing and living for a long-time living things ultimately die. Examples of living things are human beings, animals, and plants. Plants cannot move from one place to another. However, plants move their stem to face the sun. Hence, they are also living things.
- Things that cannot grow, move, breathe and reproduce are called non-living things. They do not have any kind of life in them. Examples of non-living things are rocks, buckets, and water

Awareness	• Then, the teacher divides the class into groups of three students. • Following this, the teacher asks the students to identify can and can't in the text and say the difference. • After that, the teacher gives a mini-lecture about how to use modal verbs and pronounce them.
Practice	• The teacher gives some flashcards of living or non-living things. • In groups, students write if they can or can't be born, die, grow, breathe, eat, drink, and feel emotions.
Autonomy	• In teams, students make a poster of living and non-living things saying the things they can or can't do and drawing some examples of each type. • Then, they display the poster on the wall and explain it to the rest of the class.

Materials	Timing
Youtube video, cardboard, colors, notebooks, flashcards.	2 sessions of 45 minutes

Assessment

A rubric to evaluate the poster.

Table 02: Lesson 2 - Key points

Lesson 2

Content objectives	Language objectives
• Vertebrate and invertebrate animals: characteristics and classification.	• Vocabulary: animal kingdom; vertebrate, invertebrates, skeleton, backbone, exoskeleton, big, small, soft, internal, external bones, head, torso, limbs, tail, shell, mollusks, jellyfish, sponges, echinoderms, annelids, arthropods, mammals, birds, fishes, amphibians, reptiles. • Structures: Learn how to write simple sentences using the verb to have in positive and negative.

Activities

- The teacher hands a paper with a text about the two groups that are in the animal kingdom to the students and asks them to read it in turns (adapted from https://howforkids.com/vertebrates-and-invertebrates-for-kids/)

The animal kingdom can be divided into two groups: vertebrates and invertebrates.

Vertebrates are those animals that **have** articulated internal skeletons. That internal skeleton is made up of the backbone and other bones.

Main characteristics of the vertebrates:
- Presence of the backbone. It acts as a support for the body to facilitate movement.
- Parts of the body: Most vertebrate animals **have** a head, torso, limbs, and tail.

They are classified into five groups. They are mammals, birds, fishes, amphibians, and reptiles.

Invertebrates belong to a very varied group of animals that **don't have** internal skeletons.

Main characteristics of the invertebrates:
- They are usually small in size.
- Most of them **have** an external skeleton called an exoskeleton.
- Some invertebrates **don't have** any protection. They **have** soft bodies.
- Some invertebrates **have** a shell to protect their bodies.

They are classified into six main groups: mollusks, jellyfish, sponges, echinoderms, annelids, and arthropods.

Awareness	• In groups, students need to identify in the text, the positive and negative sentences where the verb to have can be found. • Then, they need to think about the difference. • Later, the teacher gives a mini-lecture explaining each type.
Practice	• The students are placed in groups. Each team is given an individual whiteboard and a marker. • The teacher shows an animal on the big whiteboard and writes a word next to it. • Then, students need to write have or don't have on their whiteboards. If they do it correctly, they get a point.
Autonomy	• The same group needs to choose an animal and make a poster where they will draw the animal, say if it is vertebrate or invertebrate, and write five sentences using have and don't have. • Then, they display it on the wall and explain it without showing the animal (by covering the picture, for example), and the rest of the students have to guess what it is.

Materials	Timing
Paper, whiteboard, projector, pencils, worksheet, highlighters, cardboards, colors.	1 session of 45 minutes

Assessment
A rubric to evaluate.

Ideas for Further Development

From my point of view, designing a proposal has better results than the traditional method. However, there are some difficulties that I found in the process, but solving them will help me to plan better next time I plan a new unit. In the first place, finding all the materials to create the unit was time-consuming. It is for that reason that I propose to complement the lessons with material that students already have such as the course book. In the second place, I found it very helpful to follow the teacher's guide to set the objectives for each lesson. Finally, it is very challenging to elaborate a whole didactic unit throughout the academic year. It is better to complete and revise the design each year, rather than doing all the work in only one.

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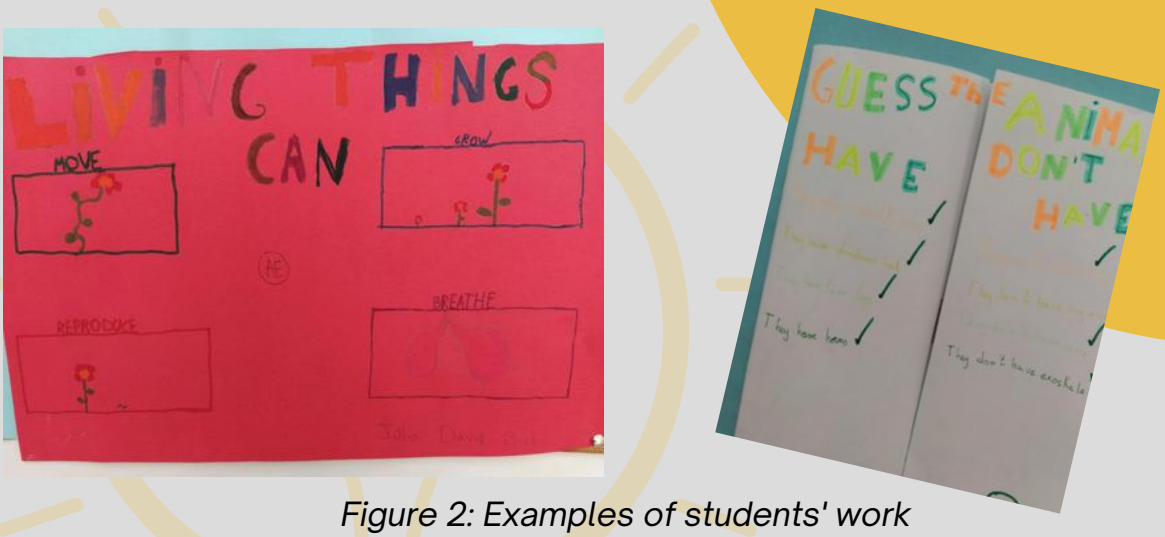

Figure 2: Examples of students' work

About the author

Ignacio Fernández Darna

Ignacio Fernández Darna is a primary teacher. He works at Institucio Igualada as the main tutor of 4th elementary students. In the past, he has also been always in contact with different educative programmes. He worked for two years in a school located in L'Arboç (Tarragona) as an English and support teacher. Besides that, he spent a whole year volunteering in a non-profit organisation called Citywise, in Dublin, thanks to a grant given by European Solidarity Corps. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Primary Education and a Master's Degree in Language Acquisition and Teaching English as a Foreign Language both at UIC Barcelona. Since last year, he has been studying in a Language Academy intending to achieve the highest-level English qualification.

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Teaching materials

Learning Situation: My Wellbeing

Vardush Hovsepyan Vardanyan, from Pau Casals Secondary School (Badalona)

The following Learning Situation (LS) deals with how to teach 4th of ESO students in order to provide them with meaningful and authentic learning, so they can apply their critical thinking to real-life situations. Moreover, since the LS is a transversal one, as the topic is relevant to other subjects, it can be used in a wide variety of situations and will help them enhance their self-esteem. Other important aspects that the LS covers are Sustainable Development Goal number 3, vector number 6 of the new curriculum, as well as the use of ICTs in the learning environment. Apart from the digital skill, it also focuses on two other transversal competences: Personal, social and learning to learn skill and entrepreneurial skill. As for the development of the LS, the main methodological strategy is collaborative work, as students are expected to come up with a final task with the help of their group members. Furthermore, sessions start with pre-task, task, post-task or review activities. Last but not least, it also caters for diversity with universal measures and supports, like formative assessment, collaborative work and the use of the different formats for the presentation of the new information, and additional or intensive measures and supports.

Context

Our society is in a constant process of change and education is “only the image and reflection” (Durkheim, 1897/1951: 372-373) of it. On the other hand, schools and education reflect society. One of the reasons why the syllabus changes is because it adapts to our new reality. The school syllabus helps us plan, develop and assess and reflect on our teaching method. And it does it through the objectives, contents, methodology, assessment criteria, as well as through a reference to students with special educational needs.

When designing the Learning Situation, it is important to take into consideration the subject and level to be taught, as well as the socioeconomic characteristics of the students. Besides, we should also bear in mind that, according to the Decree 150/2017, of 17th October, of educational attention to students within the framework of an inclusive education system, “all educational centres supported with public funds within non university education must be inclusive by establishing criteria that guide the organization and management of the centres” (Article 2). Finally, “convinced that equality between women and men and the gender perspective must be incorporated at all levels of the education system” (Council of Europe, 2007:7), this Learning Situation promotes transversal work, non-discrimination between students, empowerment, through raising awareness tasks and initiatives.

The Lesson Plan

"My Wellbeing" is a Learning Scenario to be implemented in 4th ESO C, in the subject English as a Foreign Language.

During the tutorial classes as well as in the English ones some interesting topics related to the concept of well-being have arisen. For instance, some students have commented that the reason why they sometimes fail an exam or are distracted in class is closely related to their emotional health, which is closely related to Sustainable Development Goal number 3 and to vector number 6 of the new curriculum. Others have claimed that they are not engaged with learning because they are not intelligent (low self-esteem).

At the end of this Learning Situation students will have to create a multimedia poster.

They have to summarize and present the content learned throughout the different sessions. However, in order to carry out the final task, they have to understand the concept of well-being and its implications in their lives and academic success. They will also discover about the 2030 Agenda and that objective number 3 deals with health and well-being.

You can access the complete Learning Situation through **this link**

About the author

Vardush Hovsepyan Vardanyan

Vardush Hovsepyan Vardanyan is an English teacher in Pau Casals secondary school in Badalona and a teacher trainer at the International University of Catalonia (UIC). She holds a degree in English Philology from the University of Barcelona (2011), and two master's degrees, one in Construction and Representation of Cultural Identities (2013) and another in Teacher Training (2016). In 2023 she started Spanish Philology at the UB. She has just passed the teacher selection process in the public sector with a Learning Situation that promotes students' wellbeing, Sustainable Development Goal number 3 on Good Health and Wellbeing, vectors number 2 and 6 on Gender Perspective and Emotional Well-being, as well as Digital Competence and Inclusive Teaching. Vardush considers that teaching is an art and that effective teachers have to be creative, reflective and, above all, passionate about the field.

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TEST OVERVIEW			
	READING | 20 QUESTIONS	**35 MINUTES**	Read passages and respond to questions.
	LISTENING | 28 QUESTIONS	**36 MINUTES**	Answer questions about brief lectures or classroom discussions.
	SPEAKING | 4 TASKS	**16 MINUTES**	Talk about a familiar topic and discuss material you read and heard.
	WRITING | 2 TASKS	**29 MINUTES**	Read a passage, listen to a recording and type your response. State and support an opinion in an online classroom discussion.
	TOTAL TIME	**LESS THAN 2 HOURS**	

Does not apply to the TOEFL iBT Paper Edition.

[1] Source: Survey of 94 admissions officers at U.S. universities who accept both TOEFL® and IELTS® scores and who expressed a preference.
[2] Source: Survey of 44 graduate admissions officers at Canadian universities.
[3] Source: Survey of 59 admissions officers at French universities and 100 admissions officers at German universities.

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APAC ELT CONVENTION 2024

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APAC ELT CONVENTION 2024

LIVE ONLINE SESSIONS – Thursday, 1st February

Thursday live online sessions

time	Young Learners & Primary	Secondary	Adults, EOI & academies	All levels
16:00 TO 17:00	ANDREW MOFFAT: HOW DO WE TEACH CHILDREN IN MODERN EUROPE THAT THEY BELONG? THE CASE OF NO OUTSIDERS: EVERYONE DIFFERENT, EVERYONE WELCOME			
17:05 TO 18:00	MARIA MONT & ALEXANDRA BONET: AI IN ENGLISH CLASS: CONNECTING EARLY EDUCATION TO 12TH GRADE IN 'KEEP UP WITH XMAS MAGIC		AIDAN HOLLAND (BRITISH COUNCIL): ALIGNMENT IN EDUCATION SYSTEMS [AIMED AT ALL LEVELS]	ANDRÉ HEDLUND: TRANSFORMING ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES WITH THE SCIENCE OF LEARNING AND UDL
18:00 TO 18:30	COFFEE/TEA BREAK			
18:30 TO 19:25	CLAIRE VENABLES & PAULA CASTRO: MAKING ORACY A PRIORITY: STRATEGIES TO ELEVATE STUDENT DISCUSSIONS IN PBL	CARLOS LINDADE: AI-POWERED ELT: MASTERING CHATGPT FOR ENHANCED TEACHING	KATHERINE BILSBOROUGH: CREATING TAILOR-MADE PRINT AND DIGITAL MATERIALS FOR C1-C2 CLASSES: TAKING YOUR MATERIALS TO THE NEXT LEVEL	
19:30 TO 20:30	CECILIA NOBRE: REFLECTIVE PRACTICE BOOSTING INCLUSION IN THE CLASSROOM			

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LIVE ONLINE SESSIONS – Friday, 2nd February

Friday live online sessions

time	Young Learners & Primary	Secondary	Adults, EOI & academies	Miscellaneous
16:00 TO 17:00	CHRIS KUNZ (ANGLIA EXAMS): THE MAGIC OF HELPING OUR STUDENTS SPEAK ENGLISH MORE NATURALLY			
17:05 TO 18:00	MICHELLE WORGAN: FROM LOMLOE TO LO MÁS: REAL-WORLD LEARNING FOR THE PRIMARY ENGLISH CLASSROOM	HARRY WATERS: CULTIVATING CHANGEMAKERS	DESIRÉE LÓPEZ, ANTONIO ROMERO & ÁNGEL COBO: MEDIATION RATING SCALES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS: THEORY AND PRACTICE (PART 1)	SUSAN DREGER: YOU'RE A TEACHER? BE SMART WITH ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE!
18:00 TO 18:30	COFFEE/TEA BREAK			
18:30 TO 19:25	ISABELLA CAMPOS: WORKING WITH PROJECTS: MAIN COURSE OR DESSERT?	INDIANA EVA (ELI): SPICING UP EXAM CLASSES	DESIRÉE LÓPEZ, ANTONIO ROMERO & ÁNGEL COBO: MEDIATION RATING SCALES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS: THEORY AND PRACTICE (PART 2)	EMILY BRYSON: TINY CHANGES, BIG IMPACTS: SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE LEARNING ACCESSIBLE IN THE MIXED ABILITY CLASSROOM
19:30 TO 20:30	ESPERANZA ROMERO: TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING			

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APAC ELT CONVENTION 2024

FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS – Saturday, 3rd February

Saturday face-to-face sessions

time	Young Learners & Primary	Secondary	Adults, EOI & academies	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
08:30 TO 09:00	REGISTRATION & PARTNERS' EXHIBITION STANDS				
09:00 TO 09:50	RACHEL PALING: STEPPING UP ON THE HUMAN TOUCH – BRAIN HACKS VS TECHNOLOGY				
10:00 TO 10:50	ANDREW MOFFAT & APAC TEACHERS: APPLYING THE ETHOS OF 'NO OUTSIDERS: EVERYONE DIFFERENT, EVERYONE WELCOME' TO THE PRIMARY ELT CLASSROOM	JOSÉ MIGUEL MARTÍNEZ: YOUR STUDENTS LOVE CREATIVE WRITING... THEY JUST DON'T KNOW IT YET	MARCUS SICONOLFI (ETS GLOBAL): AT YOUR SERVICE: LISTENING TEST PREP ACTIVITIES	GINA ARNOLD, ROGER GILABERT & VERA TRAGER: TITLE TO BE CONFIRMEDAUTOMATING TASK DESIGN FOR SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING	TO BE ANNOUNCED
10:50 TO 11:30	COFFEE BREAK & PARTNERS' EXHIBITION STANDS				
11:30 TO 12:20	MARK ORMEROD (MACMILLAN): DON'T KNOW THE WORD? MIME IT AND DEFINE IT!	TERESA NAVÉS & TEAM: CONSENT AND GENDER ROLES: GIRL'S AND BOY'S PERCEPTIONS	MARTYN BAKER: TIPS FOR A CAREER IN TEACHING ENGLISH: HOW TO GET TEACHER, STUDENTS AND METHODOLOGY TO WORK SUCCESSFULLY TOGETHER	JÚLIA LLOMPART, EMILEE MOORE, DOLORS MASATS, CLAUDIA VALLEJO: LET'S BE LINGUISTICALLY AND CULTURALLY SENSITIVE TEACHERS!	COLIN YOUNG: CHATGPT TO CREATE GREAT TEACHING MATERIALS
12:20 TO 12:40	COFFEE BREAK & PARTNERS' EXHIBITION STANDS				
12:40 TO 13:30	KATHRYN ESCRIBANO: OPENING THE CLASSROOM DOORS – THE KEYS TO FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN PRESCHOOL LANGUAGE CLASSES	ANABEL REIS (MACMILLAN): LEARNING SITUATIONS – EXPANDING AND TAILORING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS	KIRSTEN TINKLER: RED MANIAC	STUART MCDONALD: MOTIVATING YOUR STUDENTS TO TALK MORE ENGLISH!	JO DOSSETOR (BRITISH COUNCIL): USING CREATIVITY TO BUILD THE WRITING HABIT [AIMED AT PRIMARY]
13:30 TO 14:00	APAC AWARDS, WRAP-UP QUIZ & RAFFLE				

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APAC ELT CONVENTION 2024

PRERECORDED SESSIONS – Thursday, 25th January

OPENING PLENARY
Artificial Intelligence in English Language Learning and Teaching, by Nik Peachey

Nik Peachey is a freelance writer, teacher trainer and consultant specialising in digital publishing, online course development and the development of digital resources for teachers. Since 1992 he has worked all over the world as a teacher, trainer and project manager. He was Global Head of Learning for Macmillan's online English school EnglishUp from 2014 to 2016. In 2016 he won his second British Council Award for Innovations (ELTon) and co-founded PeacheyPublications Ltd https://peacheypublications.com/

With recent developments in the training of large language models and machine learning, artificial intelligence tools have been able to take a huge leap forward. It's likely that the impact of these developments will have significant implications across the both the academic world and the world of work. These tools offer huge opportunities for the development of languages and education more generally, but in order to ensure we use them wisely we need to have a firm understanding of how they will impact the lives of our students both now and in their future careers.

In this session I will share some of the opportunities and challenges that AI brings to our classroom and explore some of the ways it can be used to have a positive impact on both the ways we develop and educate teachers as well as how we develop our students.

CAPACSULES

Capacsule #1: Creating linguistic mediation tasks with AI, by Mónica Redondo

In the context of Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas, the introduction of the mediation skill has opened new possibilities for language teaching. However, educators often face challenges in crafting effective mediation tasks. What if we harnessed the capabilities of artificial intelligence to address this issue?

This presentation explores the innovative concept of using artificial intelligence, specifically Chat GPT, to streamline the task creation process. We'll discuss how to identify the key elements of a mediation task, including the topic, text type, and more, and then leverage AI to design custom tasks tailored to our students' needs. By embracing AI-driven task design, we aim to enhance the quality of mediation exercises, ultimately benefiting both educators and students alike.

Capacsule #2: Let's embrace change! Teaching English in the modern era, by Delia Ortega (Deliateacher)

Times are changing, the impact of technology on language learning has been profound, transforming not only the way languages are taught, but also learned. Technology has made language learning more accessible to a global audience, fostering cross-cultural understanding and promoting global collaboration.

This presentation is meant to share with teachers how we can facilitate interactive and immersive language learning by using technology, tailoring our lessons to individual learning styles, using Artificial Intelligence technologies to assist us in languages assessment, and most importantly, facilitating real-world language application through online communication tools.

This is a hands-on session. It integrates a qualitative method approach to experience the efficacy of modern teaching methodologies in English education to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teaching practices and their impact on student learning outcomes.

While the impact of technology on language learning is largely positive, it is essential to consider access issues and ensure that technology complements, rather than replaces, human interaction and cultural understanding in the language learning process.

Capacsule #3: Creating memorable school events – A Comprehensive guide for English language teachers, by Clodagh Twomey (Max the class)

This presentation offers English language teachers a thorough guide to organizing impactful school events that enhance language learning and community engagement. Beginning with an exploration of the symbiotic relationship between language acquisition and real-life experiences, the presentation emphasizes the importance of well-planned events in creating immersive language environments. Practical strategies for planning and executing diverse events are discussed, covering the selection of relevant themes, integration of language learning objectives, and the incorporation of interactive and inclusive elements.

The presentation addresses the modern dimension of event organization by highlighting the role of technology in enhancing communication, participation, and documentation. Attendees will gain insights into leveraging digital platforms, social media, and collaborative tools to streamline event coordination. It also incorporates real-world examples and success stories to illustrate effective event organization across different educational settings. Case studies underscore the workshop's emphasis on creating events that are not only linguistically enriching but also culturally resonant.

The talk concludes with a practical checklist and resources to aid teachers in planning their own memorable and meaningful school events. Ultimately, the goal of the presentation is to empower English language teachers with the knowledge and tools needed to foster vibrant and language-rich school cultures.

Capacsule #4: Let's teach English from a critical perspective, by Berta Torras

This presentation aims to promote teaching practices that empower students to become English users rather than English speakers. We are going to acquire a critical view towards the learning and teaching of English so that we can promote an empowering perspective on the learning and use of this international language. We are going to provide tools and practical ideas to implement critical pedagogy in the English classroom.

APAC ELT CONVENTION 2024

LIVE PLENARY SESSIONS – Thursday, 1st February

OPENING PLENARY
How do we teach children in modern Europe that they belong? The case of No Outsiders: Everyone different, everyone welcome, by Andrew Moffat

Andrew Moffat is the founder of the No Outsiders programme and has been a primary school teacher since 1995. He is currently Professional Development Lead at Excelsior Multi Academy Trust (MAT) in Birmingham, UK, a growing trust of seven schools.

In 2017 Andrew was awarded a MBE by the Queen for services to education and in 2019 he was listed as a top ten finalist in the Varkey Foundation Global Teacher Prize. The inclusion of LGBT+ equality in the No Outsiders programme led to some resistance and sparked much needed national debate on protected characteristics. As a result, Andrew was awarded “Hero of the year” by the European Diversity Awards and “Role model of the year” by Pink News. Today the No Outsiders programme is used in hundreds of UK schools to develop an inclusive culture.

Excelsior MAT lies at the forefront of inclusive education in the UK today, employing Andrew to deliver No Outsiders training across the UK (45 schools visited for No Outsiders training September -December 2023, 2500 teachers trained 10,000 children taught a No Outsiders lesson as part of the training). No Outsiders ethos is central to the inclusive culture at Excelsior MAT. Four of the seven Excelsior schools have had compulsory government inspections in the past three years with evidence of a positive impact of the No Outsiders programme on schools.

Teacher training related to the ‘No Outsiders’ programme has also had widespread recognition at an international level with Andrew training educationalists and sharing best practice in Italy, South Africa, India and United Arab Emirates.

In the UK, schools are asked to “Prepare learners for life in modern Britain by: equipping them to be responsible, respective, active citizens who contribute positively to society” (Gov.UK, 2023) so as educators, we need to ask, ‘What is modern Europe, what does it look like?’. Spain and other European countries are ever-changing and increasing in their diversity. In a world where children are experiencing diversity, we can’t leave acceptance and understanding to chance; we must teach it.

Home Office statistics for England and Wales show a worrying rise in Hate Crime over the last ten years. In the year 2022-2023, hate crime figures in England and Wales rose by 26%. Similarly, hate crimes have been consistently on the rise in Spain since 2017. In 2017, 1419 hate crimes were reported to the police whereas in 2021, 1802 were reported. The three most common hate crimes in 2021 were racism/xenophobia, anti LGBTI and gender-based hate crime but others include anti-Disability, anti-Roma and anti-Semitic and hate crime based on religion or belief (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights- ODIHR, 2023). What can schools do about this and is it our responsibility anyway?

A ‘No Outsiders: everyone different, everyone welcome’ school teaches children that everybody is different and everybody belongs. We talk about our differences; we acknowledge them and explore them and we recognise that it is our differences that make us unique. Difference is a positive, not a negative thing.

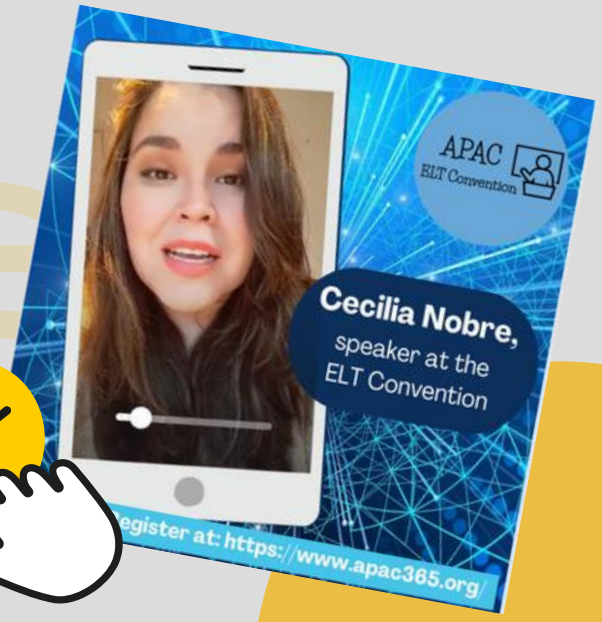
The plenary will offer a background to the No Outsiders ethos, its relevance and impact on schools in the UK today, why the ethos could also be implemented by English Language Teachers (ELT) in Catalunya, Spain and how. In addition, principles and strategies from the No Outsiders ethos will be highlighted as relevant for all teachers who seek to interweave a clear message that diversity is a positive aspect within their classrooms and should be recognised and valued.

Click on the image to watch the video!

CLOSING PLENARY
Reflective Practice boosting inclusion in the classroom, by Cecilia Nobre

Cecilia Nobre is a Ph.D. student in Applied Linguistics at Warwick University and has over 20 years of experience as an EFL teacher. She's a trainer in DipTESOL, CertTESOL, and Celta. Her career has spanned Brazil, Turkey, and the UK. Nobre co-authored "Using Video to Support Teacher Reflection and Development in ELT" with Steve Mann and Laura Baecher. Her research focuses on teacher development, video reflection, and reflective practice.

In this presentation, we will explore how reflective practice plays a pivotal role in enhancing ESL teacher training with a focus on promoting inclusion and diversity. Reflective practice, defined and discussed at the outset, serves as a cornerstone in cultivating teaching skills and nurturing inclusivity. The presentation will emphasise how self-reflection can lead to more inclusive teaching methods, supported by stories and case studies illustrating transformative experiences in identifying and mitigating biases. We will explore peer observation with an inclusive focus, introduce a collaborative observation framework, address the significance of constructive feedback, offer strategies for supporting educators, highlight cultural competency development among teacher trainers, emphasize curriculum evaluation for cultural sensitivity, and demonstrate reflective practice's effectiveness in promoting inclusion and diversity through real-world case studies. Participants will gain practical reflective activities and strategies to enhance inclusivity in the classroom and in teacher training, equipping them to meet the evolving needs of diverse learners. This talk should be relevant to teachers who would like to know more about promoting inclusivity and diversity in their classrooms, as well as teacher trainers who are looking to enhance their training programmes and equip new ESL teachers with the skills to effectively address the diverse needs of learners in today's interconnected world.



Click on the image to watch the video!

LIVE PLENARY SESSIONS – Friday, 2nd February

OPENING PLENARY
The magic of helping our students speak English more naturally, by Chris Kunz (Anglia Exams)

Chris Kunz has been an ELT Professional in Spain, Argentina, Australia and UK for over 25 years. Has vastly lectured in various countries on ELT Pedagogy, Advanced Language for teachers, English Phonetics and Phonology and English as a Lingua Franca since 1997. He has been involved with the Anglia ESOL Examinations Testing Services since 1996. He is the Anglia President within The Americas & Spain Network. Is the Principal at English Centre, College of Languages Network in Almeria, Spain. Holds the Cambridge/RSA Certificate and Diploma in ELTA. He is also a CELTA Trainer.

Bridging the gap between the "I-still-get-that-look-when-I-open-my-mouth" phase and the "what-I-just-said-didn't-raise-an-eyebrow" ultimate aim is neither very easy for students to achieve nor truly straightforward for teachers to accomplish. However, it is perfectly attainable if students are guided through the process with a heavy focus on creative, differential and co-operative learning. For this, teachers don't have to put all their eggs in one basket, but fill as many baskets as possible with as many eggs as they can get hold of. Collaborative learning embedded in a bilingual teaching and learning context can feasibly help to optimise our students' speaking skills. The defossilisation of unwanted habits and the activation of desired quirks and traits can become the gateway to success, especially if teachers carefully plan for critical thinking to be a solid part of the structure of their lessons. In this presentation, Chris will aim at debunking some myths about what sounding natural entails, whether the native speaker of English should be the only model students should look up to and the importance or unimportance of translation in our students' minds. Examples of natural versus unnatural English will be supplied and analysed, and there will be a clear link to what teachers might well wish to start concentrating on in the areas of speaking skills and pronunciation.

Click on the image to watch the video!

LIVE PLENARY SESSIONS – Friday, 2nd February

CLOSING PLENARY
Transformative Potential of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Second Language Teaching, by Esperanza Román Mendoza (George Mason University)

Esperanza Román Mendoza is a Professor of Spanish and Spanish Linguistics at George Mason University (Virginia, USA), where she has been a faculty member since 1996. Her primary research interests are distance education, e-learning, and heritage language education from a critical pedagogy approach. Her extensive research on educational technology has been instrumental in understanding the different ways that students perceive themselves as learners and how educators can help them take advantage of instructional technology to address learning challenges, overcome self-criticism, and become autonomous learners and active critical citizens. Dr. Román Mendoza has authored many books, handbooks, scholarly articles, and digital learning materials, and collaborates with professional associations, journals, and international publishers such as CALICO, EUROCALL Review, the International Journal of Educational Technology in Higher Education, Edelsa, Edinumen, and Hueber Verlag. She has created and taught a wide range of graduate, undergraduate, and continuing education courses in traditional (face-to-face), hybrid and online environments. For more information: https://mcl.gmu.edu/people/eromanme

The emergence of advanced generative artificial intelligence tools (Gen AI) has sparked a significant debate in the field of second language education. Sophisticated chatbots systems and conversational virtual assistants such as ChatGPT (OpenAI), Claude 2 (Antrhopic), Llama (Meta), Bard (Google), and HuggingChat (HuggingFace), among others, have the capability to generate text in multiple languages with impressive grammatical and lexical accuracy. This capability raises pivotal questions about their role and effectiveness in educational settings, particularly in relation to developing linguistic competencies among students and in the creation of teaching materials. This presentation aims to examine these issues, analyzing the ramifications through the lens of critical pedagogy. It endeavors to evaluate the potential advantages and drawbacks of incorporating such AI tools in educational settings, with a particular emphasis on English as a Second Language (ESL) education. Additionally, the presentation will showcase various methodologies and tactics, illustrating how both educators and students can harness the power of artificial intelligence to enhance the learning experience, support teaching methods, develop autonomous learning strategies, and perform language analysis. The aim is to provide a balanced view, considering both the transformative potential and the possible pitfalls of using AI in language education, thereby guiding educators in making informed decisions about the integration of these technologies in their teaching practices.

FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS – Saturday, 3rd February

OPENING PLENARY
Stepping up on the human touch: brain hacks vs technology, by Rachel Paling

Rachel Marie Paling founded Efficient Language Coaching in 2008 and created the method Neurolanguage Coaching® . She started teaching English as a Foreign Language to adults over 35 years ago. She has a BA Honours in Law and Spanish, a Masters in Human Rights and Democratization (EMA) and qualified as a UK Lawyer in 2003 She combined her teaching experience, her specialisation in business English and her legal knowledge to coach top executives across Europe. She has created the new method and approach called Neurolanguage Coaching® and has trained nearly 1300 language teachers worldwide certifying them as Neurolanguage Coaches with her training course, one of the only language coaching certification courses in the world accredited by International Coach Federation USA. She is a professional coach with the PCC Credential from the International Coaching Federation and also holds an MA in Applied Neuroscience and a master in Neuroeducation and Neuropsychology.

With more and more competition from AI and digital takeover, does enhancing learning and hacking the brain become more of an urgent question? Working with learners with overbearing workloads, forced to learn scenarios, emotional triggers could make AI the attractive coach, so what can we do to enhance and promote English learning through “the human touch”? This workshop will explore how we can harness neuroscientific research and principles as well as coaching to bring key information to learners to help them learn potentially faster, more effectively and without conscious effort. Participants will be practising key coaching conversations so that learners can troubleshoot motivation and commitment issues, fairness issues and also learning issues using coaching models and structured conversations to enhance learning.

Click on the image to watch the video!

3 reasons why you should sign up for the APAC ELT CONVENTION 2024

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