**MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SPECIALISED SECONDARY EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

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**PHILOLOGY FACULTY**
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**This is submitted for**

# BACHELOR'S DIPLOMA DEGREE

**Theme: "Aspect of Classroom Methods and Approaches to Materials Design"**

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**I  Introduction.**

After gaining the Independence the Republic of Uzbekistan has worked out an own model of development, taking into account the specific social and political traditions in the country. One of the most important conditions for the development of any country is a well functioning education system. As the education system ensures the formation of a highly developed that must be able to eave in a highly with social and personal activity, ability the function independently in the public and political life. By 1997 on the basis of the National Model of the development there had been worked out the national program for Personal Training which defined conceptional ways and concrete details, mechanisms for radical reforming the education system and personal training.

The program is the normative scientific basis for reforms. Starting from 1997 it is being put into practice stage by stage. The documents pave the way for radical reforms in the structure and content of education system of the National Program we need to English language under school conditions as the old approaches and longer meet the requirements of the last year. The historic changes took place in Uzbekistan since there have been obtained Independence and Sovereignty after September 1991 in Independent Uzbekistan many political economical cultural and political factors have changed. Therefore there very time of getting Independent the head of the republic I.A. Karimov attended to change educational system and Personal Training so high developed before Independence no longer meets requirements if democratic and market changes occurred in the Republic today. It should be noted that the National Program of Personal Training had some unique features. The reforms are carried out on a extensive scale and are supported scientifically. As the President I.A. Karimov emphasized in his book "Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and progress[1]". There are four path of reform and development is based:

- Adherence to universal human values.
- Consolidation and development of the notion's spiritual heritage.

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[1] I.A. Karimov "Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and progress" Tashkent 1993. P 67

- Freedom for the individual's realization.

- Patriotism.

The highest objective of reformation in Uzbekistan is to revive those traditions, fill them with new content and set up all necessary conditions achieving peace and democracy, prosperity, cultural advancement freedom of conscience and intellectual maturity for every person on earth.

According to the requirement of National highest education in the Republic of Uzbekistan it is important to make effective changes in the System of higher Education. As I.A. Karimov highlighted[2] "Our young generation must be quick-cutter wiser, healthier and of course, must be happier than us".

In order to achieve "Harmoniously developed generation" Educators should use all the suitable aids. There exists a system of people's education in Uzbekistan. "The law about People's Education" accepted by Uzbekistan government in 1974 consolidation the main principles of people's education in the republic the equal rights for all citizens in getting education regardless of racial and notional belonging, sex, religion, property, and social stones, an universal compulsory education for children and teenagers, freedom of choice of the language for learning and free of charge education, upkeep some of part of pupils on a full state main tenancy, payment of scholarship to pupils and student's the unity of the system of the people's education and all types of educational institutions which grants the possibility of transition from laver grades to higher ones; scientific character of education; its constant perfection on the basis of the latest achievements of science, techniques and culture.

A proper development of an individual, extending his or her well-being offering him or her of a high quality education, as well as change of absolute stereo types of thinking and social behavior, is the main purpose and driving force of fundamental transformations in Uzbekistan. Early days of Uzbek independence saw the necessary for change in the sphere of education and cadres training upbringing younger

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[2] I.A. Karimov "There is no future without history" Tashkent 1997. p 47

generations, and extending intellectual potential of the country President I.A. Karimov personally initiated the National Program for Cadres Training. The basic principles of the Cadres Training given the new realities is a priority of education that primary envisions its development, new public attitude towards education, knowledge intelligence vis-à-vis modern legal and market relations. Other important parameters include the continuity of education, which is ensured through constant development and updating of general educational and professional training, continuity of science and production respect for notional history and traditions, as well as preservation and enrichment of culture and so on. Adoption of the National Program for Cadre Training promotes cardinal reforms in the entire system of education[3].

As teachers of English as a foreign language, we are members of an established worldwide profession. Wherever we work, we share many assumptions about what we do; we prepare and use teaching materials and classroom methods and techniques based on similar, or at least comparable, principles. Materials and methods cannot be seen in isolation, but are embedded within a broader professional context. As Morrow writes, 'A consistent methodology is more than just a collection of activities or techniques. It requires an underlying set of principles in the light of which specific procedures… can be evaluated, related and applied'.[4]

The main aim of this work is to help teachers (both Secondary and of Higher Educational Institutions) to study the different trends and to draw valid conclusions about an effective foreign language teaching methodology and approaches to materials design. It is not enough to know the foreign language, but to combine that knowledge with a conscious reflection on how to carry out a successful teaching experience. All this will lead us to establish a new theoretical set of foundations. As many factors come into play, certain criteria to develop them must be present.

The object of the research is to study and present framework and pedagogic principles according to which materials and methods are actually designed.

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[3] I.A.Karimov "Independent Uzbekistan today" Tashkent 1993 p 10

[4] Morrow, K. Principles of communicative methodology. In Johnson and Morrow, (1981) p 59-66

The sampling methods that I chose to draw some conclusions are analysis of current literature on methods and approaches to teaching and materials design and evaluation; observation of teaching methods of Secondary teachers and thorough study of the materials as well as types of syllabuses different teachers use in their classes; and experimental or test teaching during the period of my internship.

The theoretical value of this work is that it provides teachers of English as a foreign language with a contemporary account of major trends in English language teaching materials and methodology. In addition, it provides a synthesis between 'principle' and 'practice' by making links between background issues in applied linguistics (views of language, psychological bases of language learning) and at the same time looking at the practical design of materials and methods. I hope that my work will be useful and valuable for understanding the most common design principles for teaching materials, evaluating critically the principles upon which they are based and assessing their relevance to, and possibilities for teaching context.

The main part of my work consists of two chapters. The first chapter focuses on different methods of organizing the resources and management of the classroom in relation to materials. The first section of this part focuses on classroom structures and interaction patterns, pertaining to groups and pairs, the second section deals with the concept of individual learner differences, teaching and designing materials according to this concept. The subsequent section examines recent developments in learner training in relation to individualization, including the rapid growth of information technology and impact of the Internet.

In the second part of my work I attempted to analyze some of the different 'post-communicative' trends in materials design and teaching, notably the task-based approach, neuro-linguistic programming and the most recent approach – the dogme approach, and show how these relate to teaching and teaching materials. In the last part of my work I drew some conclusions based on work I have done.

## II  Aspects of Classroom Methods.

Methods, approaches and techniques must be thoroughly chosen considering the objectives of language learning and teaching. They depend on audiences we teach and also on learning style of a learner. Each audience has specific purposes for language acquisition thus methods can occupy the result-oriented or process-oriented position. It's not sensible to stick to one particular method or approach as life itself is changing every day so do trends within accepted and alternative approaches and methods, therefore, the main questions here are "who" and then "how and what way" a teacher is going to teach to get an excellent outcome.

I found it necessary here to give David Nunan's definition of a language teaching method:  'A language teaching method is a single set of procedures which teachers are to follow in the classroom.  Methods are usually based on a set of beliefs about the nature of language and learning.' [5]

In this chapter I will look at different aspects of methods and principles according to which materials and methods are designed. Particularly, the attention will be given to pairwork and groupwork compared with some patterns of classroom interaction, as well as to seating and physical arrangement in the classroom. Further, I will discuss different learning styles, as they are closely connected with the methodology we chose to tech learners. Moreover, a considerate thought will be provided on individualization, self-access and learner training.

## § 1.Groupwork and Pairwork versus Other Patterns of Classroom Interaction.

Observation  of teachers during the period of my internship  showed  that one of the most  common  type of classroom  interaction  is that known as  'IRF'-'Initiation-

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[5] Nunan, D. Language Teaching Methodology. Sidney: Prentice Hall. (1991) p. 26

Response-Feedback': the teacher initiates an exchange, usually in the form of a question, one of the students answers, the teacher gives feedback (assessment, correction, comment), initiates the next question - and so on. On the other hand, from the perspective of methods used in the classroom by some teachers, asking students to work in groups or pairs has come to be taken for granted as a natural, integral part of language learning behavior and of communicative methodology.

There are, obviously, alternative patterns: the initiative does not always have to be in the hands of the teacher; and interaction may be between students, or between a student and the material.

There is a great deal of literature about different patterns of classroom interaction and the list of various interaction patterns represented further in Box 1.1 is adopted from "A Course in Language Teaching" by Penny Ur.

In this section of my work I will concentrate mainly on groupwork comparing it with some most common patterns of classroom interaction.

In groupwork, learners perform a learning task through small group interaction. It is a form of learner activation that is of particular value in the practice of oral fluency: learners in a class that is divided into five groups get five times as many opportunities to talk as in full-class organization. It also has other advantages: it fosters learner responsibility and independence, can improve motivation and contribute to a feeling of cooperation and warmth in the class.

Box 1.1 Interaction patterns.[6]

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[6] Ur, P. A Course in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996) p.228

**Group work**
Students work in small groups on tasks that entail interaction: conveying information, for example, or group decision-making. The teacher walks around listening, intervenes little if at all.

**Closed-ended teacher questioning ('IRF')**
Only one 'right' response gets approved. Sometimes cynically called the 'Guess what the teacher wants you to say' game.

**Individual work**
The teacher gives a task or set of tasks, and students work on them independently; the teacher walks around monitoring and assisting where necessary.

**Choral responses**
The teacher gives a model which is repeated by all the class in chorus; or gives a cue which is responded to in chorus.

**Collaboration**
Students do the same sort of tasks as in 'Individual work', but work together, usually in pairs, to try to achieve the best results they can. The teacher may or may not intervene. (Note that this is different from 'Group work', where the task itself necessitates interaction.)

**Student initiates, teacher answers**
For example, in a guessing game: the students think of questions and the teacher responds; but the teacher decides who asks.

**Full-class interaction**
The students debate a topic or do a language task as a class; the teacher may intervene occasionally, to stimulate participation or to monitor.

**Teacher talk**
This may involve some kind of silent student response, such as writing from dictation, but there is no initiative on the part of the student.

**Self-access**
Students choose their own learning tasks, and work autonomously.

**Open-ended teacher questioning**
There are a number of possible 'right' answers, so that more students answer each cue.

There is some research that indicates that the use of group work improves learning outcomes. These potential advantages are not, however, always realized. Teachers fear they may lose control, that there may be too much noise, that their students may over-use their mother tongue, do the task badly or not at all: and their fears are often well founded. Some people - both learners and teachers - dislike a situation where the teacher cannot constantly monitor learner language.

The success of group work depends to some extent on the surrounding social climate, and on how habituated the class is to using it; and also, of course, on the

selection of an interesting and stimulating task whose performance is well within the ability of the group. But it also depends, more immediately on effective and careful organization. It should be also noted that a class may not readily take to group work if it is used to being constantly teacher-directed. But this is something that can be learned through practice. However, it should be noted here that groupwork may not always be the best option for all tasks and activities. There will be a time and a place for whole-class activities in the English language classroom, just as there's a time and a place for group and pair work.

Some guidelines on organizing group work are given in Appendix 1, divided into four sections: presentation, process, ending, feedback.

### In Praise of Group Work

Group work came into the standard English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching repertoire with communicative methodologies in the 1970s. At that time, studies of contemporary foreign language classes revealed that as much as 80% of lesson time consisted of the teacher talking to (at) the students. In a class of, say, 30 students, it is evident that the learner hardly got a chance to practice the language. Teacher Talking Time (TTT) became taboo and ways were devised to stamp it out and train the students to actually perform in the language they were learning. Group work was thus introduced into the EFL repertoire to come to grips with a particular problem. Group work made it possible for the teacher to devote more time to the students' oral production, which perhaps before had not been a priority of the foreign language classroom. Thanks to groupwork, less confident students get the chance to put their knowledge of the new language into practice in a non-threatening environment, away from the critical eye and ear of the teacher. Instead of being dependent on the teacher, students get used to helping and learning from each other. Meanwhile, the teacher is left free to discreetly monitor progress and give help, advice and encouragement where and when it is needed.

To sum up briefly, there are three main reasons to use groups instead of something else (e.g., lecture, seat work):

(1) If a teacher's objective is to convey facts or processes that learners must memorize, direct instruction (teaching the whole class) is better. However, if your objective is to teach higher order thinking skills such as application, synthesis, analysis or evaluation, groups tend to work better.

(2) Groups also work well for teaching cooperation and leadership skills, and for building learner confidence.

(3) If an exercise requires several learners to have the same goal, we can use groups. This is called a group goal.

Here are some examples of group goals:

Everyone will be able to answer the questions correctly.

Everyone will be able to explain why it is important to eat energy foods.

Everyone will be able to read one sentence from the story.

Not all group work requires group goals, however. Sometimes, teachers can ask learners to work individually, but within a group. In this case, learners have individual goals, but can share their ideas with other learners or ask them for assistance.

### In Praise of Whole Class Discussion

An important aspect of whole-class discussion is the welding together of the whole group and the camaraderie that comes about when a whole group works together towards a common goal. Moreover, there is diversity in numbers; the larger the group, the more variety there is in the ideas, opinions and experiences which can contribute to the learning process. This can stimulate a greater involvement in each member of the class. Furthermore, whole class discussion is likely to be content based, rather than form based, encouraging fluency and a more memorable and meaningful exchange among the participants. It might also be more appropriate for the introverted and reflective learner. Finally, if we are talking about classes of 15 students or so, there are likely to be many opportunities of letting the whole class function as a single unit instead of dividing it into groups.

The two techniques can go hand in hand. After a session of group work, a whole-class feedback phase will give cohesion to the learning process. Ideally, the group work that has gone before will ensure that everyone has something to say, and also a reason for listening. Having "rehearsed" in a more intimate context beforehand, students may face the whole class with more confidence in their ability to handle the target language.

Tact and Sensitivity

Dealing with whole-class discussions requires the experience and sensitivity to strike the right balance between neutrality and commitment, the tact to deal with explosive situations and domineering students, the knowledge and the analytic mind demanded by the topic under discussion, and the diplomacy to ensure a fair discussion with maximum participation.

Dealing with group work demands just as much tact and sensitivity. The teacher may have to decide whether to intervene to bring an enthusiastic discussion onto a more linguistically fruitful path, or to stay in the background to allow the students to make their own discoveries about the language and the best way to learn it. Should groups be of mixed ability, so the more able language learners help the weaker ones, or would same-ability groups be preferable, so that faster learners can progress at their own pace, while the teacher gives extra help to individual learners in the slower groups?

Repertoire

Like any kind of praxis, group work can lose its meaning if it is handled in an automatic and unthinking way. It was developed under particular circumstances to solve a particular problem and it is not per se intrinsically better than any other technique. No technique is the panacea for all our teaching problems and its value should be reviewed from time to time.

In most current literature we are advised to take a regular look at the techniques we are using and, if one, such as whole class discussion activities for example, has fallen

out of our active repertoire, we should ask ourselves: Is there a good reason for this? It worked before; can it work again?

Although we build up a repertoire of tried and tested techniques and we cannot be constantly 'reinventing the wheel', we also need to be wary of unimaginative and ritualistic routine. So from time to time it is worth putting our group work practice under scrutiny and asking ourselves the same question: Is there a good reason for doing this? Badly handled groupwork can be as detrimental for the learning process as any other inappropriate technique.

Variety Adds Spice to the Classroom

It is generally recognized today that individual learners have different learning styles, strategies and preferences. It is also generally accepted that to be effective lessons need a change of pace and focus to maintain the concentration of the learners. For both these reasons it is important that we teachers have as wide and flexible repertoire.

**Interaction and classroom structure.**

Teachers may well recognize one or more of the following possibilities for the physical arrangement of their classroom, as shown in Figure 1.2.

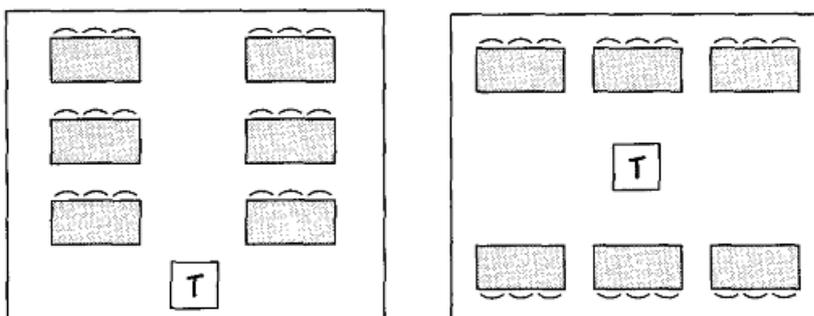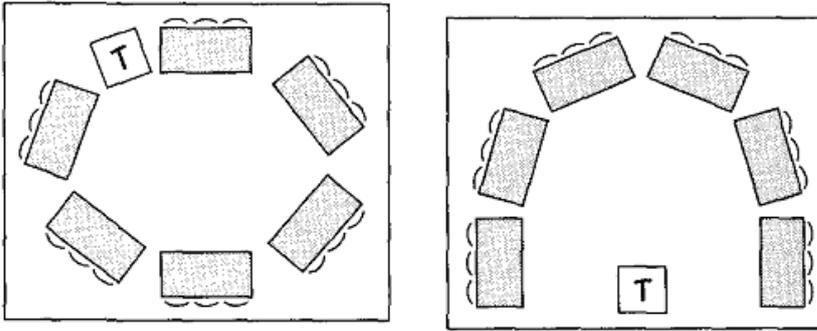Figure 1.2. Possible seating arrangements.



Figure 1.2 Possible seating arrangements.                    (continued)

These arrangements are not necessarily static, and in a flexible classroom may change during the course of one lesson, both physically and in terms of roles and interactions. There may, of course, be straightforward physical restrictions on the possibilities, such as room size. Space considerations not only act as obstacles to the establishment of a more communicative and co-operative classroom: a room that is too small for the number of students may actually force participative working patterns even where they are not appropriate.

Observing teachers' classes at school №10 during the period of internship, I found that a large amount of interaction tends to go from teacher to student and student to teacher, as shown Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3 Interaction between teacher and students
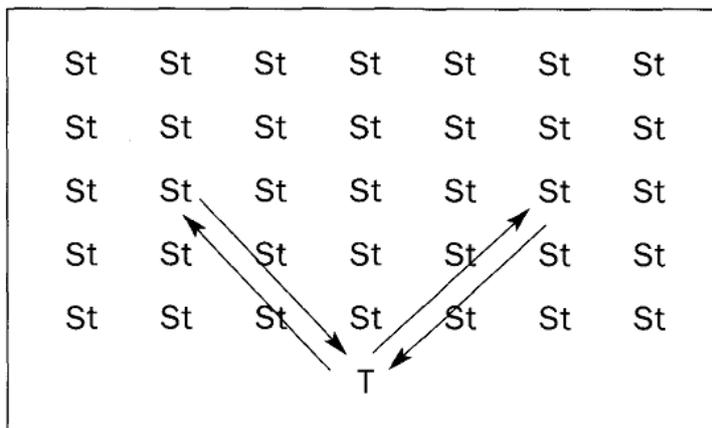


Based on the teaching experience I gained when conducting English lessons at school №10 during practice I would like to share some ideas for maximizing student interaction:

- Encourage a friendly atmosphere and relaxed learning environment. If there is a trusting, positive, supportive rapport amongst the learners and between

learners and a teacher, then there is much better chance of useful interaction happening.

- Ask questions rather than giving explanations.
- Allow time for students to listen, think, process their answer and speak.
- Really listen to what they say. Let what say really affect what you do next.
- Allow thinking time without talking over it. Allow silence.
- Increase opportunities for Student Talking Time.
- Use gestures to replace unnecessary teacher talk.
- Allow students to finish their own sentences.
- If possible, arrange seating so that students can all see each other and talk to each other.
- Encourage interaction between students. Get students to ask questions, give explanations, etc. to each other.

The following diagram (Figure 1.4) might be helpful and keeping it in mind would add to the quality of our lessons.

Figure 1.4. Interaction between teacher and students.
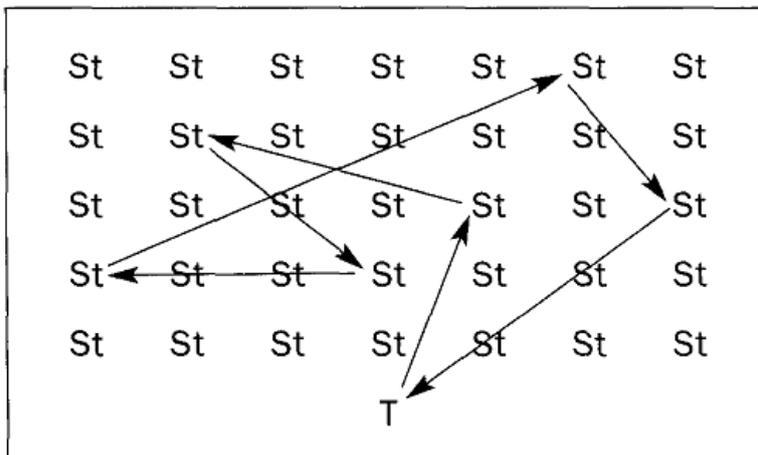


Breaking the class down into smaller size units (group, pairs) should in principle lead to a greater amount of language being spoken by each individual, and to a wider variety of language functions being used as a result of increasing role differentiation. Jim Scrivener in his work "Learning Teaching" suggests some patterns of seating in a

standard classroom (Figure 1.1) to think about, and which I found quite helpful when teaching.

Figure 1.5. Seating possibilities in a standard classroom.[7]

**'public meeting'**

**'buzz groups'**
(people change groups occasionally)

**'wheels'**
(the outer wheel can move round, changing pairings)

**face to face**
(or back to back)

**'panel'**

**pairs**

**'enemy corners'**

**opposing teams**
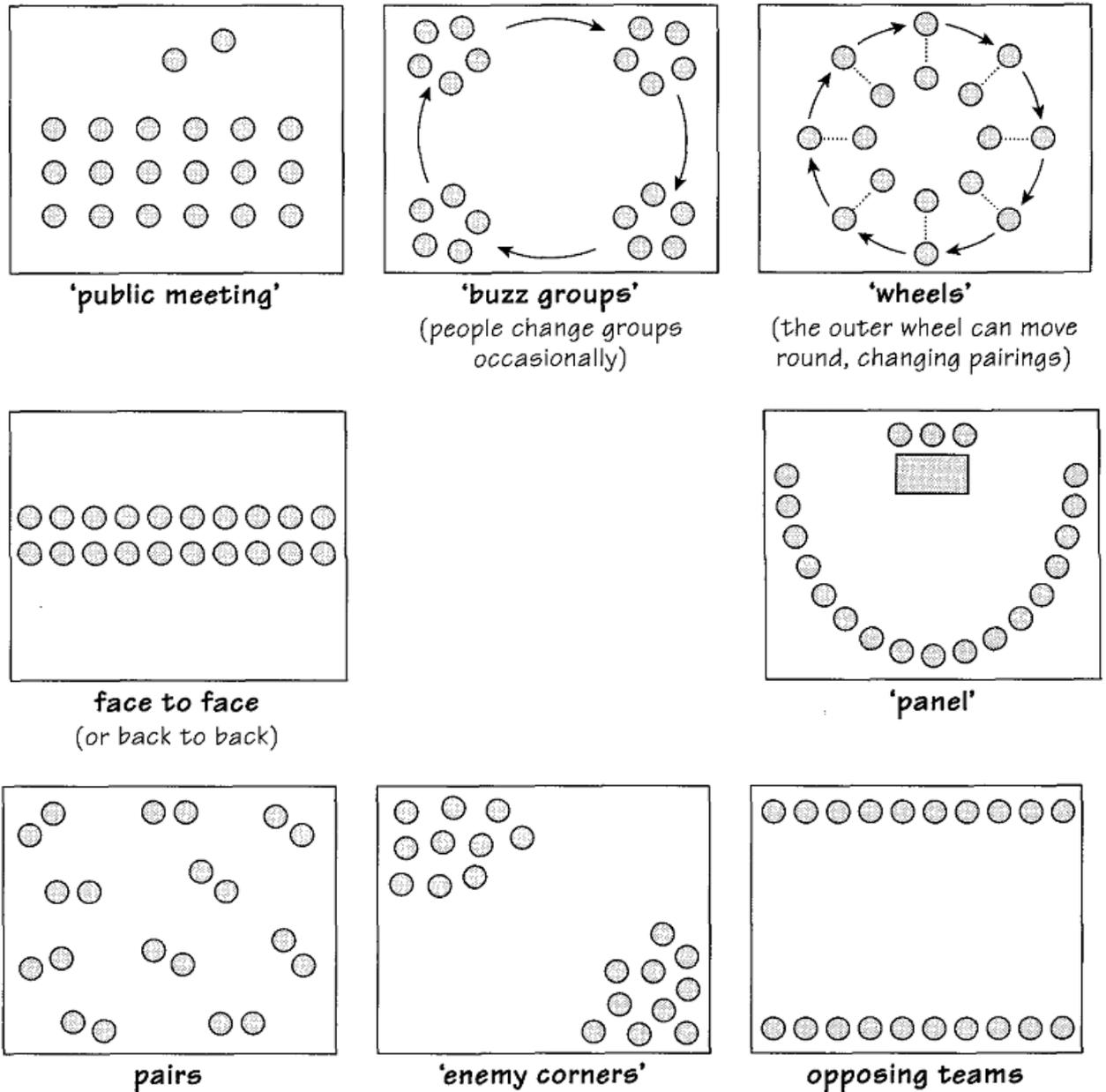
In addition to the information and discussions above I considered it crucial to add some information about questioning and critical analysis of teacher questions.

Questioning is a universally used activation technique in teaching, mainly

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[7]Scrivener, J. Learning Teaching. Oxford: MacMillan Heinemann English Language Teaching. (1998)p. 89

within the  Initiation-Response-Feedback  pattern described  at  the beginning  of this section.

It should be noted that teacher questions are not always  realized  by interrogatives. For example, the question:

'What can you see in this picture?'

may be  expressed  by the statement:

'We'll describe what is going on in this picture.'

or by  the  command:

'Tell me what you can see  in this picture.'

So  perhaps  a question,  in the  context  of teaching,  may be  best  defined  as  a teacher utterance  which has  the objective  of eliciting  an oral response  from the learner(s).

There  are various  reasons why  a teacher  might  ask a question  in  the  classroom. Some of them are:

- To provide a model for language or thinking.

- To find out something from the learners (facts, ideas, opinions).

- To check or test understanding, knowledge or skill.

- To get learners to be active in their learning.

- To direct attention to the topic be in learned.

- To inform the class via the answers of the stronger learners rather than through the teacher's input.

- To provide weaker learners with an opportunity to participate.

- To stimulate thinking (logical, reflective or imaginative); to probe more deeply into issues;

- To get learners to review and practise previously learnt material.

- To encourage self-expression.

- To communicate to learners that the teacher is genuinely interested in what they think.

In various sources questions have been classified according to various different criteria: what kind of thinking they try to elicit(plain recall, for example, analysis, or evaluation); whether they are 'genuine' or 'display' questions (does the teacher really want to know the answer, or is he or she simply checking if the student does?); whether they are closed- or open-ended (do they have a single right answer or many?); and many others.

However, in the present context, I propose concentrating on a few basic principles, suggested by Penny Ur, that would seem to characterize effective questions within the conventional IRF structure, defining 'effective questions' in terms of the desired response. As language teachers, our motive in questioning is usually to get our students to engage with the language material actively through speech; so an effective questioning technique is one that elicits fairly prompt, motivated, relevant and full responses. If, on the other hand, our questions result in long silences, or are answered by only the strongest students, or obviously bore the class, or consistently elicit only very brief or unsuccessful answers, then there is probably something wrong.

Some useful criteria for effective questioning for language teachers suggested by Penny Ur are presented in Box 1.6

Box 1.6 Criteria for effective questioning.[8]

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[8] Ur, P. A Course in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996) p.230

1. **Clarity:** do the learners immediately grasp not only what the question means, but also what kind of an answer is required?
2. **Learning value:** does the question stimulate thinking and responses that will contribute to further learning of the target material? Or is it irrelevant, unhelpful or merely time-filling?
3. **Interest:** do learners find the question interesting, challenging, stimulating?
4. **Availability:** can most of the members of the class try to answer it? Or only the more advanced, confident, knowledgeable? (Note that the mere addition of a few seconds' wait-time before accepting a response can make the question available to a significantly larger number of learners.)
5. **Extension:** does the question invite and encourage extended and/or varied answers?[1]
6. **Teacher reaction:** are the learners sure that their responses will be related to with respect, that they will not be put down or ridiculed if they say something inappropriate?

1 Occasionally – for example, where the emphasis is on listening comprehension rather than speaking – brief single answers may be more appropriate; in such cases this criterion would not apply.

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**Critical analysis of teacher questions.**

I would like to provide the analysis of teachers' questioning based on observations of classes conducted by Tojiboeva Gavhar and Kulmatova Karomat – teachers of English at school №10.

*Exchange 1.*

T:  Now today we are going to discuss circuses. Have you ever been  to a circus?

Ss: (immediately) Yes, yes.

T: Yes. Where you see clowns, and horses and elephants and acrobats..

*Exchange 2*

T:  Yesterday we learned various words that express feelings. Can you tell

me...What  does 'relief' mean?

(pause)

Well,  when  might  you  feel  relief?

(pause)

Can  you  remember  a  time  when  you  felt  relief? Yes,  Marhabo?

S1: When  my  friend  was  late,  I  thought  he  wasn't  coming  and  then  he  came.

T: Good...Feruz?

S2: I thought I will fail the exam, and then in the end I pass.

T: Good. Now: 'fear'?

*Exchange 3.*

T: Right: what was the story about? Can anyone tell me? Shoira?

S: Man.

T: Yes, a man. What did this man do? Can you tell me anything about him?

S: He...married.

*Exchange 4.*

T: Here's a picture, with lots of things going on. Tell me some of them. For example: the policeman is talking to the driver, perhaps he's telling him where to go. What else?

S1: The little girl is buying an ice-cream.

S2: There's a woman, old woman, in the middle, she's crossing the road.

S3: A man...sitting...on chair...

T: OK, a man is sitting on a chair, there in the corner.. What else?

**Analysis:**

*Exchange 1*

There is a problem of 'double messages' here, since the declared objective is contradicted by the questioning technique used. The teacher says explicitly that the intention is to 'discuss'; but the introductory question, though clear, actually discourages discussion: it is a 'yes/no' question inviting a single, brief answer, lacking 'extension', and not forwarding the declared teaching objective.

However, it is both interesting and 'available': the fact that the students answer promptly and apparently enthusiastically indicates that they probably have something to say - though they are given no opportunity to do so. Either the teacher did not really intend to 'discuss' at all and prefers to hold the stage herself, or she is not aware of the inappropriate form of her questions; perhaps a combination of the two.

*Exchange  2*

The purpose  of the  exchange  is,  presumably  to review  vocabulary  learned  the day before.  The obvious  question: 'What does  X mean?'  though apparently clear,  is unsuccessful  in eliciting  answers,  probably because  it is  too abstract  and difficult;  even  a competent native speaker  of the language  might have  trouble answering. It is,  thus,  not very  'available',  and  certainly  does  not elicit  extended answers. This teacher, however, quickly realizes  her mistake  and  rephrases, twice. The question  that demands  a concrete  example  from experience  is much better on all counts,  and  predictably  receives  immediate  and  fairly full responses.  But then, what is going  to happen  with  the next  item?

*Exchange  3*

There  is no indication of pauses  after  the questions,  and  the answers  are basically correct in content; the questions  seem  fairly  clear,  interesting and available to most of the  class,  but their value  in providing for learning  is lowered  because  of the difficulty of the  learners  in expressing  their answers  in the  foreign  language.  The teacher might have  been  able  to help by giving  some 'scaffolding', or modelling  answers,  in her questions: 'Was it about a man, a woman,  an  animal...?  It was...Yes, Shoira?'

*Exchange 4*

Here  the  teacher  makes  it very  clear  what kinds of responses she  is  requesting by providing examples.  She also  implies  that she  expects  a number  of answers ('extension'). The combination  of these  two strategies  makes  the question  far more 'available':  the sheer  number  of student  responses  to the single  cue  looks like being  relatively  large,  and  the weak student  (S3) ventures  a response  based on the examples  (of  the  teacher  and of previous  speakers)  which he  or she would not have  done  if only one  response,  without  illustration, had  been  requested.  The sheer number  of responses contributes  significantly  to the effectiveness  of the desired  practice of the target  language  as  a whole.

In this section of my work I have tried to show that dividing a class into small groups, asking students to work in pairs or, by implication, any kind of "structuring" decision by the teacher, are not merely a set of alternatives that can be mechanically applied. However sounds their justification in principle, all such arrangements have to be assessed in terms of the teaching situation in its widest sense – the existing syllabus and materials, expected roles of teachers and learners, the practicalities of physical space, the institution. At the same time it can be argued that no teaching environment can be regarded as fixed for all time. New syllabuses are introduced, often in line with shifting perceptions of national and international needs; attitudes of teachers and learners to materials, methods and to each other change; the expectations of individuals develop, both for themselves and alongside wider social changes. All these considerations have direct implications for the training and development of both teachers and learners.

**§2. Teaching to Students' Learning Styles**.

It is often argued that, in lockstep classes, learners are unrealistically assumed to learn what teachers choose to teach them, leaving no room for the kinds of individual differences.

According to Ellis a learning style is 'the more or less consistent way in which a person perceives, conceptualizes, organizes and recalls information'.[9] One basic distinction in learning style research is between 'cognitive' factors (to do with the way people think) and 'affective' factors (to do with emotions and what we feel). There is some attempt to relate these to different types of teaching.

It is always important for teachers to teach to their students' learning styles but this becomes crucial when teaching English language learners. English language learners may be highly literate in their own language but experience difficulties when acquiring English because they are accustomed to learning through a different style. Thus, our students will be more successful if we match our teaching style to their learning styles.

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[9]Ellis, R. The empirical evaluation of language teaching materials. ELT Journal (1997) 50/3, p. 213-218.

Before proceeding to discussion of different teaching methods and activities that suit different learning styles I would like to outline classification of learning styles that researchers have developed and strategies that learners may apply in order to ease the process of obtaining knowledge.

Active and Reflective Learners.

• Active learners tend to retain and understand information best by doing something active with it, discussing or applying it or explaining it to others. Reflective learners prefer to think about it quietly first.

• "Let's try it out first and see how it works" is an active learner's phrase; "Let's think it through" is the reflective learner's response.

• Active learners tend to like group work more than reflective learners, who prefer working alone.

• Sitting through lectures without getting to do anything physical but take notes is hard for both learning types, but particularly hard for active learners.

Everybody is active sometimes and reflective sometimes. Students' preference for one category or the other may be strong, moderate, or mild. A balance of the two is desirable. If learners always act before reflecting they can jump into things prematurely and get into trouble, while if they spend too much time reflecting they may never get anything done.

Sensing and Intuitive Learners.

• Sensing learners tend to like learning facts, intuitive learners often prefer discovering possibilities and relationships.

• Sensors often like solving problems by well-established methods and dislike complications and surprises; intuitors like innovation and dislike repetition. Sensors are more likely than intuitors to resent being tested on material that has not been explicitly covered in class.

• Sensors tend to be patient with details and good at memorizing facts and doing hands-on (laboratory) work; intuitors may be better at grasping new concepts and are

often more comfortable than sensors with abstractions and mathematical formulations.

• Sensors tend to be more practical and careful than intuitors; intuitors tend to work faster and to be more innovative than sensors.

• Sensors don't like courses that have no apparent connection to the real world; intuitors don't like "plug-and-chug" courses that involve a lot of memorization and routine calculations.

To be effective as a learner and problem solver, learners need to be able to function both ways. If students overemphasize intuition, they may miss important details or make careless mistakes in calculations or hands-on work; if learners overemphasize sensing, they may rely too much on memorization and familiar methods and not concentrate enough on understanding and innovative thinking.

Visual and Verbal Learners.

Visual learners remember best what they see: e.g., pictures, diagrams, flow charts, time lines, films and demonstrations. Verbal learners get more out of words, written and spoken explanations. Everyone learns more when information is presented both visually and verbally. In most University classes very little visual information is presented: students mainly listen to lectures and read material written on chalkboards and in textbooks and handouts. Unfortunately, most people are visual learners, which means that most students do not get nearly as much as they would if more visual presentation were used in class. Good learners are capable of processing information presented either visually or verbally.

Sequential and Global Learners.

• Sequential learners tend to gain understanding in linear steps, with each step following logically from the previous one. Global learners tend to learn in large jumps, absorbing material almost randomly without seeing connections, and then suddenly "getting it."

• Sequential learners tend to follow logical stepwise paths in finding solutions; global learners may be able to solve complex problems quickly or put things together in

novel ways once they have grasped the big picture, but they may have difficulty explaining how they did it.

What makes students  global or not is what happens before the light bulb goes on. Sequential learners may not fully understand the material but they can nevertheless do something with it (like solve the homework problems or pass the test) since the pieces they have absorbed are logically connected. Strongly global learners who lack good sequential thinking abilities, on the other hand, may have serious difficulties until they have the big picture. Even after they have it, they may be fuzzy about the details of the subject, while sequential learners may know a lot about specific aspects of a subject but may have trouble relating them to different aspects of the same subject or to different subjects.

**Some helpful strategies for learners.**

Active and reflective learners.

If your students are active learners in a class that allows little or no class time for discussion or problem-solving activities, they should try to compensate for these lacks when they study. For example, in a group in which the members take turns explaining different topics to each other.

Reflective learners in a class that allows little or not class time for thinking about new, should try to compensate for this lack when they study. They should not  simply read or memorize the material but stop periodically to review what they have read and to think of possible questions or applications. Writing short summaries of readings might be helpful. Doing so may take extra time but will enable them to retain the material more effectively.

Sensing and Intuitive Learners.

Sensors remember and understand information best if they can see how it connects to the real world. If sensors are in a class where most of the material is abstract and theoretical, they may have difficulty. They should be given specific examples of concepts and procedures, so that they can find out how the concepts apply in practice.

Many college lecture classes are aimed at intuitors. If intuitors happen to be in a class that deals primarily with memorization and rote substitution in formulas, they may have trouble with boredom. They can be provided with interpretations or theories that link the facts, or they can try to find the connections themselves. They may also be prone to careless mistakes on test because they are impatient with details and don't like repetition. They should take time to read the entire question before they start answering.

Visual and Verbal Learners.

Visual learners, should  try to find diagrams, sketches, schematics, photographs, flow charts, or any other visual representation of course material that is predominantly verbal. They can consult reference books, and see if any videotapes or CD-ROM displays of the course material are available. They can prepare a concept map by listing key points, enclosing them in boxes or circles, and drawing lines with arrows between concepts to show connections, as well as color-code their notes with a highlighter so that everything relating to one topic is the same color.

Verbal learners on the other hand may write summaries or outlines of course material in their own words. Working in groups can be particularly effective: they gain understanding of material by hearing classmates' explanations and they learn even more when they do the explaining.

Sequential and Global Learners.

 Most college courses are taught in a sequential manner. However, if students are sequential learners and  have an instructor who jumps around from topic to topic or skips steps, they may have difficulty following and remembering. When they are studying, it is helpful for them to take the time to outline the lecture material in logical order. They might also try to strengthen their global thinking skills by relating each new topic they study to things they already know.

 For global learners it can be helpful to have the big picture of a subject before they can master details. If instructor plunges directly into new topics without bothering to explain how they relate to what students already know, it can cause

problems for the students. There are steps students can take that may help them get the big picture more rapidly. Before beginning the first section of a chapter in a text, it is advised to skim through the entire chapter to get an overview. Doing so may be time-consuming initially but it may save students from going over and over individual parts later. Instead of spending a short time on every subject every night, students might find it more productive to immerse themselves in individual subjects for large blocks. They should try to relate the subject to things they already know, either by asking the instructor to help see connections or by consulting references.

The reason I included these suggestions in my work is that English teachers should equip their students with these strategies in order to make both their and students' work easier and more effective.

**Teaching  methods and activities that suit different learning styles.**

Auditory Learners

Students with this style will be able to recall what they hear and will prefer oral instructions. They learn by listening and speaking. These students enjoy talking and interviewing. They are phonetic readers who enjoy oral reading, choral reading, and listening to recorded books. They learn best by:

• interviewing, debating

• participating on a panel

• participating in oral discussions of written material

• giving oral reports

Visual Learners

Visual learners will be able to recall what they see and will prefer written instructions. These students are sight readers who enjoy reading silently. Better yet, present information to them with a video. They will learn by observing and enjoy working with the following:

• computer graphic

• cartoons

• maps, graphs, charts

- posters
- diagrams
- graphic organizers
- text with a lot of pictures

Tactile Learners

Students with this strength learn best by touching. They understand directions that they write and will learn best through manipulatives. Try using the Language Experience Approach (LEA) when teaching these students to read. These students will also benefit from whole language approaches to reading. They'll learn best by:
- drawing
- playing board games
- making dioramas
- making models
- following instructions to make something

Kinesthetic Learners

Kinesthetic learners also learn by touching or manipulating objects. They need to involve their whole body in learning. Total Physical Response is a good ESL method for them. They remember material best if they act it out. These students learn best by:
- playing games that involve their whole body
- movement activities
- setting up experiments
- making models
- following instructions to make something

Global Learners

Global learners are spontaneous and intuitive. They do not like to be bored. Information needs to be presented in an interesting manner using attractive materials. Cooperative learning strategies and holistic reading methods work well with these learners. Global learners learn best through:
- choral reading

• recorded books

• story writing

• computer programs

• games

• group activities

Analytic Learners

Analytic learners plan and organize their work. They focus on details and are logical. They are phonetic readers and prefer to work individually on activity sheets. They learn best when:

• information is presented in sequential steps

 • goals are clear

• lessons are structured and teacher-directed

• requirements are spelled out

To summarize, varying the activities that teachers use in their lessons, will contribute immensely to the teaching and learning process. Moreover, instructors are sure to cater for learners with different learning styles at least some of the time.

**§3. Individualization, Learner Autonomy and Learner Training.**

In this section I shall be looking at the concept of individualization in language learning and the extent to which this can be implemented both inside and outside the classroom. Then I will provide some ideas about some procedures that allow for individual choice. Further I will attempt to define learner autonomy from the perspective of material design, and consider how recent developments in educational technology and the internet have provided further possibilities for learner autonomy and individualizing language learning. Finally, I will consider what learner training involves.

 **Individualization**.

The concept of individualization in language learning.

First of all, it is clear that language learning normally takes place in groups and every class is composed of individuals, each of whom will have different capabilities and

work rates; and among these heterogeneous groups it can obviously be a problem for the teacher to allow for the variety of pacing necessary if all students are to learn effectively. Individualization in this context is essential.

The concept of 'individualization' in education is sometimes identified with the provision of a self-access centre, or even a full self-access learning programme. Materials of various kinds are made available, and the learners choose which to work on: the organization of these choices may be in the hands of either teacher or learner, and learners may be working on their own or in groups or pairs.

To put it simply a situation where learners are given a measure of freedom to choose how and what they learn at any particular time (implying less direct teacher supervision and more learner autonomy and responsibility for learning), and there is some attempt to adapt or select tasks and materials to suit the individual. Individualization in language learning is also symptomatic of the development of interest shown in the learner and the learners' needs. The opposite is 'lockstep' learning, where everyone in the class, in principle, is expected to do the same thing at the same time in the same way. Individualization can help to break the lockstep of the classroom.

Individualized learning does not necessarily imply a programme based entirely on self-instruction, nor the existence of self-access centres (which are expensive to equip and maintain and therefore not available to most foreign language learners). It does imply a serious attempt to provide for differing learner needs within a class and to place a higher proportion of responsibility for learning on the shoulders of the learners themselves. For most of us, it is perhaps more useful to devote thought to how we can achieve at least some degree of this kind of individualization within a conventional classroom and as far as it is possible outside the classroom.

Many practitioners believe that all learners can make satisfactory progress in learning a foreign language if given sufficient time plus the possibility of developing of their preferred learning styles and habits. It is clear that some learners work better

in groups, whereas others prefer to work alone. Some learners have a preference for a particular time of the day, and for many the place of study can be very important, be it in class, in the language laboratory or at home. In some learning contexts it can be difficult for learners to attend classes regularly, perhaps because of other commitments, and in these situations an individual programme may provide to be an effective mode of learning.

One way of attempting to provide a measure of individual choice in the classroom is to use self-access activities where learners choose the tasks and activities that they wish to pursue with or without the help of a teacher. In Box 1.7 there is a list of classroom procedures that allow for differing degrees of individual learner choice, suggested by Penny Ur.

Individual learner choice may be in:

1. Speed: how fast or slowly each individual may work (everyone being engaged in the same basic task);

2 Level: tasks that are basically aimed at the same teaching point may be presented in easier or more difficult versions, so that the learner can choose the one that suits his or her level;

3. Topic: the learner may be able to select tasks that - while all are based on the same language skill or teaching point - vary in the subject or topic of the text as well as in level;

4. Language skill or teaching point: each learner may choose to work on a quite different aspect of language: listening, for example, or grammar, or reading literature.

Another way learning procedures can vary is in the amount of work demanded of the teacher in preparation. On the whole, more choice for the learner means more work for the teacher.

Box 1.7 Classroom procedures.[10]

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[10]Ur, P. A Course in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996) p.236

1. **Readers.** Students choose individual simplified readers, of varied level and topic, from a school library, and read quietly in class.
2. **Response to listening.** The teacher plays a recorded text on a topical issue, and asks the class to note down points they understood.
3. **Workcards.** A pile of workcards prepared by the teacher is put in the centre of the class, all practising the material the class has recently learned, but each different. Each student chooses one, completes it and then takes another.
4. **Textbook questions in class.** The class has been given a set of questions from the textbook to answer in writing; each student does them on his or her own.
5. **Worksheets.** The teacher distributes worksheets which all practise the same grammar point, but containing various sections with different kinds of practice tasks and topics. The students choose which sections they want to do, and do as much as they can in the time allotted.
6. **Textbook exercises for homework.** The teacher gives three sets of comprehension questions from the textbook, of varying difficulty, on a passage that has been read in class; each student is asked to select and do one set.
7. **Varied tasks.** The teacher has prepared a number of workcards based on different language skills and content. There is a cassette recorder in one corner with headsets for listening tasks, and another corner available for quiet talk. Students select, work on and exchange cards freely.

As individualization involves the organization of learning and teaching in such a way as to allow the abilities, interests and needs of the individual learner to be enhanced as effectively as possible, this leads us to consider the notions of autonomy and self-directed learning in relation to individualization. There is consequently an issue between freedom and control, between autonomous, self-directed learning and externally (teacher) directed learning. It may therefore be useful to see the totally externally directed mode and the totally self-directed mode as two polarities in individualizing language teaching. It is probably fair to state, therefore, that total autonomy is only pertinent if it results in an efficient and satisfying mode of learning for that particular individual.

Individualization is also a partial response to the belief that direct teaching in the classroom does not always result in learning taking place. Teaching can take place without learning, whereas learning can often occur without any formal teaching.

Figure 1.1.    An overview of individualization.[11]

*Individualization*

*Totally externally directed, for the*         *Totally self-directed by the learner*

*learner by the teacher*
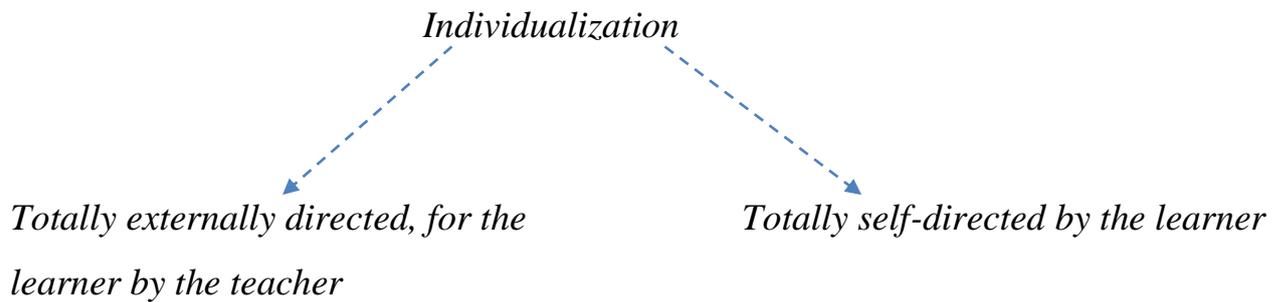
One of the basic principles in the definition on individualization is that learning can be done by learners and learners will assume some responsibility for their own learning at some stage in the process.

Individualization does not necessarily mean that the students will be working on their own either. In some cases individualization can take in small groups or pairs where students work on a similar task. At other times the learner may with a teacher or on a solitary mode.

In sum, individualization as a concept in language teaching and learning aims at providing as many permutations as possible to the learner in order to break the traditional lockstep of the classroom.

**Learner Autonomy.**

Autonomy is based on the conviction that all learning is individual. I believe that certain aspects of learner autonomy can be promoted with the thoroughly designed materials as a useful tool. By adhering to certain principles in the texts and tasks provided, the materials can assist and promote an approach to self-directed learning. Various approaches towards learner autonomy in the materials can initiate a necessary change of focus in the classroom from teaching to learning and from teacher to leaner. I will, however, maintain that these approaches can only be seen as small steps in the right direction: most of the process must be directed by the learner

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[11] McDonough, J. and Shaw, C. Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teacher's Guide. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. (2003) p. 209

himself. As teachers, we can provide good materials and create good conditions for learning, but learning itself is impossible without the learner actually taking charge. What is different between the traditional classroom situation and situations where autonomy is applied is that the learner in the latter is given the opportunity to take charge of the learning activities. Furthermore, learning is an individual process: learners are all different, their backgrounds and experiences vary and they will consequently encounter new knowledge, presented to them either by the textbook or the teacher, in different ways. We differ from each other in the way we construct events and we have different approaches to our anticipation of the same events. Consequently learning processes are individual, based on the learner's pre-knowledge and can only be monitored by the learners themselves. In classroom terms this means that each learner will encounter the foreign language and the material through which they are expected to learn the language in an individual way, which varies from one learner to the other. It follows that focus has to be on the individual learners and on their needs in the learning process.

Autonomous learning is a life-long process of constantly developing awareness and the individual aspect is essential to learning. Knowledge is not an objective entity that can be passed on from the teacher or the textbook to the learner; learning has to be monitored and controlled by the individual learner. Only the learner himself has insights into his own pre-knowledge and is, therefore, the only person who is capable of establishing the necessary relationship between what he already knows and the new material presented to him. This necessitates a shift in the classroom from teaching to learning, and from teacher to learner.

In order to provide learners with choice, a certain scope is required so that they can use the texts and the tasks which they are given, or which they choose themselves, according to their own personal interpretations, interests and needs. One consequence is that there must be room for freedom of choice for the individual or for groups of learners. It is important that learners are shown ways to explore this freedom and that they understand what freedom of choice entails. Through a rich

variety of texts, genres, tasks, approaches and methods they can learn how gradually to make qualified choices that will suit their own personal learning processes.

To promote autonomous learning materials should, therefore, place sufficient authentic texts at the learners' disposal so that they can choose a text which they find interesting, or at least, a way of approaching a specific text which accommodates their needs and interests. Authentic texts are also essential for discovering language as culture and as models for learners to develop their own texts. The tasks must encourage learners to diagnose their own needs, assist their formulation of purposes, and point out the multiple possibilities inherent in a text, for enjoyment, analysis and learning.

According to Little[12] 'the learner generates his own purpose for learning; in pursuit of those purposes he determines not only the content of learning but the way in which learning will take place.' In Holec's definition of autonomy, 'the learner selects his own methods and techniques to be used. This is done from his own needs and as a result of his past experience'.[13] In order for the learners to discover which methods and strategies might suit their learning purposes best at any given time, they need to practise a series of approaches.  If the materials contain a rich variety of methods in the form of suggestions and options, all the time leaving it up to the learners to choose and add their own suggestions, the learner's experience will increase and the scope within which their choices are made will widen. In this way they will be able to discover their own learning styles and find strategies which will suit their personal learning process.

Learning a foreign language is an interactive, social process. For me, learning a language is also a dialogical process, where the dialogue can be between the teacher and the learner or between the learner and the text, but where it is essential also to accommodate for the learning process as a dialogue between learners.

In order to further learning as a social process teachers have to give the students a

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[12] Little, D.  Learner Autonomy.  Definitions, issues and problems. Dublin: Authentik. 1991.

[13] Holec, H.  Autonomy and Foreign Language Learning.  Oxford: Pergamon. 1981.

chance to interact with each other. This requires tasks where the dialogue is authentic, by which I mean tasks where the outcome is not defined in advance. The traditional classroom dialogue is very often one of pretence and illusion, and in reality, a monologue. The type of exchange in which the teacher asks questions to which he expects a correct answer is an illusory, not an authentic dialogue. As the teacher already knows the answers, the questions are a pretence or a ritual, confusing an activity which consists purely of reproduction and control with one of language production. This is also the case where the learner performs written tasks requiring a correct answer. I am not rejecting these ritual tasks as useless in language learning, merely stating their limitations so that we do not mistake them for being authentic dialogues. They are what I choose to term monological dialogues. Because they contain no scope for personal interpretation and language production, they are uninteresting in an autonomous learning context. The dialogical dialogue with an unpredictable outcome is the only type of classroom dialogue that will further autonomy.

This is where the real challenge lies. If teachers can create or adapt the existing tasks and options which leave room for personal interpretation and scope for autonomy, and where, consequently, the outcome is unpredictable, the teacher joins a process of learning in collaboration with the learners. In order to manage this in the classroom, we have to realize that learning a foreign language is not an end in itself; language is a tool for communication, and communication is always about something. It is about interpreting and creating meaning.

### Individualization using the 'new technologies'

In recent years there has been a nascent interest shown in the learning of English, using the so-called 'new technologies', particularly the resources of the World Wide Web (WWW) and email communication. Many ELT practitioners now use these technologies as part of their teaching programme and the possibilities for individualizing language learning by using them are numerous, either within the classroom context or in a self-access and/or computing centre. The World Wide Web

or Internet is essentially an international online database that allows participants to share linked multimedia documents. The internet has a lot to offer both the teacher and the learner. There are authentic resources and materials, places where they can find various activities for learning English, and places where they can share their ideas and communicate with other 'users' of English around the world.

The advantages of the internet to learners include...

▪ Its vast size

The incredible expanse of the internet means the learner has the opportunity to find materials to his/her needs and interests. Learners tend to respond better when they feel involved and engaged in the subject and the extent of the web means that if the teacher can find out what the students are interested in, they can find it on the web.

▪ Its relevance

Much material is modern and up to date, which helps motivate students. Good web sites continually update their material.

▪ Its widespread use

Students enjoy using the net in their free time, and will appreciate its use in class

▪ Its nature

It's a dynamic medium involving movement from site to site, promoting decision-making and learner independence.

The internet is of considerable use for teachers as well as it contains a lot of resources that teachers can access and use to prepare teaching materials. These range from sites specifically designed for teachers and learners to sites from national and international newspapers, museums, galleries and so on. Teachers can use these materials much the same way as they would other print-based resources, to create worksheets and exercises for their classes.

But if teachers are fortunate enough to have access to a computer room in their school or other educational institution then it is possible to use the internet with students during a class, exploiting the net as a dynamic medium. Using the internet brings the 'real world' into the classroom and gives the students an opportunity to explore learning in a different way.

I considered it useful to add in my work some examples of activities that utilize the Internet in different educational contexts. The activities show how the internet can bring a new dimension and dynamic into the classroom and they all depend upon student access to the internet - although the first can easily be used as an example of finding resource materials on the internet.

### Some examples of internet activities

These ideas were suggested by contributors to the radio series Knowledge on the Net.[14]

**News web sites** - from an idea by Donna Arbuthnot

In this activity students can compare the treatment of a major news story across different sites - all at the click of a mouse.

Teachers need to access those sites before they go into the class, and they need to check that the same news items are being reported on both sites. Students compare and contrast the content and style.

**Research / role play** - from an idea by David Eastment

The students need to choose a new company car, with a maximum price of perhaps £20 000. The students go to different sites, select a car and then put the picture of the car inside a word document with an explanation of why they chose that particular model and what features it had.

This approach could be endlessly adapted. Students can research for any variety of projects or situations.

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[14] Robertson, C. "Using the Internet" www.britishcouncilteachenglish.org/uzbekistan

Although the web is a new resource, it makes the same demands on the teacher as more traditional teaching resources. And it is important to remember that whatever the resources and material being used - it is still the teacher that does the teaching, not the computer. Besides, the same class management skills needed for a conventional lesson are still needed in the internet class.

A number of organizations now have their own Websites, which teachers and learners can explore for language learning purposes. For example, museums such as the British Museum in the UK ([www.british-museum.ac.uk](www.british-museum.ac.uk)) have that may provide material of interest to certain learners. Newspapers, TV channels and medical societies can be another source of useful material.

As well as reading the material students can be encouraged to comment on findings with their peers by posting opinions and sending mail. Writing is also a major feature of some of the online writing sites where learners can contribute writing and receive feedback on it.

Dictionaries offer much scope for learning in an individualized context as well. One such example, which contains a wealth of information, is the Cambridge online dictionary. Wikipedia is a source of huge amount of information that students may use in learning process.

The internet is a fantastic tool for teachers. It's not the answer to simple teaching or learning, but it is an incredibly motivating resource for both teachers and learners. Instructors  can find materials for use in traditional classes, they can access message boards and discussion groups for their own interest, development and to get ideas and activities for lessons, they can use it as a communication tool which allows their students to interact with people around the world in English and they can use it as the basis of lessons with students accessing the internet live during lessons. It's not always easy to use and it does have its problems but it's a motivating and engaging resource for both students and the teachers.

**Learner training.**

After examining individualization and some of its possible ramifications I will look at other concrete possibilities for helping learners to learn more effectively by making them aware of their different language learning needs. As learner training can only really work effectively if we have some account of what a 'good' language learner actually does.

From Naiman et al. the following generalized strategies emerge as being of most importance. Good language learners:

- Are aware of their own attitudes and feelings towards language learning and to themselves as language learners.
- Realize that language works as an organized system and is a means of communication and interaction.
- Assess and monitor their progress regularly.
- Realize that language learning involves hard work and time and set themselves realistic short-term goals.
- Involve themselves in target language and learn to take risks in it.
- Are willing to experiment with different learning strategies and practise activities that suit them best.
- Organize time and materials in a personally suitable way and fully exploit all resources available.[15]

I would like to finish this section by looking at the following quotation from an EFL teacher, whose remark neatly encapsulates the feeling that a growing number of practitioners have with respect to the importance of learner training on their courses:

'As a teacher I see my role as being twofold. One is, yes, I am teaching the language, but I feel my other very important role is to assist the learners to take a growing responsibility for the management of their own learning. Within our programme,

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[15] Naiman, N., M. Frohlich and H.H. Stern: The Good Language Learner. Toronto: Modern Language Centre, Department of Curriculum, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. (1975)

learners are with us for only a relatively – a short time, and we have to prepare them so that their learning can continue outside, the length of their course.'[16]

To conclude, in this section of my work I looked at the concept of individualization in its broadest sense and have suggested various ways of implementing it both inside and outside the language classroom by incorporating combinations of learner autonomy, working with the new educational technologies, and learner training. I tried to show that the most appropriate way of implementing individualization will depend, to some extent, on the context of the teaching operation that we work in. I have also attempted to illustrate that individualization is one way of reorganizing the management and resources of the classroom to try to maximize learning potential for as many people in the class as possible.

## III  Current Approaches to Materials Design and Teaching.

The pedagogical tendencies which have characterized foreign language teaching have been profuse and varied. As Stern phrases it, "The  conceptualization of language teaching has a long, fascinating, but rather tortuous  history"[17]. This history has been formulated mainly in terms of diverse  teaching methods, each of which has attempted to find more effective and efficient  ways of teaching languages and each

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[16] McDonough, J. and Shaw, C. Materials and Methods in ELT: A Teacher's Guide. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. (2003) p. 210

[17] Stern, H.H. Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (1983) p. 21

of which has been based on different views of what languages are and of how they are best taught. And the aim of this part of my work is precisely to review recent approaches to materials design and language teaching.

The idea of how to teach a foreign language affects not just teaching, but also the way we can design the materials for teaching. There are many circumstances and factors which determine or modify the teaching process. We should analyze our own beliefs on how to teach the foreign language and adapt them, if it is the case, to more rigorous and contrasted assumptions. Throughout time, foreign language teaching has changed and it is interesting to discover our own contradictions or quests about the issue in parallel to historical development. Some may think that all traditional methods are similar and, thus, obsolete. Or, what is worse, some may think that new technologies are a genuine panacea to solve methodological problems of any type. An open and receptive attitude to analyze our own teaching conceptions upon the best methodology to follow is the key to construct foundations.

In the present part of my work I will attempt to review current approaches to materials design and teaching, namely the Task-based approach, Neuro-linguistic programming and the Dogme approach.

## §1. The Task-based Approach.

In our country English is being taught as a Foreign Language with a view to enhancing international communication. However, the examination system often puts a premium on formal accuracy and, as a result, teachers, particularly in schools and academic lyceums, often prioritize the teaching of grammar. Most teachers model the target language forms and get students to repeat them, and then ask questions intended to elicit the target forms in response. This approach stems from behaviorist

learning theories and the language thus produced is commonly called 'display' language; students are expected to respond using a word or pattern that conforms to the teacher's expectation of the specific form to be used, rather than on

conveying meaning or message. The label given to one such approach is Presentation, Practice, Production, also known as PPP. However, we all know that what is taught is not necessarily what is learned. And although PPP lessons are often supplemented with skills lessons, most students taught mainly through conventional approaches such as PPP leave school or academic lyceums unable to communicate effectively in English.

Hence, the change to task-based language teaching is indispensable as most language learners taught by methods that emphasize mastery of grammar do not achieve an acceptable level of competency in the English language. Language learning in the classroom is usually based on the belief that language is a system of wordings governed by a grammar and a lexicon. However it is more productive to see language primarily as a meaning system. We need to recognize that learners are also striving to mean. In the process of these strivings they are prompted to develop a lexico-grammar that will enable them to realize the meanings they want. Without this incentive they are much less likely to develop a usable language system. Apart from highly gifted and motivated students, most learners working within a structure-based approach fail to attain a usable level of fluency and proficiency in the foreign language even after years of instruction.

The approach that has become rather traditional in foreign language teaching is Presentation Practice Production. Commonly referred to as PPP, this advocates three stages for teaching new language: presentation, practice and production. Presentation often focuses on a single point of grammar, or the realization of a function, usually presented explicitly in a context. This stage is assumed to develop an understanding of the language point in the learner. Presentation is followed by controlled practice, presumed to enable learners to use and automatize the newly grasped rule or pattern. At the production stage, often called the 'free stage', the learner is expected to

reproduce the target language more spontaneously and flexibly, for example in a communication task or a role-play activity. But as J. Willis points out:

'The irony is that the goal of the final P – free production – is often not achieved. How can production be free if students are required to produce forms that have been specified in advance?'[18]

Many teachers will agree that one of two things happens at this production stage: either learners 'conform' to teachers' wishes and focus primarily on form, making sentences with the new item or they focus primarily on meaning and often accomplish the task successfully without incorporating the new item at all. Interestingly, the latter situation provides an excellent argument for TBL: why not then start with the task, let learners deploy whatever language they already have, and look for ways of building on that, of improving and expanding on their current language capabilities. This is a far more positive proposition.

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) proposes the use of tasks as a central component in the language classroom because they provide better contexts for activating learner acquisition processes and promoting target language learning. Task-based language learning is thus based on a theory of language learning rather than a theory of language structure. Richards and Rodgers suggest that this is because 'tasks are believed to foster processes of negotiation, modification, rephrasing, and experimentation that are at the heart of second language learning.'[19]

Feez summarizes basic assumptions as follows:

- The focus of instruction is on process rather than product.
- Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning.
- Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in meaningful activities and tasks.
- Activities and tasks can be either:

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[18] Willis, J. and D. Willis Challenge and change in language teaching Oxford: Heinemann. 1996 p.135
[19] Richards, J. C. and Rodgers, T.S. Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching: A Description and Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (2001): p. 228

- those that learners might need to achieve in real life ;
- those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.

- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus can be sequenced according to difficulty.

- The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the tasks, and the degree of support available.[20]

Before I proceed to look at task types, task variables and task dimensions as well as at a perspective to task-based learning I will attempt first to specify what is meant by 'task'.

Several different definitions and uses of the term 'task' exist throughout the literature, ranging from rather general to quite specific. For instance, J. Willis defines a classroom task as 'a goal-oriented activity in which learners use language to achieve a real outcome.'[21] Willis also suggests that 'language use in tasks is likely to reflect language use in the outside world'. Other definitions are more general. Nunan's is one of the most commonly cited pedagogical definitions of a classroom task. Nunan proposes that a communication task

'… is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form'.[22]

While there is ample quantity of definitions of a task, I would agree with the following characteristics of a pedagogic task.

A language learning task is:

- an activity
- that has a non-linguistic purpose or goal

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[20] Feez, S. Text-based syllabus design Sydney: National Center for English Teaching and Research. (1998)
[21] Willis, J. 'A flexible framework for task-based learning' in Willis, J. and D. Willis Challenge and change in language teaching Oxford: Heinemann (1996) p. 53

[22] Nunan, D. Designing tasks for the communicative classroom Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1989 p. 10

◈ with a clear outcome

◈ and that uses any or all of the four language skills in its accomplishment

◈ by conveying meaning in a way that reflects real-world language use[23]

So what characteristics do the tasks have in common?

■ In carrying out a task the learners' principal focus is on exchanging and understanding meanings, rather than on practice of form or pre-specified forms or patterns.

■ There is some kind of purpose or goal set for the task, so that learners know what they are expected to achieve by the end of the task, for example, to write a list of differences, to complete a route map or a picture, to report a solution to a problem, to vote on the best decorated student room or the most interesting/memorable personal anecdote.

■ The outcome of the completed task can be shared in some way with others.

■ Tasks can involve any or all four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

■ The use of tasks does not preclude language-focused study at some points in a TBL lesson, though a focus on specific grammar rules or patterns will not generally come before the task itself, as this could well detract from the real communicative purpose of the subsequent interaction.

What, then, would not count as 'tasks'?

According to Skehan 'Activities requiring learners to use language patterns they have just been taught or been told to use, would not count as tasks in this sense, for example, completing transformation exercise, acting out dialogues or taking part in role plays with set parts. The principle focus in such activities is not on learners

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[23] Ellis, R. Task-based language learning and teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2003 p.67

expressing and exchanging their own meanings but on practicing pre-specified language forms or functions and displaying their ability to 'produce' these patterns'.[24]

The task characteristics listed above can apply to many different types of task. While there is no definitive way to classify tasks, a broad classification that is based on cognitive processes consists of six categories: listing tasks; ordering and sorting tasks; comparing tasks; problem solving tasks; sharing personal experiences; and creative tasks.[25]

**Task types, task variables and task dimensions.**

When designing or selecting tasks for use in the language classroom teachers have a number of choices to make in terms of the type of task, the conditions under which students complete the task, and other task properties. Some of these options will be more effective than others.

Task types can be identified in a number of ways. For example, Nunan suggests two broad categories: 'real-world tasks (such as using the telephone) and pedagogic tasks (such as information gap activities)'[26]. These can be further subdivided into other categories, by language function (e.g. giving instructions, apologizing, making suggestions), or by cognitive processes or knowledge hierarchies (e.g. listing, ordering and sorting, problem solving, being creative). In other literature tasks are classified by topic, by the language skills required for completion, or by whether the outcome is closed or open (sometimes called divergent and convergent tasks[27]. Pica, Kanagy and Falodun take as their starting point the type of interaction that occurs during task completion, e.g. one-way or two-way information flow, resulting in five types: jigsaw tasks, information gaps, problem-solving, decision-making, opinion

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[24] Skehan, P. A cognitive approach to language learning Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1998: p.95-96
[25] Willis, J. A framework for task-based learning Harlow: Longman Addison-Wesley 1996
[26] Nunan, D. Designing tasks for the communicative classroom Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1989
[27] Long, M. 'Task, group, and task-group interaction' University of Hawaii Working Papers in English as a Second Language (1989) 8(2): p. 1–26.

exchange[28]. Distinguishing different task types is important, as it allows teachers to understand which types most effectively promote learning.

In addition to task types, there are also a number of task variables that can be considered. These include task characteristics such as whether the task is structured (e.g. by providing a series of prompts to direct the interaction, thus assisting task completion), cognitive difficulty and familiarity of the task (including the amount of previous practise of the task-type or repetition of the same or similar tasks). The conditions under which tasks are performed can also be adjusted. For example, narratives may range from simple to complex, topics from familiar to unfamiliar, and tasks may be completed under variable time limits.

Skehan's cognitive perspective[29]

Skehan distinguishes between three aspects of learner performance: fluency, accuracy and complexity. According to Skehan fluency refers to the learner's capacity to communicate in real time, accuracy to the ability of the learner to use the target language according to its norms, and complexity to the learners' ability to use more elaborate and complex target language structures. Skehan argues that these three aspects of performance can be influenced by engaging learners in different types of production and communication. So, for example, if we want to promote fluency in the learner, we should get the learner engaged in meaning-oriented tasks; conversely, if we want to promote accuracy or complexity in the learner, we should get him/her involved in more form-focused tasks.

What must be done, then, is to discover what task-types, variables and dimensions promote fluency, accuracy or complexity in foreign language learners and use these accordingly. Based on his 'cognitive' approach framework and findings from previous experimental studies, Skehan proposes the following five principles that constitute a model for task-based instruction:

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[28] Pica, T., R. Kanagy and J. Falodun 'Choosing and using communication tasks for second language research and instruction' in Crookes, G. and S. Gass Tasks and language learning: integrating theory and practice Clevedon, Avon: Multilingual Matters 1993: 9–34.
[29] Skehan, P. A cognitive approach to language learning Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1998

1. Choose a range of target structures.

2. Choose tasks which meet the utility criterion (Utility: 'where the use of a particular structure would help the efficiency of the completion of the task, but could be avoided through the use of alternative structures or perhaps through the use of communication strategies[30]).

3. Select and sequence tasks to achieve balanced goal development.

4. Maximize the chances of focus on form through attentional manipulation.

5. Use cycles of accountability ('draw learners into consciously engaging in cycles of evaluation').

Skehan argues that these principles meet criteria that relate to both effective communication (fluency and accuracy) and to facilitating progress and development of the target language (complexity): 'These [principles] … offer some prospects for the systematic development of underlying inter-language and effective communicative performance'[31]

Task-based learning and language instruction

How do we implement the principles underlying the above perspective on task-based learning in a classroom context? Scholars have proposed different models for task-based instruction (e.g. Nunan, 1989; Skehan, 1998; Willis and Willis, 1987). Willis's framework, reproduced in Appendix 2, falls into three main parts: pre-task, the task cycle, and language focus. (Note: T stands for Teacher, Ss for students.)

The pre-task phase provides the necessary background, knowledge and procedure, introduces students to – and familiarizes them with – the topic and the task to be performed. In the task phase, learners carry out a meaning-focused activity. It does not matter if the task is achieved through the use of language which is far from the target in terms of accuracy and complexity. They are more likely to concentrate on fluency, producing forms of the language that come readily to them. In the report phase, on the other hand, learners are required to present the results of their task phase work to the whole class. Willis and Willis argue that 'In this public

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[30] Skehan, P.  A cognitive approach to language learning Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1998 p. 122
[31] Skehan, P.  A cognitive approach to language learning Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1998 p. 129

performance learners will be motivated to produce not only fluent but also accurate language – a more 'prestige' variety. Thus, the report stage ensures a smooth transition from private to more public interaction'[32]. To enable this transition to happen, learners are given a planning phase between task and report. During the planning phase, learners will attend to form in preparation for the report phase based on the assumption that when given planning time, learners will focus on form and try to produce more complex language. As such, this framework provides opportunities for fluency, accuracy and complexity to develop.

To conclude, though TBL needs to be incorporated into language teaching, it should not be the sole approach used.

§2. **Neuro-Linguistic Programming in English Language Teaching**.

Another noteworthy approach which has of late entered the language teaching panorama is Neuro-Linguistic Programming (or NLP). It is initially developed in the field of psychotherapy by Grinder and Bandler in the early 1970s. Nowadays, NLP's central ideas are being incorporated into diverse other areas: personal development, management, sales and marketing, or education. Revell and Norman define it as "an attitude to life" but also as a "collection of techniques, patterns and strategies for assisting effective communication, personal growth and change, and learning". It is furthermore "a means of achieving intra-personal and inter-personal excellence".[33]

*Neuro* refers to the way in which we experience the world through the five senses and to how we represent it in our minds by means of neurological processes. *Linguistic* alludes to the manner in which language both reflects and shapes our experience of the world. *Finally*, Programming has to do with the way we can train ourselves to think, talk, and act in a new and positive manner in order to attain higher achievement.

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[32] Willis, J. 'A flexible framework for task-based learning' in Willis, J. and D. Willis  Challenge and change in language teaching Oxford: Heinemann 1996: 56.

[33] Revell, J. and Norman, S. In Your Hands. NLP in ELT. London: Saffire Press. (1999): p.14

Neuro-Linguistic Programming  is based on four pillars, as Revell and Norman explain: outcomes (that is, the goals or objectives which we should know precisely in order to attain them); rapport (which involves minimizing differences and maximizing  similarities with other people with a view to harmonizing communication); sensory acuity (which has to do with truly noticing what another person is communicating in order to maximize rapport); and flexibility (which means changing our way of doing things until we get to where we wanted). Each of these pillars relates, respectively, to each of the four steps of NLP's basic action model: know your outcome, do something about it, notice the response, and respond flexibly.

However, the characterization of Neuro-Linguistic Programming would not be complete without an examination of its chief presuppositions, following Revell and Norman's formulation[34]:

 - *Mind and body are interconnected*. They are parts of the same system, and each affects the other.

 - *The map is not the territory*. This tenet refers to the fact that we all experience and represent reality and the world in different ways. And our specific way is only one of many; it is one map, not the actual territory.

- *There is no failure, only feedback and a renewed opportunity for success*. This next principle obviously has to do with viewing failure as an opportunity to learn and improve. Therefore, mistakes are to be considered as a source of learning, as

evidence that progress is being made, and as useful feedback for both teacher and

student.

-  Neuro-Linguistic Programming also regards disruptive behavior in a favorable light, as it believes that *all behavior has a positive intention.* That is to say, there is always a purpose behind any type of disorderly conduct. It also helps to "reframe":

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[34] Revell, J. and Norman, S. In Your Hands. NLP in ELT. London: Saffire Press. (1999): p.15

since every character trait has two sides, rather than focusing on the disruptive features of the learner, it is best to center upon his/her positive characteristics.

- The subsequent three principles of Neuro-Linguistic Programming have to do with attaining goals and may consequently be grouped together. The first of them is phrased by Revell and Norman as '*the map becomes the territory: what you believe to be true either is true or becomes true*'[35]. The first step towards objective consecution involves believing in oneself. The next stage entails establishing clear goals, since '*knowing what you want helps you to get it*'. And such objectives can be reached because Neuro-Linguistic Programming maintains that the resources needed are within us. By resources, this approach understands positive qualities such as sense of humor, confidence, patience, or good listening skills, which can help operate the changes sought.

 - Further Neuro-Linguistic Programming presuppositions deal with the nature of communication. The latter is

non-verbal as well as verbal. According to the authors: 'it is more non-verbal than verbal, as 55% of our message is communicated bodily, 38% through our tone of voice, and only 7% by the actual words we use'[36]. Another trait of communication is that it is non-conscious as well as conscious. Neuro-Linguistic Programming stresses that 99% of learning is non-conscious and that we retrieve information in this manner as well.

- Nonetheless, despite its belief in the power of non-conscious aspects, Neuro-Linguistic Programming does not advocate sitting back and letting things happen in life. Quite on the contrary, it firmly maintains taking responsibility for one's actions, something which is claimed in the presupposition the meaning of my communication is the response I get. If we want change, we have to initiate it ourselves.

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[35] Revell, J. and Norman, S. In Your Hands. NLP in ELT. London: Saffire Press. (1999): p.16

[36] Revell, J. and Norman, S. In Your Hands. NLP in ELT. London: Saffire Press. (1999): p.18

- In line with this, the teacher should also urge the learners to make their own choices, to be flexible, as Neuro-Linguistic Programming esteems that in any system, the element with the greatest flexibility will have the most influence on that system.

- The remaining two principles are at the very core of Neuro-Linguistic Programming. The first of them points back to its origins: modeling excellent behavior leads to excellence. In harmony with the active role accorded to teacher and student, Neuro-Linguistic Programming upholds that the two participants in the teaching-learning process can make themselves. Both should model the strategies, values, and beliefs of good teachers and good learners in order to excel.

- A final noteworthy concept in Neuro-Linguistic Programming concerns the way we experience the world. It is through our five primary representational systems which correspond to the five senses: visual (looking and seeing), auditory (hearing and listening), kinaesthetic (feeling in a tactile, emotional, and psychomotor way), olfactory, and gustatory. The first three are those predominantly used by most people, and within them, one is employed more than the remaining two: in Neuro-Linguistic Programming, this is known as the preferred primary representational system. The pedagogical implications are clear: the teacher should incorporate activities which appeal to each and every one of these primary representational systems in order to cater for all possible learning styles. In other words, it is advisable to teach in a multisensory way.

Obviously, there are sound reasons why Neuro-Linguistic Programming is compatible with current classroom practice.

- Neuro-Linguistic Programming is about recognising patterns.
- Neuro-Linguistic Programming is concerned with process rather than content.
- Neuro-Linguistic Programming provides a model of how we communicate with ourselves and others.

**Neuro-Linguistic Programming and language learning**

The Neuro-Linguistic Programming model explains how we process information which comes to us from the outside and is based on the work of Richard Bandler and

John Grinder, who initially recognised the importance of eye contact and movement in identifying emotional states and how (rather than what) individuals think.

As it has been mentioned above in **Neuro-Linguistic Programming**, information arrives via the senses, and '*six modalities*' are identified as ways that different individuals

perceive the messages. These modalities are:

- Visual Remembered
- Visual Constructed
- Auditory Remembered
- Auditory Remembered
- Auditory Digital
- Kinaesthetic

These clearly form the basis of what we now know as 'VAK' – the identification of *visual, auditory* and *kinaesthetic* learners and the need to cater for different learning styles in the classroom.

According to **Neuro-Linguistic Programming** our perception of these is modified by three major elements –'*deletion,distortion* and *generalisation*'. These processes are instantly recognisable in language learners:

- *Deletion*

There is too much information for the learner to handle. Learners delete or omit some information in order to make input manageable. From the teacher's point of view, we have already learnt not to present too much new language at once, and the principle of 'less is more'.

- *Distortion*

Language learners will distort information into forms which are understandable and learnable. This process is both negative, in that it produces errors and misunderstandings, and positive in that it contributes to learnability and motivation.

- *Generalisation*

This is one of the ways that we learn, by taking the information we have and drawing broad conclusions. At its worst, over-generalisation occurs, causing misuse of rules and poorly formed hypotheses.

However, what is actually learnt by individuals is dictated by their own personal filters. Neuro-Linguistic Programming identifies these as '*beliefs*', '*values*', '*decisions*' and '*memories*', broadly defined as the way someone handles information.

In Neuro-Linguistic Programming, these filters affect our model of the world and our behaviour. In language learning, they explain a wide range of learning styles and strategies:

- Learners make decisions based on beliefs and value judgements. They are often in a state of conflict because their previous learning experiences do not coincide with their current learning environment.

- Values provide the basis for decisions about what is right and wrong, what they want / need to know and don't want / need to know.

- Memories and prior decisions create beliefs which affect our current behaviour. Learners often revert to previously adopted strategies and require deconditioning, while it can be argued that adult learning patterns merely replace earlier learning strategies which have been forgotten.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming also recognises the importance of non-verbal communication, particularly eye contact, posture, breathing and movement. '*Congruency*' is achieved when there is a match between verbal and non-verbal communication. Congruency, here, may have a language learning parallel in the concept of fluency, suggesting that non-verbal communication should be taught alongside functional language and phonology in order to achieve natural language production.

**Neuro-Linguistic Programming in the classroom**

Teachers using music to create atmosphere and stimulate creativity, or using mime and drama techniques to build confidence and add body language to speech acts are already drawing from the Neuro-Linguistic Programming repertoire. Only recently, however, have classroom activities specifically and overtly based on Neuro-Linguistic Programming been developed by ELT practitioners.

Many of these activities also integrate the skills and are extensions or modifications of existing techniques such as storytelling, guided fantasy, role-play and simulation. Areas where Neuro-Linguistic Programming can have a real impact, however, are those which explore the relationships between students and between students and teacher, and those which help to create a healthy and positive learning environment:

- *Creating rapport*
- Rapport is the sense of ease that develops when people are interacting with others they feel comfortable with, and is essential for meaningful communication to take place. Rapport is most likely when like-minded people interact. In the classroom, mingle and 'getting to know you' activities, as well as continuous negotiation between teacher and students foster rapport, while communication gap activities and group work reinforce it.
- *Mirroring*

One way of establishing good rapport is to mirror the behaviour of those we wish to influence or to be influenced by. Mirroring of posture, gestures, facial expressions and even breathing can easily be practised in the classroom, while simple drilling achieves the same results with phonological features of connected speech and key lexical phrases. To achieve natural communication, verbal and non-verbal aspects need to be combined in communicative activities. Learners may be asked to mirror the behaviour of characters on television before mirroring each other and the teacher.

- *Creating positive states and anchoring*

This is about motivation and maintaining positive attitudes to learning. In Neuro-Linguistic Programming, a positive state is created through a mental image formed by

the process of achieving something mentally or physically, and this state is anchored by a gesture, expression or body movement which is repeated to maintain or recall the state. Guided fantasy may be used to create the state, and a movement or sound selected to represent it. Some teachers, often subconsciously, opt for different positions in the classroom to carry out certain actions, such as give instructions, teach grammar or tell a story. In English language teaching this is a type of anchoring by which students automatically know what is going to happen next in a lesson, and are prepared for it.

- *Maintaining flow*

Neuro-Linguistic Programming fits in nicely with *'Flow Theory'*, the notion that learning flows like water and that the best learning takes place when uninterrupted. For the purposes of lesson planning, flow is achieved when there is a balance of skills development and new challenges, clear task goals and the need for concentration. Successful learning takes place when learners feel a sense of control over what is happening in the classroom, do not feel self-conscious, and receive positive feedback from each other and the teacher. In good lessons, time seems to pass quickly. There are clear messages here about balance of activities, interest, attitude to errors, confidence building, learner training and autonomy. Competitive and collaborative games, jokes, songs and anecdotes, personalisation and well-structured information gap activities all help to maintain flow.

- *Pacing and leading*

A set of strategies requiring the listener to 'tune in', accept and correctly state the speaker's point of view (pacing) before suggesting an alternative point of view (leading). Acceptance of an argument will be accompanied by the listener's mirroring of the speaker's behaviour. Activities involving listening without response, turn-taking, planning and decision-making are useful for raising awareness of this process.

- *Perceptual positioning*

This is an extension of mirroring used in Neuro-Linguistic Programming for resolving conflicts and involving a neutral third party as a mediator in disputes. An

English language teaching application here would be in a reading or storytelling lesson, where one position is taken by the writer / teller, another by a character in the story, and a third by a reader or neutral observer of events.

- *Modelling good practice*

Neuro-Linguistic Programming asks us to mirror what others do well. In English language teaching, much of this is about learner training, particularly when learners discover each other's strategies or adopt new study skills, for revision and examination preparation for example.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming and English language teaching are complementary in that Neuro-Linguistic Programming learns by observing communication patterns, and English language teaching learns from what Neuro-Linguistic Programming suggests as best practice in improving interpersonal communication and therefore learning. There is nothing in Neuro-Linguistic Programming that is contrary to current English language teaching methodology in terms of communicative language learning and humanistic approaches, while Neuro-Linguistic Programming has much to contribute to the already vast repertoire of the informed eclectic.

## §3. The Dogme Approach.

Dogme is a communicative approach to language teaching that encourages teaching without published textbooks and focuses instead on conversational communication among learners and teacher. This approach was initiated by Scott Thornbury in his article, "A Dogma for EFL". He and his colleagues realised that too many classes were being invaded by lesson plans, textbooks, workbooks, tapes, transparencies, flashcards, cuisenaire rods, tapes and other such gimmicks that the students themselves were no longer (assuming they once had been) the focus of the lesson. By inventing Dogme they have put the learner back into learning. The name of the approach comes from an analogy the *Danish Dogme 95* film movement which intended to "cleans cinema of an obsessive concern for technique and rehabilitate cinema which foregrounded the story and the inner life of characters." According to

Scott Thornbury 'Teaching should be done using only the resources that the teachers and students bring to the classroom – i.e. themselves and whatever happens to be in the classroom'[37].

**Key features and principles of dogme**

According to Scott Thornbury, as an approach dogme has well grounded principles in language learning and learning theories and that dogme considers

- learning as experiential and holistic,
- and language learning as an emergent jointly-constructed and socially-constituted process motivated both by communal and communicative imperatives.[38]

**Ten key principles of dogme.[39]**

1. *Interactivity*: the most direct route to learning is to be found in the interactivity between teachers and students and amongst the students themselves.

2. *Engagement*: students are most engaged by content they have created themselves

3. *Dialogic processes*: learning is social and dialogic, where knowledge is co-constructed

4. *Scaffolded conversations*: learning takes place through conversations, where the learner and teacher co-construct the knowledge and skills

5. *Emergence*: language and grammar emerge from the learning process. This is seen as distinct from the 'acquisition' of language.

6. *Affordances*: the teacher's role is to optimize language learning affordances through directing attention to emergent language.

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[37] Thornbury, Scott "A Dogma for EFL". IATEFL Issues, (2000). 153
[38] Thornbury, Scott. "Dogme: nothing if not critical". Teaching English. (2009).
[39] Thornbury, Scott. "Dogme: nothing if not critical". Teaching English. (2009).

7. *Voice*: the learner's voice is given recognition along with the learner's beliefs and knowledge.

8. *Empowerment*: students and teachers are empowered by freeing the classroom of published materials and textbooks.

9. *Relevance*: materials (e.g. texts, audios and videos) should have relevance for the learners

10. *Critical use*: teachers and students should use published materials and textbooks in a critical way that recognizes their cultural and ideological biases.

There are three precepts that emerge from the ten key principles.

**Conversation-driven teaching**

Conversation is seen as central to language learning within the Dogme framework, because it is the "fundamental and universal form of language" and so is considered to be "language at work". Since real life conversation is more interactional than it is transactional, Dogme places more value on communication that promotes social interaction. Dogme also places more emphasis on a discourse-level (rather than sentence-level) approach to language, as it is considered to better prepare learners for real-life communication, where the entire conversation is more relevant than the analysis of specific utterances. Dogme considers that the learning of a skill is co-constructed within the interaction between the learner and the teacher. In this sense, teaching is a conversation between the two parties.

**Materials light approach**

The Dogme approach considers that student-produced material is preferable to published materials and textbooks, to the extent of inviting teachers to take a 'vow of chastity' and not use textbooks. Dogme teaching has therefore been criticized as not

offering teachers the opportunity to use a complete range of materials and resources. However there is a debate to the extent that Dogme is actually anti-textbook or anti-technology. Meddings and Thornbury (the initiators of this approach) focus the critique of textbooks on their tendency to focus on grammar more than on communicative competency and also on the cultural biases often found in textbooks. Indeed, Dogme can be seen as a pedagogy that is able to address the lack of availability or affordability of materials in many parts of the world.

### Emergent language

Dogme considers language learning to be a process where language emerges rather than one where it is acquired. Dogme shares this belief with other approaches to language education, such as task-based learning. Language is considered to emerge in two ways. Firstly classroom activities lead to collaborative communication amongst the students. Secondly, learners produce language that they were not necessarily taught. As such, the teacher's role, in part, is to facilitate the emergence of language. However, Dogme does not see the teacher's role as merely to create the right conditions for language to emerge. The teacher must also encourage learners to engage with this new language to ensure learning takes place. The teacher can do this in a variety of ways, including rewarding, repeating and reviewing it. As language emerges rather than is acquired, there is no need to follow a syllabus that is externally set. Indeed, the content of the syllabus is covered (or 'uncovered') throughout the learning process.

Thus, to sum up, key features of dogme include the following:

- Dogme has its roots in communicative language teaching
- Conversation is seen as central to language learning.
- Dogme also places more emphasis on a discourse-level (rather than sentence-level) approach to language.
- Dogme considers that the learning of a skill is co-constructed within the interaction between the learner and the teacher.

- The Dogme approach considers that student-produced material is preferable to published materials and textbooks, to the extent of inviting teachers to take a 'vow of chastity' and not use textbooks

- Like task-based approach, dogme considers language learning to be a process where language emerges rather than one where it is acquired.

- **Scaffolded** learning where learning is assisted by the teacher through conversations makes it possible for effective learning to take place.

- The teacher's role is to optimize language learning affordances, the environment where learners can potentially learn and direct their attention to emergent language.

- The learners' voice, beliefs and knowledge are accepted.

**Pedagogical foundations of Dogme**

Dogme has its roots in communicative language teaching (in fact Dogme sees itself as an attempt to restore the communicative aspect to communicative approaches). Dogme has been noted for its compatibility with reflective teaching and for its intention to "humanize the classroom through a radical pedagogy of dialogue"[40]. It also shares many qualities with task-based language learning and only differs with task-based learning in terms of methodology rather than philosophy. Learners tend to interact, produce language and collaboratively co-construct their learning when engaged in communicative tasks.

Dogme, technology and web 2.0

Although Dogme teaching has been seen to be anti-technology, Thornbury maintains that he does not see Dogme as being opposed to technology as such, rather that the approach is critical of using technology that does not enable teaching that is both learner centered and is based upon authentic communication. Indeed, more recent attempts to map Dogme principles on to language learning with web 2.0 tools

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[40] Templer, B "Reflective Teaching in the Low-Resource Classroom". Humanising Language Teaching, (2004).

(under the term "Dogme 2.0") are considered evidence of Dogme being in transition and therefore of being compatible with new technology. There is a dominant view among Dogme proponents that the physical classroom will be preferable to attempts to substitute physical presence with communication via digital technology.

**Pros and cons of the Dogme approach.**
**Pros**

- From a teaching point of view it cuts down tremendously on preparation time.
- The students feel completely in control of their learning and are therefore so much more motivated.
- It keeps the instructor alert and spontaneous as they never know exactly what could happen in class and so must think on their feet.
- Teachers can handle almost anything once they have taught in a Dogme classroom.
- Students are constantly aware of the 'why' behind everything they do.

**Cons**

- Some students may feel uneasy about it at first, feeling they are not being spoon-fed a teacher-led lesson.
- It might be daunting for a newly trained teacher to work without the security of a textbook.
- Some teachers may be locked into a specific syllabus.
- Teachers may be working in very large classes where tables are bolted to the floor.
- Some teachers may feel that their role and 'power' is being undermined by this more student-centred approach.

In Appendices I provided some activities based on the Dogme approach.

To conclude, the Dogme classroom is far removed from the preconceived idea of a lazy teacher, not having prepared their lesson, walking in and saying "So what do you want to talk about today?". It's so much more than an open conversation class. It involves a hidden structure which allows the students to become autonomous in their

learning and gives them complete control over what they learn and how they learn it. Teachers are there to guide the process and watch their learners bloom into enthusiastic English speakers.

## IV   Conclusion

To conclude, it is important to illustrate the centrality of materials in language education. In formal (e.g. state-school) systems, materials, mediated by teachers, are a key link in the externally-determined design chain which potentially runs from curriculum to syllabus and leads to public examinations. In language learning setting, materials – published, teacher-produced or learner-produced – provide much of the content of the teaching – learning encounter. They are an in-class resource for learners and teachers – what learners learn with, and out-of-class resource for learners – what they learn from. Published textbooks also link teachers and learners to outside world.

Learners can learn more than language from the materials used in language-learning classes. What is learnt – or there to be learnt – is most obviously embodied in the materials as content. Learners learn not only from what they read (or hear), they also learn from interaction with others and from the process of carrying out tasks. This learning goes beyond the merely linguistic (e.g. negotiating meaning; arguing a point of view). One of the arguments for group tasks is that they encourage socialization and teamwork; they also make possible learning by observation of

others. Moreover, specific types of task can provide practice in such 'transferable skill' as, for example, collecting and classifying information, reasoning, critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving.

In a carefully designed approach to language teaching we might expect a high degree of consistency between aims, objectives, syllabus and method. Thus, materials will embody syllabus content and the method that is used to facilitate the learning of that content will be congruent with overall aims and objectives and with the beliefs about language and language learning that lie behind these.

Method, according to some sources, may exist at three levels: the theoretical level, or what is supposed to happen; the level of materials, insofar as these prescribe what teachers/learners are to do; and the classroom level.

The potential gap between principles and materials becomes wide when it comes to the classroom use of materials, since teachers may or may not use the materials in ways that correspond to the intentions of the materials designer. Besides, most teachers like variety as much as learners. This is why they prefer materials that can be exploited in different ways.

Postmethod teachers adapt their approach in accordance with local, contextual factors, while at the same time being guided by a number of 'macrostrategies'. Two such macrostrategies are 'Maximise learning opportunities' and 'Promote learner autonomy'. And there is no one method, but that individual teachers fashion an approach that accords uniquely with their 'sense of plausibility.'

Language pedagogy is an art and only the teacher him/herself will be able to master it with consistent work, risks, reflections, analyses of issues and outcome in their classroom. I always have to remind myself Brown's words "The complexity of the second language acquisition process warrants a multiple-treatment, multiphase approach to a language course". He further states "It is the teacher's task to carefully and deliberately choose among these many options to formulate a pedagogical

sequence of techniques in the classroom. And this is where a teacher's choices must be 'principled'."[41]

# V  Appendices

## Appendix 1

Group-work organization.[42]

### 1. Presentation

**The instructions that are given at the beginning are crucial: if the students do not understand exactly what they have to do there will be time-wasting, confusion, lack of effective practice, possible loss of control. Select tasks that are simple enough to describe easily; and in monolingual classes you may find it cost-effective to explain some or all in the students' mother tongue. lt is advisable to give the instructions before giving out materials or dividing the class into groups; and a preliminary**

**rehearsal or 'dry run' of a sample of the activity with the full class can help to clarify things. Note, however, that if your students have already done similar activities you will be able to shorten the process, giving only**

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[41] Brown, H.D. English language teaching in the "post-methods" era: Toward better diagnosis, treatment and assessment. New York, NY: Cambridge (2002). p.18.

[42] Ur, P. A Course in Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996) p.234

brief guidelines; it is mainly the first time of doing something with a class that such care needs to be invested in instructing.

Try to foresee what language will be needed, and have a preliminary quick review of appropriate grammar or vocabulary. Finally, before giving the sign to start tell the class what the arrangements are for stopping: if there is a time limit, or a set signal for stopping, say what it is; if the groups simply stop when they have finished, then tell them what they will have to do next. lt is wise to have a 'reserve' task planned to occupy members of groups who finish earlier than expected.

## 2. Process

Your job during the activity is to go from group to group, monitor, and either contribute or keep out of the way - whichever is likely to be more helpful. lf you do decide to intervene, your contribution may take the form of :

- providing general approval and support;
- helping students who are having difficulty;
- keeping the students using the target language (in many cases your mere presence will ensure this!);
- tactfully regulating participation in a discussion where you find some students are over-dominant and others silent.

## 3. Ending

lf you have set a time limit, then this will help you draw the activity to a close at a certain point. In principle, try to finish the activity while the students are still enjoying it and interested, or only just beginning to flag.

## 4. Feedback

A feedback session usually takes place in the context of full-class interaction after the end of the group work. Feedback on the task may take many forms: giving the right solution, if there is one; listening to and evaluating suggestions; pooling ideas on the board; displaying materials the

**groups have produced; and so on. Your main objective here is to express appreciation of the effort that has been invested and its results. Feedback on language may be integrated into this discussion of the task, or provide the focus of a separate class session later.**

Appendix 2

Overview of the TBL framework.[43]

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[43] J. Willis, 'A Framework for Task-based Learning', Oxford: Heinemann 1996. P.155

**Pre-task** (including topic and task)

**The teacher**

- introduces and defines the topic
- uses activities to help students recall/learn useful words and phrases
- ensures students understand task instructions
- may play a recording of others doing the same or a similar task

**The students**

- note down useful words and phrases from the pre-task activities and/or the recording
- may spend a few minutes preparing for the task individually

**Task cycle**

**Task**

**The students**

- do the task in pairs/small groups. It may be based on a reading/listening text

**The teacher**

- acts as monitor and encourages students

**Planning**

**The students**

- prepare to report to the class how they did the task and what they discovered/decided
- rehearse what they will say or draft a written version for the class to read

**The teacher**

- ensures the purpose of the report is clear
- acts as language adviser
- helps students rehearse oral reports or organise written ones

**Report**

**The students**

- present their spoken reports to the class, or circulate/display their written reports

**The teacher**

- acts as chairperson, selecting who will speak next, or ensuring all students read most of the written reports
- may give brief feedback on content and form
- may play a recording of others doing the same or a similar task

**Language focus**

**Analysis**

**The students**

- do consciousness-raising activities to identify and process specific language features from the task text and/or transcript
- may ask about other features they have noticed

**The teacher**

- reviews each analysis activity with the class
- brings other useful words, phrases and patterns to students' attention
- may pick up on language items from the report stage

**Practice**

**The teacher**

- conducts practice activities after analysis activities where necessary, to build confidence

**The students**

- practise words, phrases and patterns from the analysis activities
- practise other features occurring in the task text or report stage
- enter useful language items in their language notebooks

NB: Some time after this final phase, students may like to repeat the same or a similar task with a different partner.

Appendix 3

**Sample task-based activities.**

## Samples of focused grammar tasks

1. In order to practise tenses you could ask your students to create their own questionnaires and conduct a survey.

   eg For the present simple
   - Divide the students into pairs.
   - Assign the topic for survey, eg The most popular hobby, or how I like spending my weekends.
   - Ask them to make questions about how often their classmates do things they like, eg How often do you play sports? Do you watch TV every night?
   - Ask the same pairs to answer with adverbs of frequency and to count the answers for results.
   - Ask them to report the results, eg around 60 per cent love playing football every day, 10 per cent hardly ever watch TV every day.

2. In order to practice modal verbs:

   - Divide learners into groups.
   - Ask each group to come up with a list of 'golden rules' that should be followed if they want to make progress in their studying.
   - Provide the verbs should, shouldn't, must, mustn't, can, could, need, etc.
   - If students cannot come up with many ideas write sentences on the board – 'be on time', 'revise during breaks', etc. and ask students to provide suitable modal verbs for them.
   - Ask the class to choose the 10 best rules by negotiating.
   - Write them on paper and allow students to put them on the wall if they wish.

## Examples from the second conditional quiz

What would you do if an alien spaceship landed in your front yard?

1. I would pack my suitcase as fast as I could.
2. I would freshen up my extra-terrestrial language skills.
3. I would go back to watching the cartoons on TV.

Which would make you most scared?

1. If I had to take a Maths test.
2. If I had to clean my room.
3. If I had to … well actually nothing scares me!

**Student A – the robbery task**
You just saw the following robbery. Your partner will ask you about the robber and the robbery. Answer his or her questions. You will be asked questions about the following information.

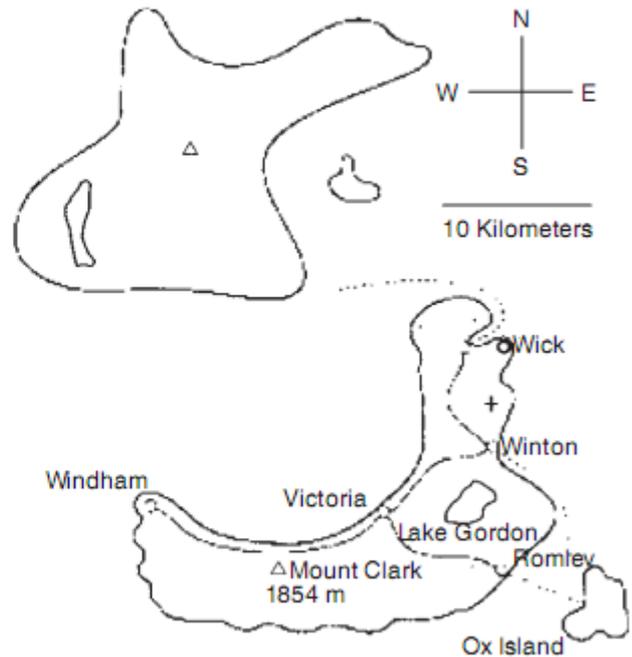| About the robbery | About the robber |
|---|---|
| Time, things stolen | Male or female, age, clothes, appearance, weapon |
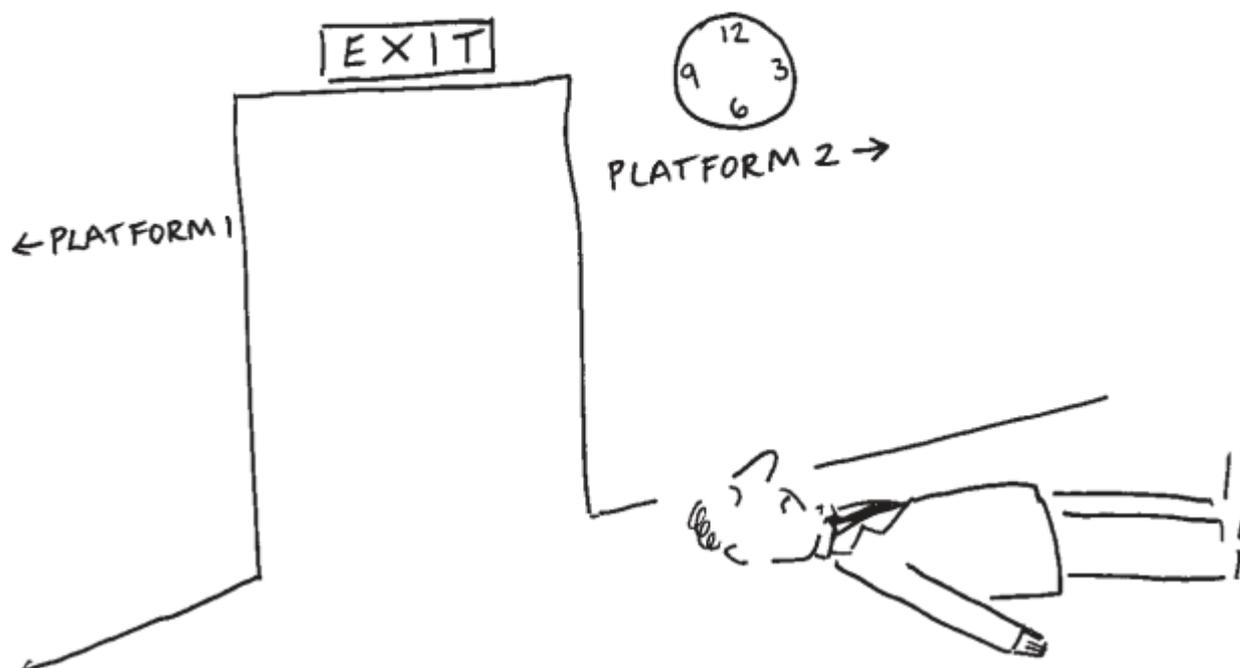
## Student B – the robbery task

Your partner has just seen a robbery. Ask him or her questions about the robber and the robbery. Later, draw the robber in the space below.
Please ask questions to get the following information.

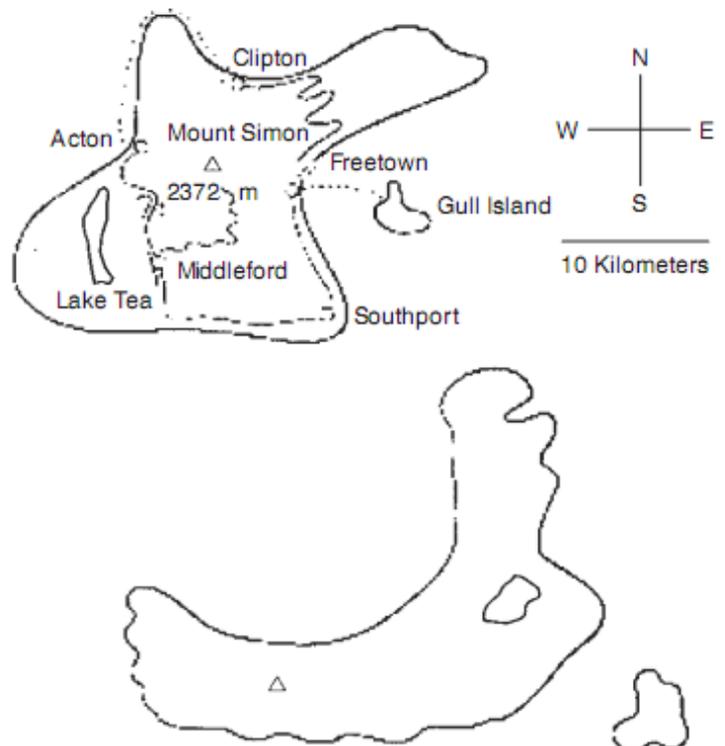| About the robbery | About the robber |
| --- | --- |
| Time, things stolen | Male or female, age, clothes, appearance weapon |
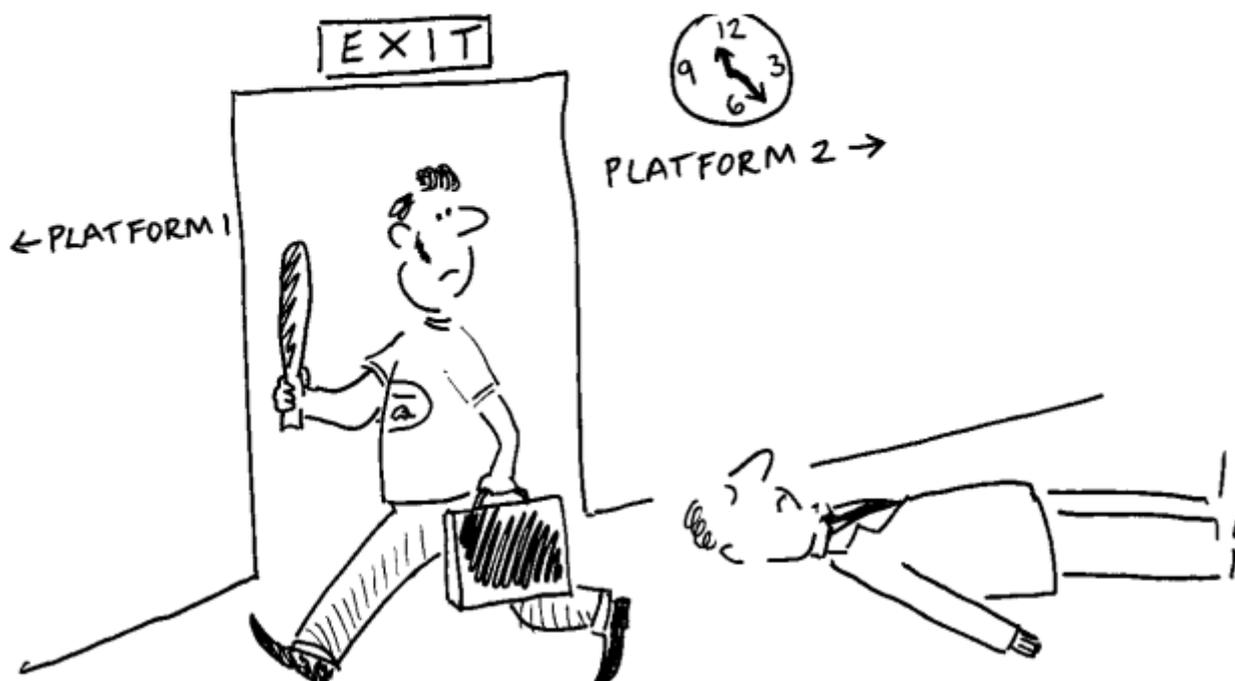
STUDENT A - The Island Task
You want to visit an island that your
partner knows well. Ask your partner
about the following information and
draw the places on the map.

| The locations of the towns, and ferry routes on the North Island | Acton, Southport, Clipton, Middleford, Freetown, and the ferry routes |
|---|---|
| The names of the | small island, lake, and the mountain |
| The height of | the mountain |

o Town
∧ Mountain
⌒ Bus Route
⌒ Ferry Route

N
W — E
S
10 Kilometers

Wick
+
Winton
Windham          Victoria
Lake Gordon
Romley
△ Mount Clark
1854 m
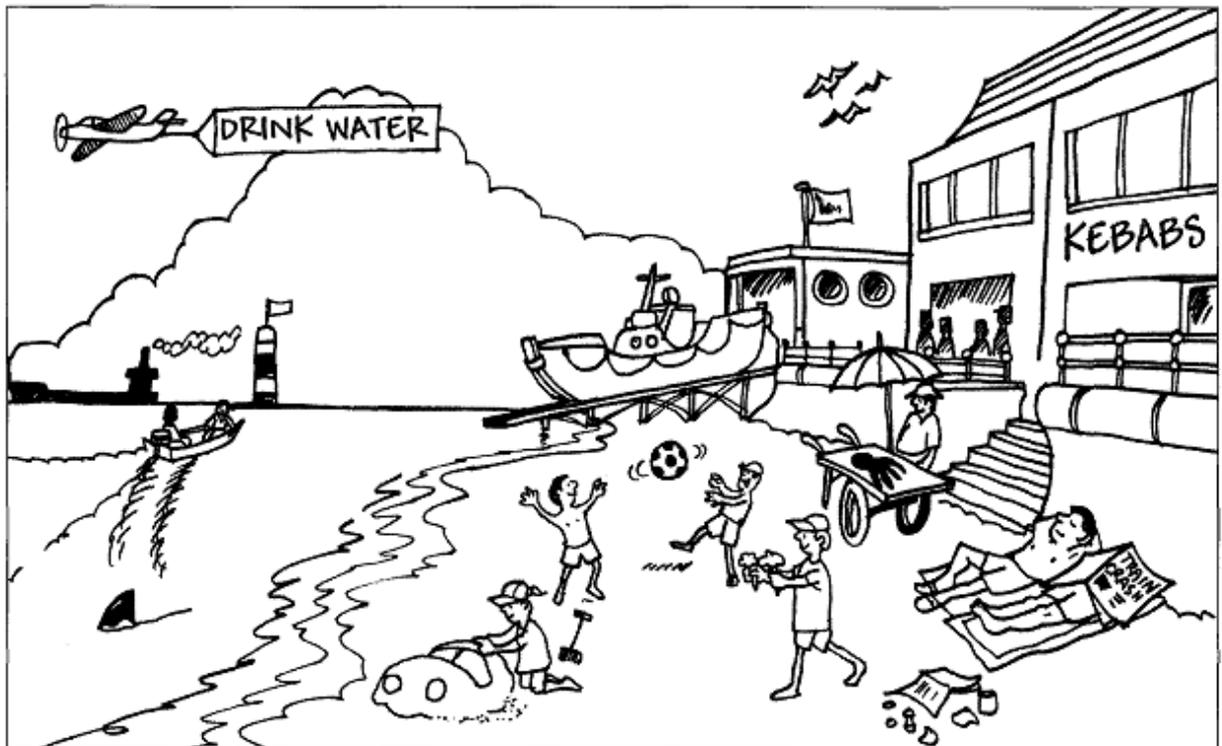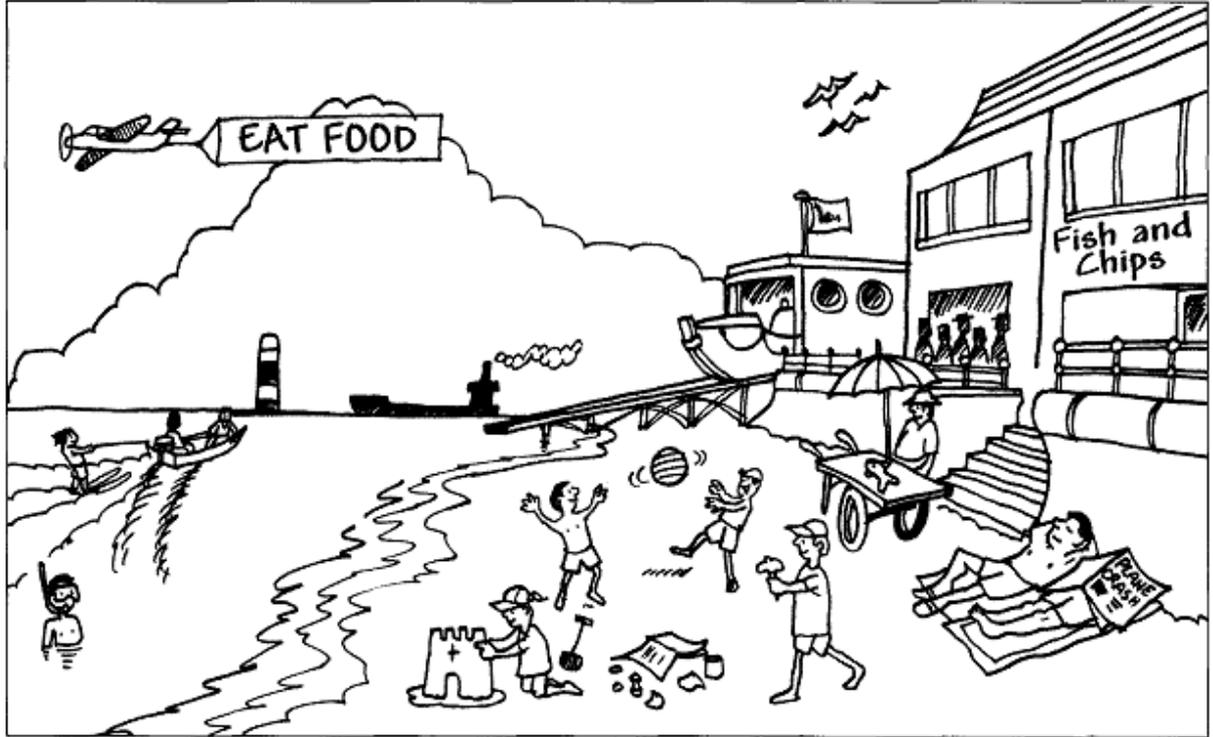Ox Island

STUDENT B - The Island Task.
You want to visit an island your
partner knows well. Ask your partner
about the following information and
draw the places on the map.

| The locations of the towns, and ferry routes on the South Island | Windham, Victoria, Romley, Winton, Wick and the ferry routes. |
|---|---|
| The names of the | small island, lake, and the mountain |
| The height of | the mountain |

o Town
△ Mountain
⌒ Bus Route
⌒ Ferry Route

Clipton
Acton      Mount Simon
△
2372 m      Freetown
Gull Island
Middleford
Lake Tea
Southport

N
W — E
S
10 Kilometers

△

# Information exchange activities [44]



[44] Scrivener, J. Learning Teaching. Oxford: MacMillan Heinemann English Language Teaching. (1998)

**Set A**

### Have you ever wanted to make a film?

Special one-day workshop for beginners by local film director.

You'll learn many essential skills:
- picking the right subject
- making a storyboard
- selecting your shots
- getting the sound right
- editing

Limited places – apply early. Cost: £150

### Medieval Days
*and early music exhibition*

Medieval marketplace – Roast meats and traditional ales –
Archery display – Life in Middle Ages –
Demonstrations of traditional crafts – Battles and attacks
Meet some of the area's finest musicians
and instrument makers

Adults £10.50 Child £7.80 OAP £7.80 Family (2+2) £20.00

### Robbie Williams
**TRIBUTE CONCERT**

*Great live show!
All the hits you love!*

Performed by Angels,
the no.1 Robbie tribute band

Special guests:
Calico School of Dance

Sports Stadium 7.00 p.m.
Entrance £10.00
Fireworks at 10.00 p.m.

### All-day mackerel fishing trip

Experience the real life of a sea fisherman!
£20 per person. Rod and bait hire £5
BEGINNERS WELCOME.
We leave at 7 a.m. from the harbour arm.
You can also come for the ride
if you don't want to fish!

### Ghost walk

Find out what really lives in the spooky corners of the old town. Your costumed guide will tell you tales of dark deeds while you explore the ancient streets. And there will be some terrifying surprises along the way!

Meet at 7.30 outside the Blue Dolphin pub – rain or shine! No need to book. Pay your guide £2.50

**Set B**

### CAR BOOT SALE

Come along and spend a great time browsing through over 200 stalls filled with treasures, antiques, collectables and junk.

Boot sale opens at 8.00 a.m. Entrance for customers 50p, children free.

Hot and cold food available. Ice cream. Free parking. Toilets.

If you want to sell:
Cars: £6 Vans £8.
(Arrive between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m.)

### Port Vittoria Zoo

The greatest little zoo for a hundred miles!
Get face to face with the meerkats!
Check out the penguins underwater.
Test your jumping ability against the monkeys!
Huge adventure playground.
Miniature train service round the whole park.
Full catering facilities – fast-food and family restaurants.
All-day ticket Adults £17 Children £15

### 'Ave you ever been 'orseracing?

A great day out –
and not expensive.

Full day's racing card – 8 races.
Come and watch from
the luxury of our
terrace restaurant and bar –
or have a bet! Who knows?
Today could be your lucky day!
Entrance £6.60
Children welcome – £2.00

### EXTREME !!!

**The story of dangerous sports**

*An exciting special exhibition at the Museum of History and Culture.*

Learn about the origin and history of sports such as bungee-jumping, BASE jumping, free-diving, speed-skiing and many others.

Find out the current records. Watch demonstrations by experts. Try your skills on our special Virtual Reality simulators.

*Entrance free. Open 10.00–5.00 Simulators £2.00 per go. Demonstrations at 11.00, 1.00 and 3.30.*

### Fancy a Day in France?

One-day coach trip to France. You can explore the town, have a great lunch in a top-class restaurant or shop till you drop in the famous hypermarkets – lots of bargains.
Coach leaves 6.50 a.m. – return 10.20 p.m.
ONLY £22.50 per person.
NB You must have a valid passport.

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