

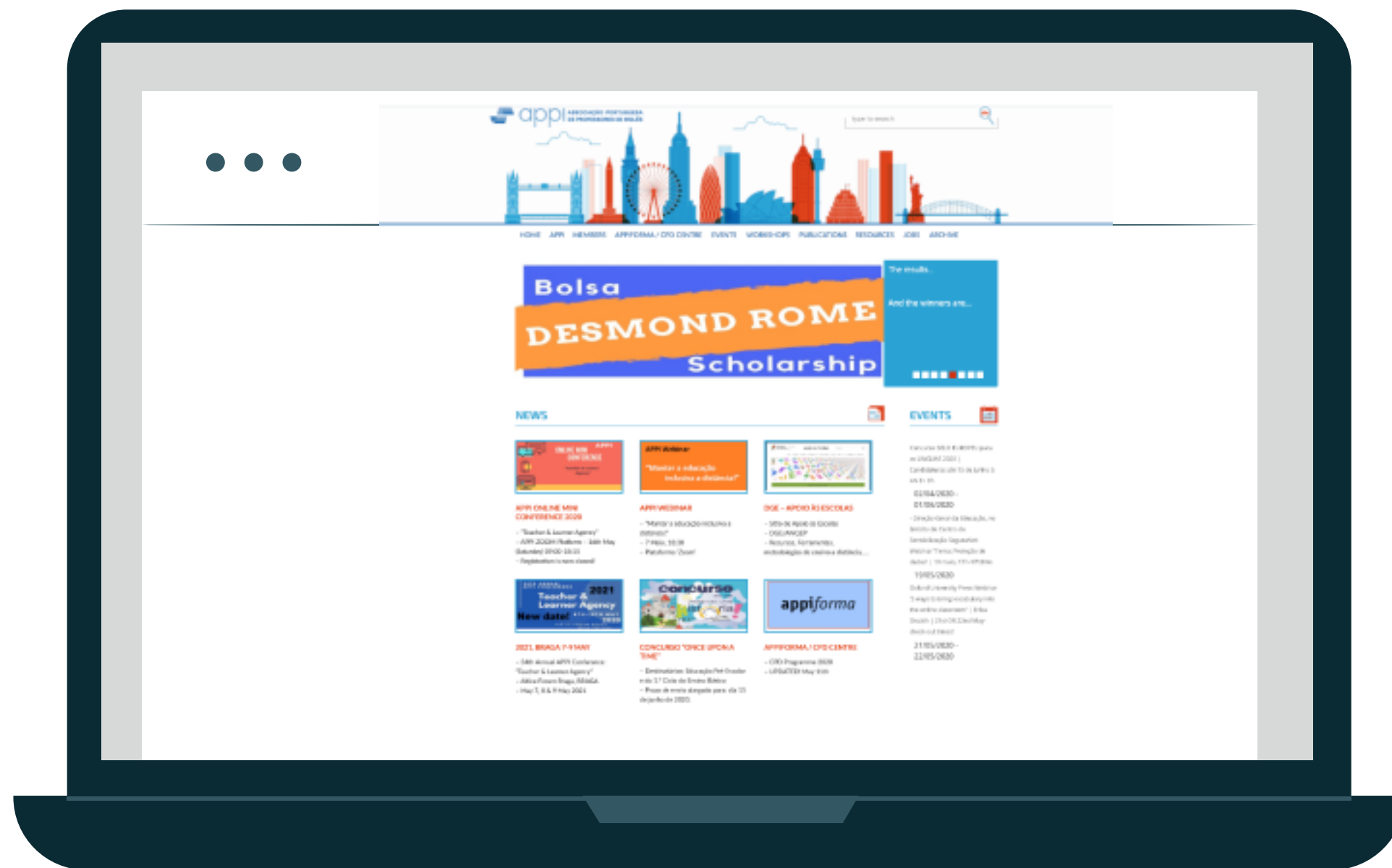


ASSOCIAÇÃO PORTUGUESA  
DE PROFESSORES DE INGLÊS

*the*  
**appi**  
**eJOURNAL**

*Year 2 | 17 | Spring 2020*

*empty chairs at empty tables*



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Some notes about the new format of the journal.

The eJournal is conceived to be read on your computer, laptop, or tablet. The format we are using makes the eJournal more screen friendly. For those who still have good eyesight, you may even be able to read it on your mobile phone.

If there are printable worksheets included in the content, we can make a link to a downloadable file that you can print out easily.

We hope you enjoy the new look.



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# EDITORIAL

Dear APPI members,

Welcome to the Spring 2020 edition of the APPI eJournal.

As we all are experiencing life has been changing dramatically at a high pace and we are asked to cope with it the best we can. It has not been easy, but most teachers are on a mission to work together with their students and help them achieve their goals. Hands-on and some of us are dealing with platforms we have never heard of before, but even though that may constitute a problem, no one will be set aside once we are problem solvers ready to face one more challenge.

The **DGE** has created the site:

<https://apoioescolas.dge.mec.pt> to support schools in this overwhelming situation teachers are facing and asked APPI to share useful links so that they may access free educational resources swiftly.

**Annie Altamirano** encourages teachers to never forget the role played by values when teaching either young learners or teenagers.

**Neil Mason** shares his own opinion about distance learning in swirling times of an unexpected pandemic.

In the near future teachers will have to choose new coursebooks; therefore, **Nicholas Hurst** and **Isabel Russo** have created a checklist that is of good value to help us making the best decision.

As technology is the trend more than ever, **Carlos Lindade** and **Tiago Carvalho** present the readers with some tech resources to use distance learning and assessing while **James Riley** highlights the benefits of Engaging in Effective Peer Observation using the PEERS Model.

Writing is one of the skills every teacher and learner has to deal with so as to become proficient and thus **Pedro Dias** explains how Teaching sentence length to ESL students can make a difference.

Intercultural awareness, referred to in *Aprendizagens Essenciais* as a competence to be developed together with students, can be achieved in many diverse approaches. **Célia Baixa** has chosen a way of tackling it with a visit to Museu Calouste Gulbenkian in Lisbon, which can be adapted to another museum close to the school where you are teaching.

**Sónia Rodrigues** and **Tânia Castilho** show teachers how to create and implement Curricular Autonomy Domains — *Domínios de Autonomia Curricular* (DAC) in “future present” Schooling.

Preparing students for their final exams constitute a requirement in teachers’ practice, so **Isabel Silva** and **Judite Fiúza** have created a practical activity following part II of *Prova de exame 550*, based on a personal account related to the most spoken and analysed topic that surrounds and absorbs people’s energy and thoughts all over planet earth, COVID-19.

And finally On the Bookshelf section **Judite Fiúza** provides us with the book review Intercultural Language Activities by John Corbett, for us to make the most of a subject that may help both teachers and learners to better understand the power of Interculturality.

*Summa summarum*, there is a variety of topics we hope are relevant to your practice. We would much appreciate if you could share an article for a future edition. Please, get in touch [ejournal.appi@gmail.com](mailto:ejournal.appi@gmail.com)

Stay home (if you can), stay safe for your and everyone else’s sake.

Editors,

Judite Fiúza, Anna Pires, Neil Mason



# We don't teach English. We teach people.

Annie Altamirano

**E**LT teachers, especially those who teach young learners, know instinctively that they are expected to teach not just English but also values. In this article, I will outline a very simple methodology for introducing values in the language classroom and present two ideas that can be implemented with young children and older learners.

ELT teachers, especially those who teach young learners, know that they are teaching more than English. One of those things is values.

However, it is important to point out the controversial nature of the subject of moral education and the sensitivities it may engender, since moral education could be perceived as a form of indoctrination. To guard against possible misinterpretation, I would like to point out the following:

- © The nature of the work of schooling involves dealing with issues that could easily be labelled under moral education, for values are manifested in what we do, how we act, and what we say.
- © Teachers need not avoid tackling moral issues. Quite the opposite, they should be encouraged to do so not with the purpose of steering their students in the direction of a certain point of view or converting them to a new doctrine, religious or otherwise, but rather to prepare them to think carefully and critically about moral issues.
- © One major issue of contention in relation to moral education is whose values to teach. This issue could be more sensitive in an ELT context where the values of the immediate environment differ significantly from the values of English-speaking societies.

## Methodology

In order to implement educational values in the EFL classroom, we should centre around creating an active learning environment. Active learning involves building an open classroom climate characterised by student participation and interaction, respect for students and teacher, open discussion, and positive reinforcement.

We can't walk into a classroom at the beginning of the year and say, "This year I expect you all to be fair, kind, honest, careful, friendly, helpful and on time." It won't happen. But we can set specific, small goals and ask students to try to stick to them.

By breaking values into small, meaningful chunks, stating our expectations, following up during the week and rewarding students for good behaviour, teaching values becomes not only manageable, but incredibly helpful to your image as a teacher.

## Empowering students: anti-bullying strategies

When dealing with the topic of special or talented children, be ready to protect the weak or shy from being teased, highlighting the fact that, even those who do not respond to stimuli easily, should be rewarded for their positive efforts in the learning of a foreign language.

- © Turn a bullying or name-calling incident into a teachable moment by discussing what happened and how one can act as an ally.
- © Teach explicit lessons that explore identity-based bullying, prevention strategies, empathy-building, and activities that help students practise the skills of being an ally with role-plays and scenarios.



- © Use literature for children or young adults, as well as videos, that provide examples of ally behaviours and how they made a difference.

### Love yourself

Khari Toure is an author, spoken word artist and filmmaker from Oakland, California. When he found that his 6-year-old daughter Nia was being teased about her weight at school, he encouraged Nia to embrace self-love and then turned his inspiring message into a rap song with the title “Love Yourself.” The video can be found in [Toure's Youtube channel](#).

The song encourages all three of his daughters to take pride in their bodies and themselves, and not listen to anyone that may criticise them. It also offers a mantra for anyone who is feeling bullied to repeat to themselves: “I’m beautiful / I’m worthy / And those mean words / Can’t hurt me / I’m priceless / I’m smart / And I love myself / I’m focused on my health.”

— Watch the video <https://youtu.be/21LHPg57nxg>

### Prejudice and tolerance

David McKee's book, *Tusk Tusk* (Andersen, 2006) is a fairly short and simple book, easy enough for A1+ and A2 students, yet it raises many complex issues. It serves as an excellent departure point for discussion with pre-teenage and teenage students. The topic of prejudice is perhaps one of the most prevalent throughout this story.

The elephants in the story did not like each other because of the colour of their skin. Is this a fair judgement? Do you think it is fair to judge someone because they look different? Is it OK not to like someone because they were mean to you? What is the relationship between a person's outer characteristics and their inner qualities? Does one's appearance or physical characteristics reflect one's inner characteristics? Are they

two separate things? The elephants in the story did not like each other because they looked different from one another. Do you think that is fair? Do you think that the elephants' skin colour means that they are bad? These and other questions can guide the students towards a discussion about the larger issue of the morality of prejudice.

The book ends on an ironic note: “... the little ears and the big ears have been giving each other strange looks.” Encourage learners to predict what will happen next. Will the grey elephants uphold their grandparents' peace loving ideals? Or will they start another war against each other as their ancestors had done over the colour of their skin? These questions may be an excellent way to start a discussion of the book.

If the grey elephants were peace loving, why were they still finding fault with one another's appearance? Would you still consider the elephants to be peace loving even though they were prejudiced towards each other? Do you think it is possible to not be prejudiced at all and to never judge someone based on a character trait?

Some would argue that humans are inherently prejudiced and will never escape this cycle of discrimination. Some would argue otherwise. See what your students have to say!

For students, learning explicit values can be lots of fun. They enjoy helping each other remember the week's value and really enjoy seeing how we, the teachers, occasionally forget to use it. (We're all learning together!)

But remember that above all, whether with very young children or older students, teaching values takes time and patience and it is best done by example!

Annie Altamirano (MA ELT & Applied Linguistics) has over 30 years' experience as a teacher, teacher trainer and materials developer. She has co-authored courses for children, adolescents and adults for all major publishers and has given teacher-training workshops in Latin America, Europe and Asia. Her latest published work includes *Cambridge Global English Teacher's Resource*, *Cambridge Grammar & Writing skills Levels 7-9 Teacher's Resource* published by Cambridge University Press and *Now I Know Level 4* published by Pearson. She is currently the Vice-President of TESOL-SPAIN.





This has been a strange few weeks ... and it might stretch out to the next months. All of a sudden we all have to become specialists in distance education and give classes or organize work for our students via the internet.

There have been some people up in arms claiming that teachers are becoming exhausted with this situation. Now, please forgive me for using a little critical thinking here — weren't teachers already exhausted?

Apparently, Portugal has the oldest teaching population in Europe — but, if you are now 60 years old, that means that you would have been about 35 when the internet started to take over our lives. When the Delors' UNESCO report of 1996 was published, you may have been between 23–25 years old. The report stressed the urgent need for IT skills. Delors' 4 pillars of education have served as the basis of education policy since most teachers were, in fact, quite young.

Just a short while ago, a teacher said to me “We are not all proficient in these new technologies”. But my question to her was “What's new about them?” They've been around since the beginning of most teachers' started teaching.

Another thing that makes me question some of the arguments which seem to say that if you're over 55, you poor thing, you are technologically obsolete — is that some of the best use of technology I've seen in has been by people who are the older teachers! Sometimes their design sense may still be in the 1990s, but they manage pretty well, it seems to me!

Some of the most resistant and tech-backward people I have met are the generations which came along later. The so-called digital natives who are NOT tech experts! Jason Dorsey, who studies generations in the workplace, says they are tech dependent, not tech savvy. They are addicted to their phones, that

# OLD, but not obsolete!

doesn't mean that they are capable of using technology effectively to work.

Remember, the generation that is “tired and obsolete”, is the generation that invented the whole computer industry, the internet, and educational technology!

I know I'm exaggerating a bit. I'm just saying that we cannot make sweeping statements and correlate lack of digital competence to age — at least without proper data to back up our personal theories.

My mother is 78 — the only arthritis she suffers from is from texting too much. My dad is not as quick with tech, but both of them managed quite well to install ZOOM on their smartphone!



In the film  
***Terminator: Genisys***,  
a rather “mature”

Schwarzenegger says that he  
is “Old, but not obsolete!” Tired,  
maybe. Exhausted, well, maybe.

Believe me, you still have value, and  
you can still bang someone over  
the head with your walking stick  
or and could still throw a board  
eraser with amazing  
accuracy.

Many kids starting  
University have very little  
idea how to use technology to  
collaborate on projects — I  
believe the next group to enter  
University in the autumn will be much  
more capable in online / blended  
collaborative projects requiring them to  
connect with Zoom, Skype, Google  
Docs, and other tools, because this  
crazy exhausting, stressful,  
nobody’s — fault situation is  
forcing us all to  
“up-skill”.

I am impressed,  
very impressed with some  
of my older teachers at University  
— at how they have quickly managed  
to get used to giving lessons on Zoom.  
Sure, they need some help jumping back  
and forth between technologies — but let  
us not assume that the younger ones have  
things any easier! Because they don’t!  
They are also struggling.

Teachers need to be able to learn, not just  
teach others stuff. It is the responsibility  
of a teacher to be a life-long learner.  
To remain an expert in the use  
of the tools of their art.

It’s forcing us all to  
face the fact that we’ve let  
ourselves become obsolete, but we  
now have an opportunity to catch up and  
show our students that learning is a life-skill,  
not just something to get you into University.  
If ever we needed proof that the world can change  
in the blink of an eye, and the way we do things  
can be quickly replaced by “new normals”,  
COVID-19 has shown us this.

...

“The future always comes too fast  
and in the wrong order.”

*Alvin Toffler*

“Don’t Panic”

*Douglas Adams (HHGTTG)*



Neil Mason’s  
Educational Technology at the  
University of Manchester, has a  
post-graduate certificate in **Coaching  
and Mentoring in Education** from the  
University of Gloucestershire, and is  
currently studying “**Ciências da  
Educação**” at *Faculdade de Psicologia  
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Porto. He also teaches a course  
on Intercultural Intelligence  
at FLUP, U.Porto.



# Check it, choose it, use it!

Using a checklist to facilitate analysis and selection of new coursebooks.

Nicolas Hurst & Isabel Russo

Coursebooks play a very important role in Portuguese ELT classrooms. The choice of coursebook can determine, to a great extent, the quality of learning—teaching that occurs. Evaluating such materials requires a focussed and theoretically-grounded approach.

## Introduction

Many ELT coursebooks are launched onto the Portuguese market every year by local and international publishing houses. These coursebooks vary from level to level, and from publisher to publisher, according to an annual schedule decided by the Ministry of Education. Teachers are already under considerable pressure from heavy workloads (both curricular and administrative) and the additional, predictive task of coursebook selection (Ellis, 1997) needs to be taken seriously, if for no other reason (and there are many) than for its long term consequences.

The perfect coursebook does not exist (Richards, 2001), so we had better select the best options available if we want to improve the quality of our educational system. Using a checklist can allow hard-pressed teachers access to an up-to-date, criterion-based, balanced and straightforward evaluative tool (Tomlinson, 2003). Both more experienced and less experienced teachers can benefit from employing such a tool to analyse the potential suitability of a coursebook with more ease and choose the best one for their and their learners' needs without falling into the temptation of relying on 'impressions' or commercial presentations (AbdelWahab, 2013).

The use of a ready-made coursebook checklist allows teachers to analyse all the coursebook options available according to pedagogical parameters, to go through these coursebooks in more systematic and theoretically grounded manner

(Mukundan & Ahour, 2010). Such checklists must include parameters of specific areas of ELT practice, bearing in mind that the chosen coursebook will provide the students with a crucial learning framework, both inside and outside the classroom, and, teachers, their main support in fulfilling the Ministry designated learning objectives.

The checklist accompanying this article is intended to be both simple and effective, recognising that “[n]o coursebook evaluation checklist in the literature is complete. Regardless of the number of items it is made up of, any checklist can be modified by adding or deleting items depending on the circumstances of a given instructional setting” (Demir & Ertas, 2014, p.247). Users of this checklist may wish to expand or revise the checklist to include further categories or items; for example, related to physical or utilitarian aspects, the layout or even the weight (Mukundan, 2011).

This checklist provides a list of parameters divided into four main categories: ‘Cultural content’, ‘Language work’, ‘Skills work’ and ‘Teachers’ zone’. This format allows the user to easily evaluate the most important pedagogical aspects of a coursebook by going through the items listed and simply selecting ‘always’, ‘sometimes’ or ‘never’. It is also designed to be easily photocopied; this means not every possible criterion or perhaps even category is included here, the choice is, by definition, subjective (McGrath, 2016).

## Cultural content

Learning a new language means more than just being able to use its grammar and vocabulary correctly; it's about intercultural communication between communities, it's about cultural products, cultural perspectives and cultural practices (Moran, 2001).



Therefore, the coursebook must fulfil the challenging task of providing cultural content that embraces many Englishes and their associated cultures from all around the world.

We live in a multicultural world, it is imperative that students get ample opportunity to learn and to develop their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and to mature into globally aware citizens. This content (whether ‘implicit’ or ‘explicit’ in separate sections) should be evenly distributed through the coursebook, and if possible, be complemented by additional materials included in the ‘extras’ package.

There are many ways to introduce cultural content to students, it cannot simply consist of knowing about some ‘famous’ actor, football player or the iconic local dish or festivity. The coursebook must depart from what we usually find: an unreal, stereotypical English-speaking ‘world’, where everything is clean, affluent and consumeristic (Hurst, 2014).

Keeping it interesting might pose a challenge because fashions and trends change fast and students are unique, they have different tastes and interests. The coursebook must present cultural content which is interesting (motivational) enough to nurture students’ curiosity, for them to want to learn more, and at the same time develop their ability to understand themselves and the ‘Other’. The more diverse the sources and types of the cultural content the better, since these will enlarge the students’ window on the world (Gray, 2002).

### **Language work**

The language work category is divided into the subcategories of vocabulary and grammar.

Normally coursebooks will have standard exercises to practise the new vocabulary being introduced, which follow texts or even grammar exercises. The coursebook normally presents new vocabulary through the texts, through the unit’s theme,

through the listening activities, the further reading and so on; but, some vocabulary might already be known by the students and the book must challenge this knowledge and also stimulate their curiosity to learn more. Above all, vocabulary is very important because it is directly implicated in the production work done by students (Nation, 2005).

Students aren’t big fans of learning grammar because most exercises tend to be mechanical and are seldom varied. This subject poses a challenge by itself, because even if the teacher wants to keep it interesting, most of the time the grammar presentation method is ‘old fashioned’. Normally, grammatical content is presented through the PPP format (Presentation – Practice – Production). This is, in fact, a standard way of teaching new language items, and if the coursebook fully embraces it, it is almost guaranteed that students will be demotivated and bored (Hurst, 2010).

As with vocabulary, the teacher can use the coursebook as a means of reference, i.e., present the tables with the rules of grammar ‘use’ but supplement the presentation with new, more up-to-date materials that are more relevant and interesting to students. Teachers should give more time for students to produce new language with the grammar and vocabulary they have learned, thus practising fluency. Pronunciation must also be practised, but above all, students should have ample opportunities to make personal use of the language items they are learning, to ‘experiment’ and to be spontaneous.

### **Skills work**

The most recent teaching methods are more centred on the student’s learning needs and expectations; students must be able to use the new language presented and that can only be achieved through a continuous focus on productive skills (Paran, 2012). Activities should be purposeful, with a clear communicative function.



Coursebooks rely heavily on texts to provide students with cultural and linguistic input. These texts comprise both the cultural content and the language that will be taught and practised in the subsequent activities. The texts included in the coursebook are of major importance given that they also prompt the development of the receptive skills.

These texts should come from various sources and be authentic, accurate and appropriate. Moreover, the texts selected can be in the coursebook for various reasons, and their relevance must be evident to the students, otherwise they will question their significance. For instance, the texts can be associated with the unit's theme, with the grammar or vocabulary being taught or they can also be used to practise reading skills.

Nowadays, one of the main objectives of learning a new language is the possibility of using it to communicate with other people. The coursebook must include activities that intend to prepare them for the use of 'real' language whether the students are working on the pronunciation, fluency or practising a language structure accurately (Nobuyoshi & Ellis, 1993). These language production activities must provide a learning challenge appropriate to the students' level, so that success is achievable and only minimal teacher intervention is required.

### **Teachers' zone**

In Portuguese-produced coursebooks, teachers and students have basically the same layout and contents, but the teacher's version is normally a more complete one, including suggested answers and teaching tips. This version should present relevant information that connects its content with the official national programmes ('Metas Curriculares', 'Aprendizagens Essenciais', etc.).

A clear connection between any extensive reading resource and the students' coursebook should be demonstrated, highlighting its relevance to the unit's theme and to its presence in the book. Not all materials and exercises in the book are suitable for the individual teacher's method (some of them can be too mechanical and repetitive), so the Teachers' zone could present some alternative approaches or additional activities or for 'pushed output' or 'differentiated learning' (Ur, 2013).

Normally, the teacher's book includes references to the audio/video materials to present the listening/viewing activities to students, this could also be complemented by other multimedia support relevant to the coursebooks themes as well as assessment activities that the teacher could hand out to students to assess their progress.

Finally, one major aid for teachers, and for their lesson preparation and reflective practice, could be the inclusion of lesson plans, term plans and teacher's diaries (Mathew, 2012). With these materials teachers could keep up to date and adjust their teaching to their students' particular needs.

### **Conclusion**

Using a checklist to evaluate a coursebook provides a useful foundation for textbook selection. Given the centrality of coursebook in the ELT teaching-learning process, it is vital that teachers are equipped with instruments to guide them in exercising their choices. This is especially true in Portugal where teacher training courses have rarely included any formal input and/or training in the principles of materials development; this is despite the existence of extensive publications in the area, dating back to the seminal work of Sheldon (1988) and Cunningsworth (1995). Furthermore, conducting coursebook evaluations as a 'team' effort can also provide an opportunity for including more teachers in institutional decision making and promote 'in-house' teacher development.



Book details	Title:		
	Author(s):		
	Publisher:		
	Level:	Nr. of pages:	Price:

Coursebook categories		Always (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
Teachers' zone	Does the content correspond directly to the official Ministry documents ( <i>'metas curriculares'</i> etc.)?			
	Does it include methodological suggestions about using the coursebook?			
	Does it come with useful associations between the coursebook and 'off-book' extension activities?			
	Is an answer key provided for activities?			
	Does it include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- differentiated exercises and activities?</li><li>- teacher's tips for varying activities?</li><li>- information on potential difficulties?</li></ul>			
	Additional materials provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Does it provide multimedia support (ppt, YouTube, flashcards, active internet links, etc)?</li><li>- Does it provide assessment materials (tests)?</li><li>- And self-evaluation activities?</li></ul>			
	How does it help the teacher organise his/her practice? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- with lesson plans?</li><li>- with term plans?</li><li>- with teacher diaries?</li></ul>			
Cultural content	Is cultural information evenly distributed throughout the coursebook?			
	Are there extra separate sections on specific cultural topics?			
	Is the cultural content relevant to unit it is included in?			
	About the cultural content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- does it present the various English 'cultures'?</li><li>- is it stereotypical of the English 'world'?</li><li>- does it only portray a 'perfect' and unrealistic world?</li><li>- does it stimulate students' curiosity to learn more?</li></ul>			
	Does it allow students to explore different cultures?			
	Can students connect these different cultures and world views to their own culture/community?			
	Is the cultural content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- age appropriate?</li><li>- from varied 'real world' sources?</li><li>- interesting for students?</li></ul>			



Skills work	Receptive skills: listening and reading	Does it allow for students to develop their intercultural communicative competence (ICC)?			
		Can the texts be used for both listening and reading?			
		Are the texts appropriate to the unit's theme?			
		Is the reading task focussed on the language (i.e., vocabulary, grammar) being taught?			
		Can the reading texts be used to practise a specific sub-skill (skimming, scanning, reading aloud, etc.)?			
		Are the texts:			
		- heavily edited and adapted?			
		- largely from authentic sources?			
		- appropriate for the learner's level?			
		Do the texts connect explicitly with the pre- and post-exercises/activities?			
		Does the book include a variety of text genres and types?			
		Do the listening activities provide a variety of genuine accents?			
		Is the listening activity appropriate to the learner's level (length and complexity)?			
		When listening to a text is the student supposed to memorise the content?			
		Are the students required to analyse and/or summarise the message as a listening activity?			
		Are the speaking activities focussed on practising:			
		- pronunciation?			
		- fluency?			
		- a language structure?			
		Can students work autonomously in a speaking activity?			
		Do the speaking activities result from working on texts?			
		Do the activities allow students to produce 'real' language?			
		Is teacher validation needed to be successful in speaking activities?			
		Do the writing activities intend to:			
		- develop specific writing skills?			
		- practise different written registers?			
		- identify and correct errors?			
		Does the book provide opportunities for students to practise writing both inside and outside the classroom?			
		Are the writing activities intended to practise content learned through previous exercises?			
		Does it make use of model texts of different types?			
		Does the distribution of new vocabulary allow for a continuous progression and development of the students' lexical resources?			
		Are different varieties of English included?			
		Are the 'target' lexical items both 'real' and 'up-to-date'?			

Grammar	Is the vocabulary presented connected with the units' theme?			
	Can students learn more vocabulary through:			
	- audio content?			
	- further reading?			
	Relevance of the vocabulary presented:			
	- is it connected with grammar work?			
	- is it intended for memorization only?			
	- is it included as a text comprehension activity?			
	- can it be used in communication activities?			
	- can it also be used for language production?			
	What different types of vocabulary are presented:			
	- formal?			
	- colloquial?			
	- idiomatic expressions?			
	- contractions and slang?			
	- theme related only?			
	Does the book contain			
	- reference lists of 'important' vocabulary?			
	- vocabulary glossaries for each unit?			
	The exercises provided are:			
	- focussed on structural accuracy?			
	- varied in types of answers required?			
	The kind of approach used:			
	- is it inductive via tables of 'rules'?			
	- is it introduced through other sources?			
	- is it deductive, derived from other tasks?			
	- does it follow the P-P-P framework?			
	Is the grammar connected to the theme (lexis/ideas)?			
	Is the grammar content highlighted in the units' texts?			
	Does it contain 'real' examples of the grammar in use?			
	Does it allow for students to practise the spoken forms?			
	Does it contain exercises/tasks for students to practise the spelling rules?			
	Can students use the new grammar to use the language for themselves (fluency)?			
Observations:		Score:		

You can download this grid as a MS Word™ document at: <https://bit.ly/course-book-grid-word>

Or as a PDF document at: <https://bit.ly/course-book-grid-pdf>



**Nicolas Hurst.** (APPI B-1415). Assistant Professor in English Studies at FLUP. PhD in Anglo-American Studies (University of Porto, 2014). Teacher of English and ELT methodology, materials design, etc. Numerous articles published in Portugal and abroad. Regular speaker at local and international conferences. ELT coursebook consultant.



# Engaging in Effective Peer Observation Using the PEERS Model.

James J. Riley

**M**ost educators will agree that effective teaching and effective learning go hand-in-hand. Teaching is a journey. Throughout our careers, we all need to find ways to improve. There are a variety of opportunities for teachers to engage in professional development — including conferences, reading journals, and receiving formal observation reports from administrators. However, many teachers agree that no one is better equipped to provide more appropriate feedback than their fellow teachers. With this in mind, **peer observation of teaching (POT)** may be one of the most effective tools that teachers have for professional development.

Peer observation has been shown to assist teachers with implementing innovations (Joyce & Showers, 2002), improve teacher confidence (Donnelly, 2007) and enhance teacher performance (Lomas & Kinchin, 2006). However, in order for POT to be effective, teachers have to establish the proper environment. I use the acronym **PEERS** (Positive & Productive; Exploratory; Establish Context; Reflective & Recursive; Stakeholders) to outline an ideal POT environment.

## **POSITIVE & PRODUCTIVE**

For peer observation to be effective, teachers need to approach the process with a positive attitude and seek to improve. Teachers need to be willing to give and receive feedback that is positive, yet constructive. Teachers who are averse to giving or receiving such constructive criticism can render the entire POT process useless.

## **EXPLORATORY**

If teachers embrace the peer observation process as one that is truly centred on professional development, then they can be free to explore new ideas. Teachers need to know that the environment is safe and nonjudgmental. It is important to note that tying the peer observation process to performance reviews, awards, or monetary compensation will leave teachers feeling less open to exploring new ideas. This makes it a less effective tool of professional development.

## **ESTABLISH CONTEXT**

The POT process needs to be more than simply a one-off classroom observation experience. Teachers need to begin by clearly defining the purpose for their participation in POT, as well as how the process should play out. Prior to classroom observation, peers should participate in a pre-observation conference that allows the teacher being observed to establish the context of the experience. This includes teacher expectations, experience with technology (if applicable), background of the students, teaching style, professional development goals, class objectives, understanding of theory and pedagogy, and any concerns that either teacher may have about the lesson.

## **REFLECTIVE & RECURSIVE**

After the classroom observation is complete, teachers need to engage in deep and critical reflection on what happened during the lesson. This is where the learning takes place! It should include a thorough examination of theory and how this links to the lesson. Close this reflection moment by establishing goals



for the next classroom observation. Wang (2017) really makes the importance of formative observation clear when he talks about the necessity of POT programs taking place over time, as opposed to being episodic events.

## **STAKEHOLDERS**

If POT is to be successful, control of the process needs to be handed to the stakeholders: the teachers. Teachers need to exhibit a degree of control over what classes they want to have observed and what skills they wish to improve. If the environment is non-judgmental, teachers will feel less apprehensive over having peers observe the classes where they most need support and assistance. Any sort of observation instrument or rubric should be created in conjunction with the participating teachers.

Applying the PEERS acronym has the potential to aid in the peer observation process. However, there are challenges to implementing POT. The acronym FAILS outlines some potential pitfalls to implementing a POT scheme.

## **FORCED PARTICIPATION**

Some institutions may require teachers to participate in peer observation programs as a tool of professional development. While this may result in teachers' professional development, POT works best when participation is voluntary. Forced participation may result in a lack of the critical reflection that is necessary for teachers to develop their skills.

## **APPRAISAL**

Tying any POT scheme to performance appraisal, evaluation, awards, or monetary compensation will make it less effective. It's counterintuitive to insist that a POT scheme is non-judgmental, teachers should explore new ideas, and then assign teachers a score based on their participation. This type of appraisal often results in "dog and pony shows" that fail to produce real improvements to classroom performance or changes to teaching philosophy. If I knew I was receiving a score (particularly one







that might impact my salary), I would choose my best class to be observed — not the one that I needed the most assistance with.

### **INFRINGING ON ACADEMIC FREEDOMS**

Many teachers view classroom observation for any purpose as an infringement on their academic freedoms. However, Dos Santos (2017) found that teachers would be willing participants if the peer observation scheme were clearly defined and offered multiple opportunities for observation and application of skills. Further, if the environment is non-judgmental and focused on exploring new ideas, teachers will be less likely to feel that the POT scheme is something being imposed upon them.

### **LIMITED TO ONE EVENT**

As previously mentioned, professional development programs need to be a long-term commitment. Today, most observations are summative and not well-suited to teachers' professional development goals (Noakes, 2009). However, formative observations provide the best opportunity for teachers to learn and apply new skills. They are also better suited to shape teaching philosophy.

Classroom observation is a great path to professional development. Teachers have a variety of options where PD is concerned. Alibakhshi and Dehvari (2015) found that teachers develop best by teaching. The potential of POT to translate to changes in the classroom, a deeper understanding of theory and pedagogy, and adjustment to new approaches to teaching make it an ideal tool of professional development. The potential benefits of a POT scheme may extend to a variety of teaching contexts. The PEERS acronym should serve as an outline for teachers who wish to improve their performance.



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# Teaching sentence length to ESL students.

Pedro Dias

**W**hen working on the students' writing skills, one of the problems you will undoubtedly face is sentence length, because Portuguese students often learn that, in order to be accomplished writers in their native language, they must generate long, complex sentences. It's only natural that they try to replicate that way of thinking in their English writing.

Typically, in ESL classes students will learn the basic Subject + Verb + Object structure, as in John eats cake. In time, they can be expected to add place and time (In the morning, John eats cake at home) and sentence subordination (In the morning, John eats cake at home, whereas Susan eats toast at the school cafeteria). A problem arises when intermediate to advanced level students try to write longer sentences with several different clauses in English; many do not master the syntax and tend to get lost in their own words, adding tense confusion, syntactic mistakes and misused collocations to their texts. Also, many students do not use punctuation correctly. It is, therefore, necessary to show them how to avoid those pitfalls; one way of doing it is by teaching them a simple rule: count your words.

## **How long can an English sentence be?**

Naturally, there is not a standardised limit to the number of words in a sentence. Among others, linguistic ability and the level of qualifications of the intended reader will influence length (that is why I have quite a few long sentences on this page), as well as the nature of your text – for literature, of course, there are no rules. Even so, we can find some useful suggestions: the Style Guide for the UK government online

services recommends “Do not use long sentences. Check sentences with more than 25 words to see if you can split them to make them clearer”. And research from the American Press Institute suggests an average length of 21 words, explaining that, at 14 words, readers understood 90% of the information, while at 43 words, they understood less than 10%. It is worth remembering that the average sentence length of author JK Rowling in *Harry Potter*™ is 12 words. Compare that with a recommendation for Portuguese: don't go beyond 40 words.

## **Show them where to stop**

If, for example, you take the first sentence in this text, you will notice that it is exactly 40 words long. I do hope it is intelligible, but maybe a mouthful for some students. So, imagining it was written by a student, I would take the student's text and show him/her how to make it shorter and clearer: “See, take out ‘because’ and make a full stop there. If you also remove this adverbial, ‘undoubtedly’, and one of these redundant adjectives, either ‘long’ or ‘complex’, you will end up with two sentences, one with 17 words and the other with 20.” Much easier to deal with and to write. If students can be persuaded to count the number of words in their lengthier sentences, they may stop to consider the syntax and make an effort to write sentences that are shorter, clearer and, consequently, more effective. As a reference, I would recommend a maximum length of 15–20 words for the students' texts, depending on their language level.

In the example below, I recently asked a 10th grade student to comment on an advertisement with a Pepsi can and some ice cubes. Halfway through her text she wrote, “I think that this ad





means that Pepsi should always be drunk cold with a cube of ice and this Pepsi will taste better and maybe because this drink is more a drink for the summer.” There are several different problems here, but the first might be length: 36 words and a syntax that doesn’t quite help getting the meaning across to the reader. My first question was, “Can you break this down into two sentences? Or even three?” Working alongside the students and discussing intended meaning, we got “I think that this ad means that Pepsi should always be drunk cold with a cube of ice. Pepsi will taste better that way. Maybe it also means that this drink is more a drink for the summer.” After that, we were able to add punctuation, rephrase some expressions and insert more varied vocabulary. But sentence length was the basis for developing her writing skills.

Quality feedback is crucial if our students are to progress in their writing. Showing them where the difficulties are, rather than just grading a paper, is more effective and allows for greater improvement in future tasks of the same kind. In this sense, providing a reference length for their sentences allows them to revise their texts, mid-way through the writing process, and detect where a potential problem may lie.

**Pedro Dias** was born in Lisbon but works and lives in the Alentejo. He teaches English as a Foreign Language to teenagers in the Escola Básica e Secundária José Gomes Ferreira, in Ferreira do Alentejo. He also teaches in the Beja Polytechnic Institute and has many years’ experience as a translator, both freelance and working for the European Union.





# Assess remotely! But how?

Tiago Carvalho

*In this article I propose a digital activity relying on video recordings of learners followed by self, peer, and teacher assessment. The activity is structured so that learners acquire linguistic skills, hard skills related to usage of online learning tools, and soft skills, like empathy and critical thinking.*

I was holding on to this text for a while to confirm whether we would have to teach from home. And so we did... COVID-19 has triggered our need to unlearn what we learned and is making us relearn. Our classrooms became virtual, our black / whiteboards became chat boxes, our learners became faces on a screen, and our manuals, copies, and worksheets are now pictures, word documents, and pdf files. The effects of COVID-19 are going to be with us for a while, so there are many things we are all invited to do differently.

Among my many concerns is the way I am going to assess my learners, and there is no better time to finally implement those digital formative assessment practices I have been reading so much about. My main focus is to find a way to transform the assessment moments of my courses into valid learning moments, i.e., place the learners in different positions during the classes, namely learner, teacher, and evaluator.

I have seen that it is possible to design learning units where the learners assume all these roles. Apart from being motivating learning units, they were also sustained by a teaching–learning–assessment strategy enriched by several digital instruments and participants. Such units result in learners having practical experience as both teachers and learners in the context of formal

online teaching and learning, and by using assessment tasks (self and peer), these learners are subconsciously invited to execute a critical reflection of the whole process.

A search for this style of activity led me to what I am going to propose. I would like to present a virtual classroom activity that has been used by Matthew Cotter and Don Hinkleman presented in EuroCall 2019, which centres the assessment model of their learners in audiovisual student presentations subjected to peer-assessment and self-assessment. When reading this proposal, bear in mind that these EFL teachers (and researchers) have been perfecting and documenting the impact of this activity on their learners since 2009. Here is how they have been executing it:

1. During weekly ninety-minute classes of a course called “Oral Communication C” spreading through fifteen weeks, students were required to get ready for and present on varying themes such as giving instructions (speaking to inform) or sightseeing recommendations (speaking to persuade).
  - These tasks were complemented with homework quizzes to train learners to use online rubrics for self and peer-assessment.
2. All assessment activities by the teachers and the learners were done online, using a Learning Management System (Moodle).
3. The video recording and presentation was done using Moodle VAM, and all learners and teachers of the course had access to all records, to complete the self and peer-assessment tasks.



4. The assessments were done using simple predetermined rubrics at first, but these would be growing in complexity as the weeks passed, and more video presentations were being made.
5. The teachers would also preform their assessments on the videos and the quality of the assessments. Teachers also observed and assessed non-linguistic elements like posture, eye contact, voice volume, so that they could provide complete feedback to the learners in both linguistic and behavioural aspects.

The teachers also gave their learners a satisfaction survey, which indicated that this methodology was much appreciated. Moments like watching their own videos, rating their work, being assessed by the peers, getting feedback from the teachers, and watching their peers' presentations (which was the most enjoyable task), have proven to be very appreciated by the learners. Students mentioned that participating in the assessment procedure by using the Moodle platform helped them develop for their own future performances. Another curious outcome from this activity is how the learners tend to score themselves lower than their teachers (during post-performance assessment) on ALL presentations. This means that learners tend to be more demanding about themselves than their teachers. However, I believe that this element can vary according to the regional environment where this activity is happening.

It seems to me that an EFL learning unit that requires that learners take the role of evaluators by using the Learning Management System ultimately requires them to: 1. first





revisit the presentations again by viewing the videos; 2. then go through the cognitive process of scoring and giving feedback to their peers and themselves; and 3. reflect on all feedback received. Therefore, I will be very keen to experiment with this activity.

Being asked to teach remotely is giving us the chance to relearn and rethink how we assess our learners. Personally, it is making me look at digital assessment to understand how to relate / crosscut the concepts of 'digital assessment' and 'digital teaching/learning'. Especially in online environments, where we miss essential elements of the learners due to the distance, it is crucial to nurture dynamics for motivation, which allows for authentic and meaningful digital learning/assessment. Moreover, I must stress the need to conceive didactical and pedagogical practices of teaching, learning, and assessment based on educational goals, but leaving room in the remote tasks for the development of soft skills, which prepare our learners for a demanding, complex and uncertain professional future.

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I am a language teacher with multilingual skills and a passionate researcher foreign languages teaching/learning. I firmly believe that watching TV and films in English are great auxiliary learning aids.  
I am developing an online tool to help EFL teachers and learners choose the audiovisual contents that suit their teaching / learning needs.



The illiterate  
of the 21st  
century will  
be those who  
don't know  
how to learn,  
unlearn and  
relearn.

Alvin Toffler



# WhatsApp in the ELT Classroom: Practical, Possible and Painless

Carlos Lindade

“The limits of my language are the limits of my world.”

— Ludwig Wittgenstein

**B**ack in 2009, no one could have imagined the impact WhatsApp would have in our daily lives. Regardless if you use it to send messages, pictures, videos and even voice recordings, its potential for English Language Teaching is colossal. This article aims to discuss some practical, possible and painless applications for our classroom.

## 1. Introduction

Education in the XXI century is an ever-changing landscape of wonder and opportunity and when combined with contemporary technology, an indispensable pillar of our lives, the sky is the limit.

The current use of smartphones, mobile phones, and tablets have enabled the introduction of **m-learning**, which augments opportunities for teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Every device contains countless apps and communication apps such as WhatsApp, in particular, which may be adapted to be a unique teaching/learning tool. Some research in this area even indicates that the use of WhatsApp supersedes the traditional face-to-face tutoring in real classroom placement into long-distance learning and teaching in a virtual classroom (Hamad, 2017). The application involves vital benefits following the augmenting of the learner's writing, reading, speaking, and listening skills through text and verbal instructions. My aim with this contribution is to share my personal experience using WhatsApp with B1 English learners from the University of the Azores.

## 2. WhatsApp and ELT

As mentioned above, the use of WhatsApp in teaching English to foreign learners involves many potential advantages. By considering a popular user-friendly free app, one is able to augment students writing, listening, speaking, and reading skills expanding the English lesson experience far beyond the realms of the physical classroom.

### How?

First, by acknowledging the importance of social media and social networking in learners' lives. WhatsApp undoubtedly facilitates students' discussion, which allows them to overcome their fears of interaction when using English. According to research in this area foreign learners tend to overcome their fears online, unlike in real classroom settings or face-to-face communication. The students realise their potential and abilities through practising English online, which also boosts their confidence (Bensalem, 2018). Therefore, students via WhatsApp tend to engage in discussions confidently in English, which in turn improves their four skills. WhatsApp also encourages collaborations among students and guidance from their teachers. Short collaborative tasks requested by the English teacher, or even more complex ones like eTwinning projects, may be done via WhatsApp by integrating students from different geographic locations. The app allows for the creation of groups that encompasses students collaborating for a particular task. WhatsApp groups allow for interaction





among students and teachers through a closed space accessible to every party at any time. The platform also enhances communication by sending recorded sound and video clips, text messages, and other materials such as reading materials (Hamad, 2017). The sharing of materials in WhatsApp groups enhances connections among the participants, which in turn improves the learning of English.

WhatsApp also has the potential advantages of extending learning time. Teachers may use the app to extend learner's learning time (online) to cover the required syllabus and engage in interactive learning. The extended time may also be used for the question and answer sessions or writing and recording speeches in English (Bensalem, 2018). The students learn from their comfortable environments and favourable schedules.

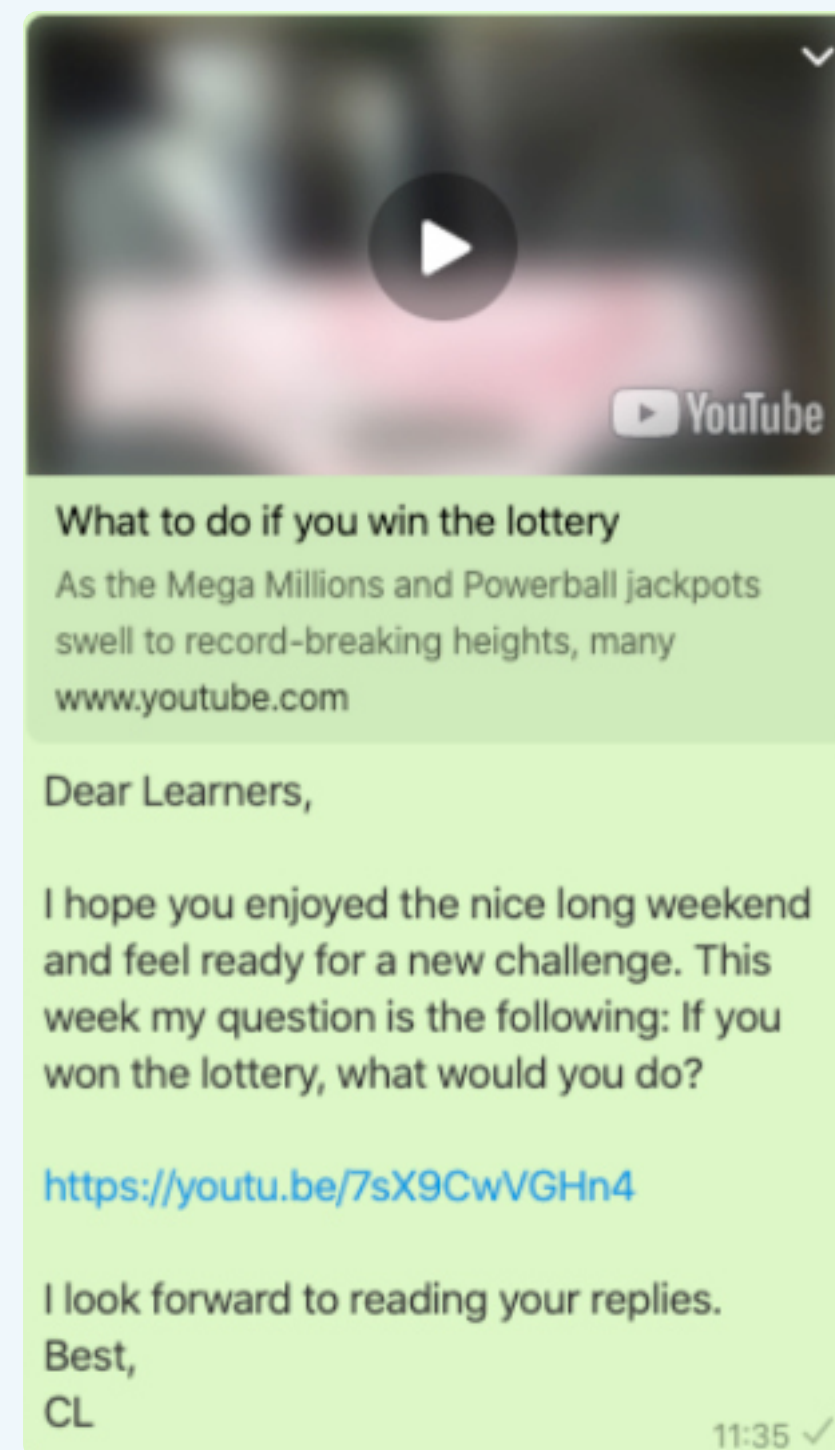
Finally, WhatsApp has advantages of learning from other students' mistakes. The students share written and recorded speeches that are used for learning. The teachers may also send materials for transcription to enhance listening skills. The students are required to listen and write word for word from speeches (Bensalem, 2018).

### 3. WhatsApp in my lessons

If you have seen one of my past APPI sessions, you know that I am a huge advocate of bridging theory and practice. While the previous section highlighted the theoretical framework, here I will briefly point out the practical side.

After setting up the group, I informed the learners that we would have a weekly challenge. The challenge would be sent in advance of each lesson in order to introduce the upcoming topic. By sharing a meaningful image, video, song or question and requesting a written or verbal comment, I was able to obtain valuable feedback.

In the beginning of each lesson we would go over the comments and feedback would be given. By highlighting specific mistakes or chunks of language, learners would learn from each other's mistakes contributing for meaningful language learning. Here is an example of a challenge:



<https://youtu.be/7sX9CwVGHn4>





Because I don't have permission from the learners, I can't openly share their replies.

Learners were also encouraged to complete and share tasks that were not completed in class, providing an important moment in the learning process. By sharing written or audio files students had the opportunity to acknowledge their peers' work, ask questions...

With smaller classes, students took turns in providing the weekly challenge and I would prepare a class around that specific challenge. By transferring power to the learners, there were no issues with attendance, motivation and/or participation. Students' feedback by the end of the academic year considered the English lessons as diverse, fun and exciting. A safe place where their opinions were relevant and respected by all. By being introduced to a topic beforehand, learners felt more confident to actively participate in the in-class activities.

#### 4. Final thoughts

Overall, WhatsApp, when used appropriately, plays an integral role in enhancing the learning of English among students. It's practical, considering it's a widely used instant messaging platform, almost impossible to avoid nowadays; it is possible because it does not require a long and complex installation process nor does it require the user to remember another login or password, and it is painless because it won't burden you like blogs or wikis sometimes do.

Today, considering the ramification of the Covid-19 outbreak and the shutdown of schools nationwide I have realised more than ever how significant enhanced web-based apps are to the educational system.

Using WhatsApp as a learning outlet has even fueled my PhD research since I've realised its potential to help learners improve their pronunciation, a skill widely neglected in the English classroom (Lindade, 2018).

If you give it a try, you won't regret it and if you do please share your experience afterwards.

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# Travelling, collecting, exhibiting and educating: raising EFL learners' intercultural awareness in a visit to Museu Calouste Gulbenkian in Lisbon

Célia Baixa

**B**earing in mind the educational role of museums and the need to raise the students' intercultural awareness, this article presents some suggestions of task-based and interdisciplinary activities to be explored in a visit to Museu Calouste Gulbenkian aimed at the development of intercultural and critical thinking competences through an active engagement with objects from different cultures.

Intercultural and critical thinking are considered key competences for the 21st century. (Inter)Cultural content can be integrated in ELT with activities to raise intercultural awareness (IA) and develop intercultural communicative competence (ICC).

Baker (2018: 33) defines IA as the “understanding of the fluid, complex and emergent nature of the relationship between language and culture in international communication”.

Utey (2005: 6) states that students should be aware of the existence of different cultures, recognize their importance in human interaction and communicate successfully in an intercultural society.

ICC involves not only the exercise of tolerance to both linguistic and cultural differences but also the capacity to understand the intercultural dimensions of communication and to conciliate those differences (Byram, 1997).

EFL students must be exposed to activities that promote the sensitization for an intercultural global environment of communication.

The educational role of museums is unquestionable (Hooper-Greenhill, 1992). As repositories of material culture, museums are important sources of knowledge available in an immense diversity of visual experiences, interactive activities, (inter)cultural encounters and entertainment. They are places of intercultural dialogue because the way objects are displayed to represent peoples, groups and countries allow visitors to make connections between their cultures and the cultures objects come from. (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000).

A philanthropist and a man of vision, Calouste Sarkis Gulbenkian was born in Scutari (in Armenia, Ottoman Empire; present-day Istanbul, Turkey) in 1869 and died in Lisbon in 1955. Born at a crossroads of civilizations, with a vast knowledge of both eastern and western cultures, he travelled as a student, an oil business

mediator and an embassy councillor to places like Marseille, Baku, London, Cairo, Venice, Rome, Paris. Escaping German-occupied Paris, he came to Lisbon in 1942 where he lived until his death (Conlin, 2019).

With a passion for beauty and art he collected about 6000 objects from Antiquity to the beginning of the XX century which are on display at the Museu Calouste Gulbenkian (MCG) in Lisbon.

Visiting MCG can be an excellent opportunity to develop project and interdisciplinary work (with History, Geography, Art, Philosophy) and promote an active engagement with museum objects. With task-based activities all four skills can be developed before, while and after the visit takes place.

As far as raising intercultural awareness is concerned, important objectives are involved:

- to recognise historical, spiritual and cultural roots belonging to all human beings through museum objects;
- to develop an open and critical approach to different cultures and a greater understanding of diversity;
- to promote a critical awareness of values and symbols related to the students' own culture.

### **Travelling and collecting: the collector and his travels**

Anticipating a visit to MCG may engage students in research activities related to the life of Calouste Gulbenkian by searching at the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian's website information in English about the life of its founder.

His biography is a source of historical and geographic information. The rules of biography writing can be explored in order to write texts in the EFL classroom.

Throughout his life Gulbenkian travelled for different types of reasons: to study, to work, for leisure and to escape war and xenophobia. Geography teachers can be very helpful in organising with students a map with Gulbenkian's travel routes and gathering information about the cities he visited to create a bilingual travelogue.

In order to improve critical thinking, students may be asked to compare Gulbenkian's reasons to travel with the ones that originate contemporary mobilities/migrations and reflect about them. They may be asked to relate Gulbenkian's story to their personal or family's story.

With the cooperation of History and Art teachers, vocabulary activities can be organised within the scope of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) to cover basic aspects of the collection: names of objects (statue, statuette, vase, jar, tile, coin, portrait, carpet); materials (gold, silver, jade, canvas, wood, marble) some art terms (pottery, oil painting, drawing, still life, figurative art, decorative arts).

Students may be divided into groups to collect information during the visit. In the different parts of the exhibition (Egypt, Greece, Rome, Islamic Art, Middle East, European Art, French Furniture, etc) each group will have to find and photograph objects related to the below-mentioned categories:

- birth and death rituals;
- religion/worship;
- daily routines (eating and drinking, personal hygiene, work, housekeeping);
- clothing /accessories;
- leisure /entertainment.



### Exhibiting: looking at the collection

Teachers should check beforehand with museum staff rules concerning group circulation, picture taking and writing materials allowed inside the galleries.

While visiting the museum, make students look at and photograph the exhibits and gather information about them according to the categories they were assigned to.

### Educating: presenting the information

PowerPoint presentations can be organised to show the pictures students have taken of the objects.

Each group selects one or two objects from the different categories and describes them to the class. They may be asked to explain their choices and how these objects may relate to others in the same case, wall or stand. The beauty and function of the objects may also be addressed. Speaking skills can be explored fully in terms of providing descriptions, explanations, clarification and argumentation.

Students are expected to find that aspects such as birth and death, everyday life activities, spirituality and worship and entertainment are almost universal components of culture represented by similar objects whichever time, country or region they belong.

A final task may be asked to students: if you had the opportunity to expand Gulbenkian's collection with a gallery dedicated to Portuguese artefacts which ones would you include in each of the five categories?

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# Curricular Autonomy Domains

## *Domínios de Autonomia Curricular (DAC)*

# in “future present” Schooling

Sónia Rodrigues & Tânia Castilho

Contemporary schooling in Portugal is plagued by high levels of dissatisfaction, be it within the realm of teachers or that of students, and is thus in dire need of a new outlook on teaching and learning. It is within this emerging context of transformation, reflexion and innovation, that we have embraced new professional development practices, creating and implementing the following DAC project.

### Introduction

The School of the “future present”, where students enjoy learning in a fun and innovative way, has clearly set itself apart from the scholarly classes that we have come to know so well, within the 100 year old concept of education as a formatting industry. We are thus urged to create conditions that allow us to reinvent the classroom, ensuring the success of teaching and learning as a joint venture.

Education is understood for the purpose of this article, as “a complex reality of processes and practices, (...), through which the pupil is transformed” (Boavida & Amado 2008, p. 155), and requires henceforth collaboration and “care”. In other words, it “involves a way-of-being through which one (...) centres one’s attention on another, with diligence and solicitude” (Boff, 2005, p. 29), facilitating the blooming of new potentials, with the patience

of a “sower” (Grácio, R.) who awaits the seed to sprout without ever giving up.

Being an education professional requires one to cater for each student’s characteristics, capabilities and interests, respecting diversity and inclusion and providing equal opportunities as well as differentiated treatment, in a clear commitment towards the student’s development.

Working on Curricular Autonomy Domains — Domínios de Autonomia Curricular (DAC) — leads to cooperation and even more importantly to collaboration, not only amongst teachers, but also between the latter and the students themselves, working towards the same aim, which is human development, becoming co-authors in the construction of knowledge. The teacher remains, however, an essential director, who guides and mediates the learning process with care and attention.

DAC are a curricular work option that allows for interdisciplinary collaboration or collaboration between different grades of the same subject.

Here we have privileged the intersection of learning through different subjects, favouring practical work and the development of research skills as well as viewing the student as a holistic individual, whose emotional, mental and physical health influences all other fields of learning and living.

### DAC “Be!...Love: beyond illusion”

The basis of this project created by the Professional School in Tomar has been the title of one of T. C. Aleehah’s books “Be!...



Love: Beyond Illusion” and was developed in the context of St. Valentine’s Day celebration. This DAC project involved teachers and students in collaborative work around the theme of “Love”, which is transversal to some of the curriculum’s subjects, namely Psychology, Portuguese, English and more indirectly, but no less relevantly, the graphic representations created by Electronic Edition and Drawing & Visual Communication students.

This DAC project had the final aim of organising and implementing a Talk and Practical Workshop under the theme “Be!... Love: Beyond Illusion” with the author, together with an art exhibit with the students’ artwork (Picture 2 & 3). The project revolved around some Essential Learning Skills pertaining each of the participating subjects, with the aim of developing several capacities as per the Students’ Profile at the End of Compulsory Education — *Perfil dos Alunos à Saída da Escolaridade Obrigatória*, as can be seen in Table 1.

The Electronic Edition subject took a leading role, by challenging the Graphic Arts students to create a poster in order to communicate the Event to take place on the 13th of February. The chosen poster, which was decided by the teacher of this subject, was then featured on several Muppies around town and shared on Social Media (Picture 1).

The subject of Drawing and Visual Communication developed an art exhibit, with work produced by the students according to the chapters of the book they had access to. The idea around this would ultimately be that these illustrations can be featured in a special edition of T. C. Aeelah’s book, “Be!... Love: Beyond Illusion”.

Considering this book has both an English and a Portuguese version, for the latter subject, students created Love Letters which were henceforth exchanged amongst the students on St. Valentine’s day.



Picture 1

The English subject developed a debate around the theme of “Love”, serving the purpose of setting the foundation for the final report to be done after the Talk / Workshop, in the Psychology class, exploring what Love might be and not be.

This particular DAC project highlighted the importance of the teacher understanding him/herself as a relational being, constantly beckoned to adapt in context, seeking the learning process success through collaboration, without overlooking an ethics of caring, and being capable of presenting challenges as an architect of human development, in partnership with education’s recipients: the students themselves.

Both authors, Sónia Rodrigues and Tânia Castilho (T. C. Aeelah) have created other different DAC projects for literary books, combining love for reading with many of the XXI century skills, proposing work beyond the textbook adopted for each subject, as an innovative way of exploring and implementing essential curriculum.

They intend to undertake further studies into DAC implementation and are open to collaboration and discussion with other agents of the learning process.

Thank you very much for choosing to dive into the new world of Education and being a pioneering explorer on this long overdue revolutionary journey. Hand in hand we can overthrow seemingly impossibles and facilitate brilliant possibles.

Change may be messy while in construction, but the result is a well worth upgrade for all of us.



Picture 2



Picture 3



Subjects	Essential Learning	Skills Areas
Psychology	Analysing the human mind as a world construction system.  Analysing resilience as a process non-exclusive to an individual's inner resources, but also depending on the contexts where the individual operates.	Languages and Texts (A)  Critical and Creative Thinking (D)  Interpersonal Relationships (E)  Personal Development and Autonomy (F)  Well-being, Health and Environment (G)
Portuguese	Elaborating coherent and linguistically correct texts.  Writing texts of different genres and with different finalities.	
English	Understanding different types of discourse and following complex argumentation lines, within the themes presented, integrating one's own experience and mobilising knowledge retained from other areas, be it orally or in written form.  To read and understand extensive texts, both literary and non-literary; interpreting explicit and implicit information, relating it with one's knowledge and personal experience.	
Drawing and Visual Communication	Recognising the different contexts of experience as a source of visual and non-visual stimuli, analysing and graphically registering the situation that one is involved in.  Recognising Drawing as one of the languages present in different contemporary artistic manifestations.	
Electronic Edition	Recognising the different contexts of one's own experience as a source for visual and non-visual stimuli.	

Table 1 — summarised plan of the “Be!... Love: Beyond Illusion” DAC

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Doctor of Education Sciences by the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Coimbra University, specialising in Education Organisation and the Ethical Profile of Teachers, Learning and Teacher Training, Sónia has been a teacher of Philosophy and Psychology at several secondary schools in Portugal for the last several years.

**Tânia Castilho (T. C. Aeelah)**  
Creative Director at Linda's School, Tânia holds a degree in Communication Sciences and has experienced her creativity through many avenues, such as English Teaching, Fitness Instruction, Writing, Conscious Breath practices, social entrepreneurship and much more. She enjoys inspiring Passion for Life and celebrates each breath with love and gratitude.

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Tânia Castilho



Sónia Rodrigues



# READY TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL?



# PROVA de EXAME 550 - Part II

Isabel Silva & Judite Fiúza

Bearing in mind that both teachers and learners' reality has changed due to COVID-19 and we are no longer in the classroom, but teaching and learning must go on, we have decided to create a practical activity that we hope can be of use to the overloaded teachers.

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## Part A – Use of English and Reading

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All over the world we are living a time of change due to a common fierce enemy COVID-19.

**1. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. You must use between 2 and 4 words, including the word given. Do not change the word given. Write only the numbers and the missing words.**

**1.1.** “I later learned that one person was infected, although I didn't notice her showing any symptoms yet.”

\_\_\_\_\_ showing any symptoms yet, I later learned that one person was infected. (**DESPITE**)

**1.2.** She has a fever and coughs a lot; she has probably caught the COVID-19.

She has a fever and coughs a lot; she \_\_\_\_\_ the COVID-19. (**MAY**)

**1.3.** “The truth,” they said, “is that not much evidence exists on this novel virus.”

They said that \_\_\_\_\_ evidence on this novel virus. (**THERE**)

There is a **separate A4 pdf** file which you can download at: <https://bit.ly/prova-052020>





You are going to read a text about a personal account in times of COVID-19.

I'm a 42-year-old woman who got the New Coronavirus. This is what it's been like.

BY ANONYMOUS AS TOLD TO JESSICA MIGALA

On Friday, March 6, I was sitting in my living room when I got the voicemail message that just said, "Call me back," in an urgent tone. That's when I knew that I had tested positive for the new coronavirus, aka COVID-19. I'm fine now, mostly, a little short of breath with an occasional cough, but it's been... an experience.

Here's how everything happened: on Tuesday, February 25, I was at a lunch with seven people at a restaurant, which is where I suspect I caught the virus. I later learned that one person was infected, although I didn't notice her showing any symptoms yet. I, along with two other people, were sick by that Friday. They told me that their symptoms were very mild and that they only had a brief fever. For me, it was a little worse.

On Friday, February 28, I woke up with a sore throat and headache. I work from home, and by noon I felt so under the weather that I had to stop working. By 2 p.m., I had chills and body aches and a mild fever of 100.2°F that was gone within a half hour after I took Advil. By 3 p.m., I was in bed and stayed there well into the next day. Initially, I thought it was the flu.

I live near Seattle, and the day I got sick, I learned that someone in the area had gotten COVID-19. I also read that they had no connection to anyone in an affected country overseas, and so their case was suspected to have been caused by transmission from someone else in the community. On Saturday, February 29, I went to a clinic near my home and had my temperature taken again (100.5°F). The nurse I saw gave me Tamiflu, an antiviral for the flu.

At that point, the new coronavirus was on my mind. I got home and called the consulting nurse from the clinic again and asked if I could get tested for COVID-19. I was really worried, but she told me I didn't meet the criteria for testing. At that time, you had to have had contact with someone under investigation for the disease or who had traveled to China recently. She told me that if I wanted to be specifically tested for the flu, I could go to urgent care. She didn't recommend going there, though—they were really crowded with other people with the flu, and I'd risk either infecting others or being exposed to viruses that others had. So, I stayed home. The nurse also suggested that I enroll online in the Seattle Flu Study. It's a research project, and if you qualify, they send you a kit, ask you to swab your nose, and mail it back to them. (There have since been reports that they'd begun testing samples for COVID-19 against federal



guidelines.) I'm not sure if the nurse knew I'd get tested for new coronavirus by enrolling in the study, but I'm grateful that she pointed me in that direction.

Within two hours, the FedEx guy was at my door with a swab kit. It was a Saturday, so I didn't mail the sample.

On Friday, March 6, I received that fateful voicemail from the public health department. The way the woman said, "Call me back," I just knew something was up. When we connected over the phone, she told me that I had tested positive for COVID-19.

The woman who delivered the news to me was amazing. She was calm, asked me about who I'd been in contact with, and talked to me about quarantining. I was instructed to quarantine until 72 hours after my fever was gone, or seven days after my first symptoms - whichever came later. By that time, I had been self-quarantining already for a week. I'm a copy editor, so I always work from home and could continue to when I felt well enough to do so.

I have a husband and two children who are 7 and 10, and luckily, they haven't caught it. Novel coronavirus was a big unknown when I got my test results (and still is on many counts), so I really isolated myself from everyone by staying in my bedroom for the first 72 hours I was sick. In retrospect, I think this made a difference in lowering their risk of catching it.

Still, the health department suggested my family go under self-quarantine for 14 days so that we could monitor them and see if they developed any symptoms themselves. This means they don't leave the house. My quarantine is over, but I still haven't gone out, partly because I feel the science on how long the novel coronavirus may be contagious is up in the air on this. My husband tested negative a couple of days ago, and my kids won't be tested unless they have symptoms.

I'm still not kissing or hugging them, and that's hard. We have Clorox wiping-down parties as a family. My 7-year-old daughter loves to do this, as she's been wiping down all the doorknobs and handles and the bathroom sink as part of her weekly chores since she was age six. I'd like to think maybe this contributed in some small way to containing the virus in our household.

Truthfully, for me the illness hasn't been that bad. A couple of years ago, I got the flu and found that to be worse. Being sick with COVID-19 felt different because I experienced shortness of breath, which is what tipped me off to the fact that I might have it. It was like I could still breathe but I couldn't get a full breath, which felt a little

This article has been medically reviewed by Keri Peterson, MD, Internal Medicine, Mount Sinai Hospital.  
From: Women's Health US  
<https://www.womenshealthmag.com/health/a31426150/coronavirus-patient-essay>

scary. I'm typically a healthy person who always recovers easily from illness. It's been almost two weeks now, and I'm just getting over it, which is similar to the experience I've had with any cold or flu.

90 What's been hard for me is personally notifying everyone I can think of who I might've had contact with.

I've been on the phone for hours. It was difficult to know that I was disrupting and upending people's lives. But they've been so gracious and have thanked me for telling them. That experience was more stressful than I realized it would be - and was honestly tougher than the illness itself.

95

Although my community has been amazing and incredibly supportive - there have been so many people who have asked if we needed any - realize there is still a lot of fear and stigma associated with COVID-19, which is why I've decided to remain anonymous in this piece.

100

For me, having the novel coronavirus has been manageable, but I realize that hasn't been everyone's experience.

I am most concerned for the people whose health is already compromised in some way, and it's for them that we all need to take the measures we can to contain this virus as quickly as possible. I hope you'll also consider not attending any events, especially if you've had any fever or symptoms. We all need to do what we can to keep others safe.

105

**2. Match the ideas in column A with the corresponding paragraph in column B.**

Two of the paragraphs do not apply.  
Write only the letters and the paragraph numbers.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
(a) COVID-19 and the flu can easily be confused	Paragraph 3
(b) Making a decision	Paragraph 5
(c) Practical measures	Paragraph 7
	Paragraph 8
	Paragraph 11

**3. Choose the correct option (A, B, C or D) to complete the sentences according to the text.**

Write only the numbers and the letters.

**3.1. In this text, the author's main purpose is to**

- (A) focus on the consequences of COVID-19.
- (B) show people how to deal when caught by COVID-19.
- (C) explain how the coronavirus works.
- (D) highlight the benefits of the National Health Service.

**3.2. Paragraph 5 implies that**

- (A) getting tested for the COVID-19 is useless.
- (B) COVID-19 has been tested on everyone.
- (C) most people segregate the ones who have caught the virus.
- (D) COVID-19 was not tested at an early stage in the community.

**3.3. In paragraph 8, we learn that the narrator**

- (A) has never stopped working.
- (B) is eager to keep on working from home.
- (C) feels pressured to continue working.
- (D) will go on with her work when feeling better.

**3.4. According to the last paragraph, the narrator**

- (A) is worried about her health.
- (B) is concerned with her family.
- (C) fears for people who are not healthy.
- (D) is afraid people may not follow the rules to stop spreading the virus.

**4. Match each word in column A with the expression they refer to in column B.**

Two of the options do not apply.  
Write only the letters and the numbers.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
(a) They (l. 10)	(1) the narrator and seven people who had lunch with her
(b) they (l. 39)	(2) urgent care volunteers
(c) they (l. 62)	(3) two other people who had lunch with the narrator
	(4) the narrator's closest relatives
	(5) urgent care services



5. Match each word in column A with the word in column B that can replace it in the text.

Two of the options do not apply.  
Write only the letters and the numbers.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
(a) got (l. 1)	(1) received
(b) got (l. 19)	(2) caught
(c) got (l. 26)	(3) became
	(4) arrived
	(5) left

6. Read the following paragraph about the value of reliable information on coronavirus.

Three sentences have been removed from it.  
From the sentences 1) to 5), choose the one which fits each gap a) to c).  
Two of the sentences do not apply. Write only the letters and the numbers.

Everyone is talking about coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and everywhere you look there's information on the virus and how to protect yourself from it.

a) \_\_\_\_\_. Sadly, there's a lot of information out there that is incorrect. Misinformation during a health crisis leaves people unprotected and vulnerable to the disease and spreads fear and stigmatization.

Be sure to get your facts from reliable sources, like UNICEF and the World Health Organization. UNICEF is working with global health experts around the clock to provide accurate information. b) \_\_\_\_\_. We'll continue to provide the latest updates, explainers for parents and teachers, and resources for media as new information becomes available, so check back to stay informed of the best ways to protect yourself and your family.

c) \_\_\_\_\_. Share this information with your family, friends and colleagues to help ensure people have the facts about COVID-19 and can protect their health.

[https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/covid-19\[IS1\]](https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/covid-19[IS1])

## Part B – Written Interaction and Production

1. You've just received this message from a close friend.

Hi!

Our class is organising a voluntary group to help the elderly with their shopping list or any other needed errands. Want to join?

1. Write an e-mail to your friend asking for more information about the activity. Ask about:

- geographical area of intervention
- the elderly health situation
- how the whole activity is planned
- schedule.

Write your text in 60-80 words. Do not sign your e-mail.

2. The school library is organising an exhibition on the topic:  
A voluntary experience that changed my life for good to be displayed on the Citizenship Week.

Write an opinion text between 150 and 200 words. Remember to:

- explain what the experience was about
- provide clear evidence of the impact it had on your inner self.



Isabel Silva

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Judite Fiúza

**Judite Fiúza**

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She currently serves on the APPI executive board.



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# ON THE BOOKSHELF

## INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

by

JOHN CORBETT

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CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOKS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS

[www.cambridge.org/elt/intercultural](http://www.cambridge.org/elt/intercultural)

John Corbett is a Professor of English at the University of Macau and Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow. He has written and published various books on language education and on corpus-based linguistics.

Intercultural Language Activities first published ten years ago, 2010, may at first seem outdated as new pedagogical models are changing and put to practice at a high rate. However, this book could have been written today as it enhances 'observation, description and evaluation of different cultures, the learner's own, and those of speakers of other languages', i.e., the relevance of intercultural language learning and teaching, which are fully integrated in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL).

This book is divided into eighteen parts: Thanks and Acknowledgments, Introduction, fourteen chapters, Further reading and resources, Index and a CD-ROM.

In the Introduction Interculturality constitutes the key, either related to communicative competence, knowing us and the others, knowing how to relate and interpret meaning, developing critical awareness, knowing how to discover cultural information, knowing how to relativise oneself and value the attitudes and beliefs of others or the Internet and intercultural language education.

In the following fourteen chapters, a wide range of themes and ways of dealing with them together with students and among them constitute prime examples as how to develop and achieve intercultural education.

**Chapter 1 – *Getting up an online community*** – it is exemplified how to start, develop, devise rules for an online discussion, explore culture through a virtual mascot, an intercultural film club and a journal of intercultural discussions, with the required procedures.



**Chapter 2 – Mediations** – highlights the crucial role played by a mediator in what concerns intercultural speakers of different languages ‘between people from different social and cultural backgrounds’. Many given examples can be used to identify, discuss and suggest solutions to communication issues, such as gender and sympathy, personal critical incidents, conflict resolution, mediation and reflection, according to different levels of formality.

In **chapters 3 and 4 – Domestic life and Public spaces** – learners are encouraged ‘to think ethnographically’, to live, compare, ‘to develop their skills of systematic observation and description’ and reflect on them. A wide range of practical and actual tasks as well as projects are suggested for students to do aiming at achieving a multicultural awareness reinforced by an online intercultural exchange.

**Chapter 5 – Face to face** – is about communication and its variables concerning not only speaking but also body language, which can change due to diverse cultures. Some lesson plans are designed so as students may share stories in conversation with supporting talk, explore non-verbal communication, such as eye contact, empathy as well as gestures and informal language according to the situation and the interlocutors.

**Chapter 6 – Interviewing** – students become aware of how to develop interview questions and provide answers from different cultural groups to alien creatures, having in mind learners’ interests as well as preparing them for the real world. All this exploring assumptions that may lead to misunderstandings and then overcoming them.

**Chapter 7 – Interpretations** – make students infer diverse realities and consequent explanations of stimuli presented such as postcards, advertisements, watching films and writing reviews, interpreting proverbs across cultures and famous quotations.

**Chapter 8 – Childhood** – constitutes a flashback of the learners’ younger years, enticing them to go back in time and share a walk down memory lane followed by comparisons among several cultures represented in the classroom or researched on the Internet so as to come to a conclusion of similarities and differences.

In the **9th chapter – Icons** – the spotlight goes into ‘national and international icons and (...) what makes them admirable’, followed by ‘founding figures, national bards, international heroes and (...) finally ‘Someone I admire’ inviting students to report ‘their own stories of unsung heroes (...) who they admire’ and why.

**Chapter 10 – Sports** – *National and international sports, local and team sports, cultural associations and their main features*, supported by the language of fandom and a project work ‘Attending a sports event’ will culminate into a ‘Debate on blood sports’, which engage learners in expressing their views, pointing out pros and cons, making use of argumentation based on facts and critical thinking.

**Chapter 11 – Food** – a wide variety of activities is suggested having into account *National dishes and cultural associations in various countries, Regional and ethnic cuisine, International food, Food idioms*, using the British National Corpus, *Shopping lists and Supermarket psychology* as a way of knowing customs and traditions and accepting diversity.

**Chapters 12 and 13 – Politics and Religion** – despite being very controversial subjects, they may constitute a way of sharing ideas and beliefs in a civil manner as for students to be able to accept a myriad of different life approaches. While in chapter 12 the activities suggested will prepare learners to a political debate, those in the 13th ‘focus on non-judgemental, comparative observation and description of religious practices and beliefs’ and students ‘are encouraged to promote a non evaluative, empathic response to different types of religious belief and ritual.’

**Chapter 14 – Presenting an image** – different cultures present different looks and messages across peoples. *Choosing a wardrobe* ‘introduces basic clothing vocabulary’, *A question of style* decodes clothes and what resides behind them, *Smelling sweet* and *Making up* makes learners apprised of what ‘can be used in different cultures to create an impression’, and *Living dolls* ‘takes a more critical look at the issue of body image across cultures, and a particular version of beauty on the global population.’

Further reading and resources, Index and a CD-ROM, which ‘provides print-friendly photocopiable worksheets and reading texts’ that can be used immediately, are followed.

All in all, *Intercultural Language and Activities* shows teachers sundry activities to lead their students to be aware of the differences and similarities around the world, and to come to the conclusion that those can be overcome when one becomes open-minded and is willing to use critical thinking and understanding in order to become better citizens and therefore contribute to a better global society.





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