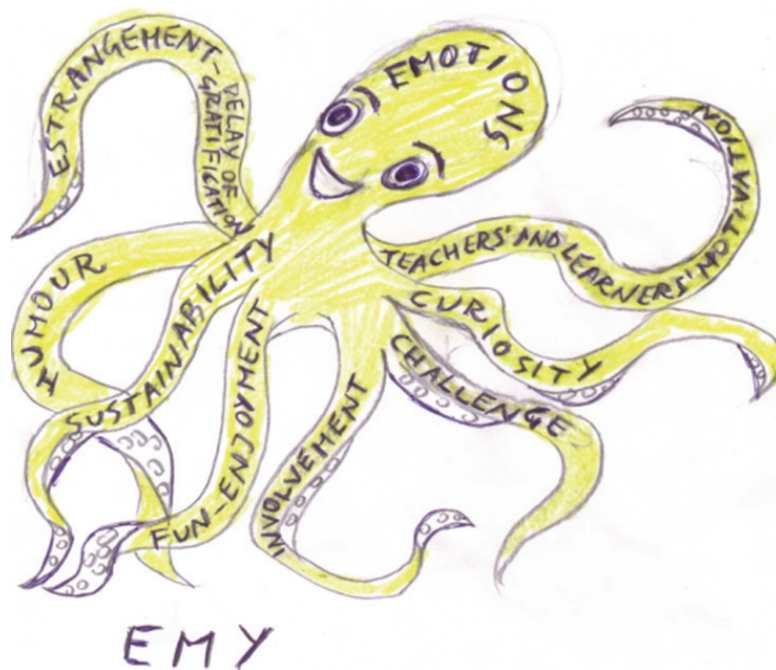


Giuseppe Caruso

# An Emotional Framework in Foreign Language Pedagogy

## Facing the Postmethod Challenge



JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN HUMANITIES 257

Giuseppe Caruso

An Emotional Framework in  
Foreign Language Pedagogy

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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

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Karl Popper (1944:232): "The way of science is paved with discarded theories which were once declared self-evident".

## **ABSTRACT**

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Research has recently highlighted the usefulness of the focus on emotions in pedagogy (Hargreaves 1998). Concerning foreign languages, it has shown how learners' emotional involvement could lead to more effective acquisition (Dewaele, 2011). In this study, carried out in the University of Jyväskylä using qualitative procedures, I have explored the impact of an emotional framework on foreign language learners from a context-sensitive Postmethod perspective. I have discussed how an appeal to the emotions, rousing positive feelings in the learners, provides them with the motivation needed to cope with the effort and pressure involved in the learning process. In particular I have identified humour, songs and puzzles as areas which can be profitably exploited to emotionally involve learners. Although activities related to these three areas have long been part of foreign language pedagogy, they have generally been confined to a marginal role, e. g. as time-fillers, and have generally been employed with young learners. In my emotional framework, on the other hand, they play a central role, being the backbone of the lesson, and are used with adult learners as well. I have also shown how estrangement techniques can be exploited in order to increase the impact of classroom activities. I have put special emphasis on teachers' motivation, focusing on the personal and professional satisfaction given by the teachers' production of their own pedagogical materials. The analysis of the data, which comes mainly from students' feedback, shows remarkable interest and involvement. However, my research does not assume that this particular emotional framework could be applied in any context. My aim is not to provide a rigid pedagogical model, but to show how useful and profitable a focus on the emotions might be in foreign language pedagogy, and to encourage teachers to create and apply an emotional framework taking into consideration its local relevance and following their own personality and inclination.

Key words: emotions, motivation, Postmethod, foreign language pedagogy

**Author's address** Giuseppe Caruso  
Department of Languages  
University of Jyväskylä  
gius.vir@libero.it

**Supervisor** Professor Hannele Dufva  
Department of Languages  
University of Jyväskylä

**Reviewers** Professor Tim Murphey, PhD  
English Department  
Kanda University of International Studies  
Japan

Docent, Lecturer Esa Penttinen, KT, FT  
Department of Teacher Education  
University of Helsinki

**Opponent** Tim Murphey



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I am indebted to the hundreds of students I taught as a teacher of English and the dozens I taught as a lecturer in Italian and Norwegian, since my pedagogical line is the result of my interaction with them. I owe much both to the students who showed appreciation for my commitment and enthusiasm and also to those who were critical, enabling me to adjust my professional sight in order to meet the challenges of new contexts.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

A foreign language class is a space teachers have available to them in which to promote the acquisition of a foreign language. Since such a space is often limited by the general context of the subject schedule, it is essential that teachers should seek to make maximum use of the time they have and ensure the greatest possible impact of teaching on learners. In trying to do this, it might be extremely useful to exploit the relationship between the emotions and learning. If the flow of language input meets a smooth surface, it simply passes by without leaving any trace, but if it meets a jagged and rough surface with lots of wrinkles, pores, small niches, indentations and little ledges, then part of it will be retained and form layers and incrustations which will end up working like a dam. It will be argued in this thesis that emotions might provide such a rough surface.

Research has recently highlighted the usefulness of focusing on the emotions in foreign language pedagogy. It has been shown how more attention to affective aspects (Arnold 1999) and learners' emotional involvement (Dewaele 2011) could lead to more effective pedagogical strategies.

The approach of this study, which has explored the impact of an emotional framework on learners, is qualitative, since the data I collected and analysed comes mostly from feedback and information provided by my students. As a lecturer in and teacher of foreign languages, I witnessed how appealing to the emotions and rousing positive feelings in learners provides them with the motivation they need to cope with the effort and pressure involved in studying a language. On this basis I identified *humour*, *songs* and *puzzles* as three areas in which learners' emotions can be profitably exploited with a pedagogical purpose.

Although activities related to these three areas have long been part of foreign language pedagogy, they have generally been confined to a marginal role, e. g. as time-fillers. In my emotional framework, instead, they are the backbone of the lesson and their impact is increased through the use of estrangement procedures, which will be discussed in Chapter 9.

The exploitation of emotions in foreign language pedagogy requires imagination and flexibility, and this explains why my emotional framework is to be viewed within a Postmethod perspective (Kumaravadivelu 2006), which emphasizes a rejection of inflexibility and political correctness. The study is also an account of the research I did on my own practices and it is therefore related to Action Research (Waters-Adams 2006) and Exploratory Practice (Allwright 2005).

## 1.1 My theoretical background

In 1991, Dick Allwright gave a lecture entitled "The Death of Method", where he pointed out "the relative unhelpfulness of the existence of methods" (Allwright & Baily 1991:1). This lecture paved the way for the rise of a variety of Postmethod pedagogies. Kumaravadivelu was the first who used the expression Postmethod in an article, "The Postmethod Condition: (E)merging Strategies for Second/Foreign Language Teaching" (1994). Postmethod pedagogies, which have arisen from an awareness of the ineffectiveness of methods in foreign language teaching, emphasize local and particular conditions, are context sensitive, and are based on the experiences of teachers and their daily practice (Kumaravadivelu 2006:184).

I see a relationship between Postmethod pedagogies and the theory of Action Research, a term which was first used by the psychologist Kurt Lewin in the essay "Action research and minority problems" (Lewin 1946), and later applied to pedagogy. Action Research in education declined in the 1960s, reappearing in the 1970s in connection with the idea of the "teacher as researcher" advocated by Stenhouse (1975:143).

A more recent contribution to the theory of Action Research has been given by Altrichter et al. (1993), according to whom the field of education is characterized by a conflict between technical and reflective rationality (Altrichter et al. 1993:199-200). Technical rationality seeks general solutions to practical problems. These solutions can be developed in research centres, and can be translated into teachers' actions by means of publications, training, administrative orders, etc. Reflective rationality seeks specific solutions to practical problems. Such solutions can be developed only in the context in which the problem arises and in which the practitioner is a crucial and determining element. These solutions cannot be directly applied to other contexts, but can be made accessible to other practitioners as hypotheses to be tested. Reflective rationality provides the basis for Action Research (Altrichter et al. 1993:204), which consists in analyzing existing practice and identifying elements for change (Altrichter et al. 1993:199). In the process, as research proceeds, wider links are likely to be found. This approach uses action as a means of research, implementing, monitoring and analysing planned change. In it teachers turn out to be "professional knowledge makers, rather than simply professional knowledge users" (Waters-Adams 2006: introduction 3).

In Action Research, theory and practice are considered parts of a single whole. As Carr and Kemmis (1986:113) write, “both proposition and practice are in a process of mutual construction of each other”. The relationship between theory and practice is also explored in depth by Winter (1987, 1989), who suggests that, since any social practice consists of a complex of contradictory elements, any attempt to understand it must be dialectical (Winter 1987:12).

As Altrichter et al. (1993: 4, 35) argue, the purpose of Action Research is to provide understanding and lead to improvement in action. It is mostly research carried out by practitioners on their own practice and operating at a personal level, like the present study, which focuses on my own experience as a teacher. Educational research carried out through Action Research does not aim to produce universal truths. Rather, it is concerned with the realization of what can be done here and now. If it produces a helpful understanding, then it can be offered to others to try, but generalizations are not directly applicable beyond the contingencies of practice (Waters-Adams 2006: introduction 4). However, although this view provides the common ground for the Action Research theory, its forms, purposes, methods and results differ widely (Hollingsworth et al. 1997:312) and, as Carr (1989:85) suggests, “Action Research means different things to different people”.

The main criterion for choosing a particular data gathering method in Action Research is whether such a method will give useful information about what is being studied. Methods used in Action Research are both qualitative and quantitative, and consequently the research might involve the choice of a range of data-gathering techniques, each of which might illuminate a different aspect of the same issue. Each method will give access to different aspects of the situation, and although there will still be areas not covered, more is known than by using only one method. The assumption is that gathering data from different methods increases the overall reliability of the research process (Waters-Adams 2006: introduction 7).

Allwright, in outlining his Exploratory Practice, questions the use Action Research makes of standard academic techniques, and advocates the use of familiar classroom activities as classroom investigative tools (2005:354-355), since these ensure sustainability (1997a:369). However, in spite of Allwright’s opposition to Action Research, I suggest that teachers doing research in their own classrooms could make use of both Action Research and Exploratory Practice. This is what I think I have been doing in this study.

## **1.2 The methodological approach of the present study**

The present study shows the development of my own teaching style, rooted in my 17 years’ experience as a high school teacher of English in Italy, and developed when I began to consider the impact of an emotional framework on foreign language students at university level. Such an attempt was made in the University of Jyväskylä, where I was lecturer in Italian for four academic years



and lecturer in Norwegian for two semesters. The courses involved were: Italian ITAA125 (Kielten Laitos - Language Department, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009) and Norwegian (Kielikeskus - Language Centre, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011).

My research is based on a qualitative approach. I collected and analysed the students' feedback, their comments, and information I had about their language study background and about their reasons for choosing that particular language. The study also contains some numerical data concerning the assessment of the learners' proficiency through very simple tests designed by myself. However, this data does not play any central role, since it is not meant to provide any statistical information. Rather, it has the purpose of helping the reader observe some characteristics of my teaching style.

Although the number of students involved in this study is not in the region of hundreds, it seems to me that it is all the same worthy of consideration. I am a teacher by profession, and in this research I have become an explorer in my own classrooms. In this respect I agree with Allwright and Baily, who write that

[teachers] might actually enjoy and profit from looking upon their classroom teaching as an excellent opportunity for conducting their own investigations [...] so that they can become more effective language teachers, better able to help the learners with whom they work (Allwright & Baily 1991: xv).

In order to fully convey the spirit of my research, I would also like to mention the neuroscientist Cozolino who, in discussing work in the classroom, argues that

Teachers are the experts in this domain and scientists should pay attention to their work, figure out why they are successful, and explore what their successes tell us about how brains learn (Cozolino 2013: xxii).

From the time of my teaching in the Italian high school, where I started developing my emotional framework, I do not have much data. The reason is that I did not keep any records, not knowing then that they would turn out to be useful in some future pedagogical research. Still, I have some feedback from my old students, which will be referred to further on in the present study.

I do not assume that the emotional framework which I introduce here can be generalized and applied to any context. My aim is not to provide a rigid pedagogical model, but to show how useful and profitable a focus on emotions might be in foreign language pedagogy. I aim to encourage other teachers to apply an emotional framework which takes into consideration local relevance and suits their own personality and inclination. Consequently, although this thesis is about the way I developed my own emotional framework, it is available for reflection to any teacher interested in the exploitation of emotions in foreign language pedagogy.

## 2 SOME KEY CONCEPTS IN THEORIZING FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

First of all, I would like to present some basic concepts and terms in foreign language pedagogy in order to clarify the way I will be using them in the present study. This might prove useful because of the terminology problems arising from the plethora of conflicting schools and theories that have developed in the last half a century, creating a jungle through which one has to cut one's way.

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006:84, 89), the words "method" and "principles" refer to the assumptions, beliefs and theories about the nature of language pedagogy. Kumaravadivelu also highlights how "approach" and "method" are used interchangeably in the literature on foreign language teaching (2006:85). Other authors, e. g., Hubbard, Jones, Thornton and Wheeler (1983:30-31), consider "approach" and "method" to be two different concepts, the former being the theoretical part, and the latter being a collection of techniques arranged in a specific order. These authors also argue that different approaches may even share the same methods. However, they concede that "approach" is often used informally to mean something closer to "method". Prabhu uses the term "method" to refer "both to a set of activities to be carried out in the classroom and to the theory, belief, or plausible concept that informs those activities" (1990:162). For Kumaravadivelu, what teachers actually do in the classroom is indicated by the words "methodology" or "techniques" or "procedures" (2006:84, 89).

Terminological confusion is so great that the same word might be used with opposite meanings, as the following examples show. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006:79), a syllabus may be either *synthetic* or *analytic*. In a *synthetic syllabus* a language system is split into smaller units of grammatical structures or functional categories, which are presented to the learner one by one. In an *analytic syllabus*, on the other hand, language input is not presented to the learner piece by piece, but in fairly large chunks without any specific linguistic focus, and the learner's attention is drawn to communicative features of the language. However, in dealing with the Analytic Experiential Dimension Framework, Kumaravadivelu (2006:189) writes that

the *analytic strategy* concerns the formal or functional features of the language, focusing on the code or the language medium, while the *experiential strategy* focuses on the message. The word *analytic*, then, seems to imply two opposite meanings in the expressions *analytic syllabus* and *analytic strategy*. Another example of how confusing terminology might be is in the use of the expressions *focus on form* and *focus on forms*, proposed by Long (1991:45-46). While the former rejects explicit grammatical instruction and emphasizes the role of classroom interaction, the latter indicates the traditional teaching of grammatical items in separate lessons (Sheen 2003:255; Kumaravadivelu 2006:64).

In this presentation of some frequently used concepts in foreign language pedagogy, I will now focus on the difference between *acquisition* and *learning*, and discuss the notions of *input*, *output* and *intake*.

## 2.1 Acquisition and learning

The difference between acquisition and learning has turned out to be a central issue in second language pedagogy research. It has been studied in particular by Krashen, who maintains that adults have two independent systems for developing ability in second languages, i.e. subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning, and that "subconscious acquisition appears to be far more important" (Krashen 1981:1). According to Krashen, "foreign language acquisition is very similar to the process children use in acquiring their first language" (1981:1).

The acquisition/learning distinction is not new, though. Lawler and Selinker (1971:35) proposed that for rule internalization one can

postulate two distinct types of cognitive structures: (1) those mechanisms that guide 'automatic' language performance [...] that is, performance [...] where speed and spontaneity are crucial and the learner has no time to consciously apply linguistic mechanisms [...] and (2) those mechanisms that guide puzzle- or problem-solving performance.

However, Krashen's (1981:2) theory is more elaborate. Its starting point is that "in normal conversation, both in speaking and in listening, performers do not generally have time to think about and apply conscious grammatical rules", and even the best language students do not usually master all the rules presented to them. Krashen's conclusion is that "it is therefore very difficult to apply conscious learning to performance successfully" (1981:2). Furthermore, he discusses different types of performers, in particular the "overusers" of monitoring (Krashen 1981: 4), who consciously focus on grammar and feel that they must "know the rule" for everything. In Stevick's terms (1976:78), these performers may suffer from "lathophobic aphasia", an "unwillingness to speak for fear of making a mistake". At the other extreme, Krashen puts "underusers" (1981: 4), those who appear to be entirely dependent on what they can "pick up" of the

second language. Under-users seem to be immune to error correction, and do not perform well on "grammar" tests. Although an under-user may acquire a great deal of the target language, for Krashen the ideal performer is the one

who uses learning as a real supplement to acquisition, monitoring (i.e. focusing on form) when it is appropriate and when it does not get in the way of communication (Krashen 1981:4-5).

According to Krashen (1981:5), the acquisition/learning relationship in adult L2 achievement also has to do with the concepts of aptitude and attitude. While "aptitude may be directly related to conscious learning [...] attitude refers to the acquirers' orientation towards speakers of the target language", and it relates directly to acquisition and only indirectly to conscious learning. Consequently, attitudinal factors may allow the acquirer to be open to input that can be used for acquisition. And, for Krashen (1981:5),

if the direct relationship between acquisition and attitudinal factors does exist [...] we must conclude that attitudinal factors and motivational factors are more important than aptitude. This is because conscious learning makes only a small contribution to communicative ability.

Krashen's views have been criticized by Schmidt (1993:209), who maintains that there can be no L2 learning without attention and noticing. Among Krashen's critics, one can also mention Gregg (1984) and McLaughlin (1987). However, in spite of criticism, Krashen's contribution to foreign language pedagogy is remarkable. It has both shaken certainties and forced researchers to bear in mind the complexity and problematic nature of language learning.

## 2.2 Input and output

The concept of *input* has frequently been used in the study of foreign language pedagogy. It comes from computer language, where it indicates the data fed into the machine. Kumaravadivelu (2006:26) uses the term to mean the language the learner is exposed to, which should be both linguistically and cognitively accessible. Language input that is available but not accessible is just noise (Kumaravadivelu 2006:26). Krashen (1982:33) maintains that we acquire a language only by understanding messages through *comprehensible input*, which he indicates with the formula  $i+1$ , in which  $i$  represents the learner's current level of knowledge, while  $+1$  refers to the next level up. This suggests that input should contain language that the students already know as well as new language. Therefore, the material offered should be at a slightly higher level, but something that students can still understand. Krashen (1981:102) calls the use of this language "rough tuning" and compares it to the way adults talk to children. Mothers and fathers tend to simplify the language they use so that children can more or less understand it. While they do not simplify their language in any precise way, they adjust the lev-

el of their language use to make it more or less suitable to the child's level of understanding. If foreign language students constantly receive input that is "roughly tuned" - that is, slightly above their level - they will acquire new items of language without making a conscious effort. Krashen's theory is in contrast to conscious learning, where students receive finely tuned input - that is, language chosen to be precisely at their level.

*Output* is what the learner produces orally or in writing. It contains both well formed utterances and deviant utterances. Traditionally, *output* has been considered evidence of what has already been learnt, but research indicates that it has a wider function. For example, Swain (1985:248-249) uses the concept of *comprehensible output*, arguing that

we need to incorporate the notion of being pushed towards the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently and appropriately.

Swain (1985:249) argues that the attempt to produce language moves the learner from processing the language at the level of word meaning to processing it at the level of grammatical structures. Swain (1995:125-126) also highlights three functions of output in the learning process: the *noticing function*, the *hypothesis-testing function* and the *metalinguistic function*. The *noticing function* indicates the possibility that, while using the target language, learners may find a linguistic problem and this may lead them to an appropriate action. The *hypothesis-testing function* indicates that when learners use the target language they may experiment with what works and what does not. When they are involved in interactions and receive negative feedback, they test different hypotheses. The *metalinguistic function* indicates the learner's conscious thinking about language, in order to produce utterances that are linguistically correct and communicatively appropriate.

### 2.3 Intake

Intake concerns the way language acquisition happens, but there are conflicting views as to what it means. For example, Krashen considers it a "product", and maintains that "intake is simply where language acquisition comes from, the subset of linguistic input that helps the acquirer acquire language" (Krashen 1981:101). Krashen also argues that

the major function of the second language classroom is to provide intake for acquisition. This being a very difficult task, one could also say that the major challenge facing the field of applied linguistics is to create materials and contexts that provide intake (Krashen 1981:101).

Kumaravadivelu criticizes this view, though, writing that

the product view of intake appears severely flawed. It implies that there is no need to differentiate input from intake [...] and the distinction between input and intake, crucial to the nature of L2 development, becomes insignificant, if not irrelevant (Kumaravadivelu 2006:28).

A number of researchers see intake as a “process”. Among them is Hatch, who defines it as a subset of the input which “the learner actually successfully processed” (Hatch 1983:81). This position is shared by Gass (1997:23), who considers intake “as apperceived input that has been processed”. Ellis adds to this that

intake is that portion of input that learners notice and therefore take into temporary memory. Intake may subsequently be accommodated in the learner’s interlanguage system, becoming part of long-term memory (Ellis 1994:708).

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006:28), intake is “an entity of learner language that has been fully or partially processed by learners and fully or partially assimilated”. In any case, as Guthrie (1983:36) puts it, “It seems clear that linguistic intake is a *sine qua non* of language acquisition”.

In dealing with intake, research has distinguished *intake processes* and *intake factors*. The former have been studied by several researchers, among them Guthrie (1983:36), who writes:

At the present time we are not able to say precisely what function linguistic intake plays in the development of second-language fluency. It may be that the second-language samples heard by the acquirer serve in some sense as models against which hypotheses about the form of the language can be tested.

A thorough description of intake processes has been provided by Kumaravadivelu, according to whom they “consist of mental operations that are specific to language learning as well as those that are required for general problem solving activities” and are the “most vital and the least understood link in the input-intake-output chain” (Kumaravadivelu 2006:45). Kumaravadivelu argues that intake processes may be grouped into three broad and overlapping categories: inferencing, structuring and restructuring. He writes that these processes appear to govern what goes on in the learner’s mind when he or she attempts to internalize the target language system. Learners infer the linguistic system of the target language from the available and accessible input data, they structure appropriate mental representations of the target language system, and finally, they restructure the developing system in the light of further exposure and experience.

The process of inferencing involves making a series of guesses to derive tentative hypotheses about various aspects of the target language system (Kumaravadivelu 2006:45). Structuring indicates the process that governs the establishment of mental representations of the target language (Kumaravadivelu 2006:46). As learners begin to understand how the L2 system works, they begin to see the relationships between various linguistic categories. The process of structuring helps learners construct, structure and organize the system of the target language (Kumaravadivelu 2006:46).

Compared to inferencing, structuring gives learners a deeper understanding of the properties of the target language system and greater control over their



use for communicative purposes. It can also regulate the flow of information between short-term and long-term memory (Kumaravadivelu 2006:46). Chaudron (1983: 438-439) sheds more light on the difference between inferencing and structuring. He argues that the former indicates "the perception and comprehension of forms" and the latter "the incorporation of the forms in the learner's grammar".

Restructuring indicates a new internal organization needed for interpreting new information. Kumaravadivelu (2006:47) writes that "it results in learners abandoning their initial hunch and opting for a whole new hypothesis", thus marking "a strategy shift that coordinates, integrates and reorganizes" components. Restructuring appears as "a sudden, abstract, insight-forming phenomenon" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:47).

Intake factors, according to Kumaravadivelu (2006:29), "bear on the psycholinguistic processes of language learning". However, there are different opinions among researchers as to what these intake factors are. Krashen (1981:10) points out that intake depends on two factors: comprehensible input and a low affective filter. Kumaravadivelu has recently produced a more elaborate list of intake factors that sees the word "intake" as an acronym (Kumaravadivelu 2006:30). However, it seems to me that in his effort to create the acronym he has forced together heterogeneous elements, as can be seen from the table below:

TABLE 1 Kumaravadivelu's acronym of intake factors (2006:30)

<p>Individual factors: age and anxiety;          Negotiation factors: interaction and interpretation;          Tactical factors: learning strategies and communication strategies;          Affective factors: attitudes and motivation;          Knowledge factors: language knowledge and metalanguage knowledge;          Environmental factors: social context and educational context.</p>
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The main intake factors on which research has most frequently focused are age, interaction, communication strategies, motivation and metalinguistic knowledge, and I will discuss each of these more closely in what follows.

### 2.3.1 Age

Age has often been considered a major factor in L2 acquisition, and over the years, various hypotheses have been proposed to account for the correlation of the age of acquisition and the degree of mastery of the second language. According to Graddol (2006:89), one rationale for teaching languages to young children is the idea that they find it easier to learn languages than older students.

Several researchers have proposed the view of a "Critical Period", when L2 is acquired more proficiently. The idea of a "Critical Period" was first introduced by Penfield and Roberts (1959: 236, 240), who suggested that children's

brains are more plastic than adults', and before the age of 9 they can learn 2-3 languages as easily as one. Along similar lines, Lenneberg (1967:158) argued, on the basis of studies in neurophysiology, that biological brain changes limit the "Critical Period" from roughly two years of age to puberty, after which language acquisition becomes difficult.

The concept of a "Critical Period" during which learners acquire a second language with relative ease has been supported by several researchers. For example, Krashen (1981:77) argues that "Lenneberg's claim [...] is not completely ruled out", although "the ability to acquire language naturally does not disappear at puberty". Lamendella (1979:7) introduces the expression "sensitive period", and argues that second language acquisition might be more efficient during early childhood. Pinker (1994:293) describes the age factor in language acquisition and its underlying causes as follows:

Acquisition of a normal language is guaranteed for children up to the age of six, is steadily compromised from then until shortly after puberty, and is rare thereafter.

Qin Zhao and Morgan (2004:7) argue that "the correlation between age and L2 attainment is generally negative"; as a consequence, "the maximum age for native-like achievement in L2 is 15 years approximately", and they conclude that "the commonly held view 'the earlier, the better', has credibility". However, they point out that "the age-related effect also reflects the differences in affective, socio-cultural and input variables" (2004:7). Consequently, "L2 acquisition cannot be considered simply on the basis of the 'Critical Period' without considering other conditions" (2004:7), e.g., motivation. Some adults may have obvious goals which may make them highly motivated. Even though

children are generally observed to be intrinsically better learners; adults have developed cognitive skills and self-discipline which enable them to utilize a greater efficiency in the acquisition of a larger volume of comprehensible input within the same exposure time period (Qin Zhao & Morgan 2004:7).

However, quite a few researchers question the idea of a "Critical Period" in L2 acquisition. For example, McLaughlin (1992 Myth 2) argues that it is a myth that the younger the learner, the more skilled he/she becomes in a language. But he concedes that "pronunciation is one aspect of language learning where *the younger is better* hypothesis may have validity" (1992 Myth 2 para.4). What McLaughlin also suggests is that because children have to learn shorter and simpler structures in their early acquisition days, there is an "illusion" that they learn a second language more easily and quickly than adults (1992 Myth 1 para. 5). Flege (1987: 164) argues that "existing evidence does not provide firm and conclusive support for the existence of a critical period for human speech learning". Klein (1986:10) maintains that "ideal second language acquisition is biologically feasible even after the age of puberty".

There are several researchers who accept the "Critical Period" view but believe that it does not result in the impossibility of relatively high attainment by adults. Birdsong (2005:123) argues that a variety of "cognitive, task-related,



attitudinal, experiential, demographic, aptitude and training variables may affect the slope of the age function". Ausubel (1964:421) maintains that children may be able to better acquire an acceptable accent in a new language, but he goes on to point out that this is outweighed by two overwhelming advantages that adults have. Firstly, adults have a more extensive L1 vocabulary and therefore do not have to acquire thousands of new concepts in the L2, as children do, but only the verbal symbols representing those concepts (Ausubel 1964:421). Secondly, according to Ausubel (1964:421), adults' ability to make conscious grammatical generalizations and apply them is an asset rather than a disadvantage. Hammerly (1991:8) argues that in many ways adults are superior to children as learners, since they have greater cognitive maturity, better learning strategies and study habits, better focus and goal orientation, a longer attention span, the ability to make a greater variety of associations, and better short-term memory.

According to Robertson (2002:10), the expression "window of opportunity" is preferable to "Critical Period". He sees the age between 2 and 14 as an excellent window of opportunity to learn pronunciation. However, merely because one has missed that window does not mean that one cannot learn pronunciation successfully. Robertson further maintains that, because of greater memory storage capacity and greater capability of their conceptual system, older learners may learn some aspects of L2 faster and more efficiently than younger ones.

Finally, I would like to consider the issue in the light of my own experience as a lecturer faced with young adults learning Italian. Most of my students at the University of Jyväskylä were in their early twenties, well beyond the "Critical Period", and my impression is that their age was not such as to prevent them from learning Italian, a language most of them had never been exposed to before attending university. What turned out to be decisive was their motivation and, I would add, maybe, the effectiveness of the pedagogical framework.

### 2.3.2 Interaction

Although we do not know enough about what enables classroom language learners to develop their mastery of a second or foreign language, we tend to believe that success in L2 teaching "has something, if not absolutely everything, to do with the nature of the interaction that takes place during lessons", as Allwright (2000a:1) puts it. According to Krashen, "meaningful interaction in the target language" (Krashen 1981:1), is needed for the acquisition of the target language. Littlewood (1981: 6-7) argues that "the learner can be helped to use the language as an instrument of social interaction" through carefully designed "pre-communicative" and "communicative" classroom activities (Littlewood 1981: 19, 21, 29). Allwright (2000a) discusses a "weak" and a "strong" hypothesis of interaction. The "weak" form suggests that

interaction is indeed the principal mechanism through which classroom learning is managed. This view maintains that interaction is best seen as the key process whereby learning is managed (Allwright 2000a:3).

The other view which Allwright proposes is the “strong” form of the interaction hypothesis. It starts from the suggestion that interaction is the process through which classroom language learning is managed, but makes the further claim that

in the language classroom the process of negotiation that is involved in interaction is itself to be identified with the process of language learning. In a sense then, in this view, interaction is language learning (Allwright 2000a:6).

In Allwright’s view of interaction, the starting point is the notion of “communication”, which involves the fundamental processes of interpretation, expression and negotiation (2000a: 6). In this respect, “communication” does not necessarily mean person-to-person interaction, but it might also mean reading a text silently, since this would be an example of communication involving “interaction with the text” (2000a: 6), without expression or negotiation. In this view, two-way person-to-person communication necessarily involves all three potential components of communication, and the term “negotiation” would involve the negotiation of meaning (2000a: 6).

Allwright’s (2000a:7) view is that interaction in the target language does not simply offer language practice, and is not simply the main procedure in L2 teaching; it is the language development process itself. But he does not mean that all forms of classroom interaction are equally productive for purposes of language development. In this respect he writes:

For such purposes interaction must be seriously meaningful, about matters of serious concern to the participants, and therefore conducive to a serious attempt to communicate, not merely to simulate communication. This largely rules out the sorts of controlled or pseudo-communicative interactive activities (Allwright 2000a:7).

In looking for “matters of serious concern” as the object of interaction, Allwright suggests focusing, among other issues, on the curriculum and the learning process in discussions in which the intention is to reach agreement.

The classroom is now our real world, a real world of learning in which, by explicitly negotiating the curriculum and the learning process we will simultaneously develop our linguistic resources (Allwright 2000a:7).

However, Allwright concedes that curriculum negotiation need not be conducted exclusively in the target language (Allwright 2000a:8).

In my own research, while focusing on puzzle-solving procedures, I worked on a pair work interaction that had the purpose of finding the information needed to make sense of an incomplete text. Although this was less realistic than negotiation with the purpose of reaching agreement on the curriculum, as suggested by Allright, it had pedagogical value since it turned out to be challenging, and consequently absorbing, for the students.

### 2.3.3 Communication strategies

As Bialystok (1990:1) writes,

the familiar ease and fluency with which we sail from one idea to the next in our first language is constantly shattered by some gap in our knowledge of a second language.

In the attempt to overcome that gap, learners might use various communication strategies (Bialystok 1990:1). Let us assume that they have to speak, for instance, about a pencil, but they do not know how to say “pencil”. In this situation they might avoid mentioning the object at all, or they might provide a description of it (e.g. a little wooden cylinder), or they might indicate its function (“we use it to write”). Tarone, who produced a classification of communication strategies, defined them as “mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared” (Tarone 1980:420). Another researcher who has studied communication strategies, producing a more complex classification than Tarone, is Dörnyei (1995:58). Cook (1993:137), in turn, recommends less emphasis on taxonomic descriptions and classifications and more emphasis on looking at what communication strategies learners creatively choose in the actual context.

In these studies about communication strategies, two basic perspectives can be found. One views learners’ ability to use such strategies as something innate, which cannot be taught (Bialystok 1990). The other rejects innateness and argues that L2 learners can be taught the core vocabulary in L2 needed for communication strategies (Tarone 1978, 1986).

As far as my own pedagogical approach is concerned, I recognize the importance of communication strategies and have encouraged students to communicate by involving them in activities based on pair or group interaction designed to bridge information gaps.

### 2.3.4 Motivation

Motivation is one of the main determinants of second/foreign language (L2) learning achievement (Dörnyei 1994:273). Research in this field was pioneered by two Canadian psychologists, Gardner and Lambert (1972), who were mostly concerned with motivational components related to the social context. Gardner’s motivational construct highlighted the interplay of two factors: the integrative and the instrumental (Gardner & MacIntyre 1993:1). The former are associated with a positive disposition towards the L2 group, while the latter have to do with potential gains deriving from L2 proficiency.

Researchers have expanded Gardner’s theory by adding new components or producing new classifications. One of the best known distinctions is the one between extrinsic and intrinsic motivations (Ryan & Deci 2000:55). The former refer to “doing something because it leads to a separable outcome”, the latter to “doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable” (Ryan & Deci 2000:55).

A significant contribution to studies on motivation has been made by Dörnyei (1994), according to whom the process of L2 learning involves various personality traits and social factors. For this reason an adequate L2 motivation construct is bound to be eclectic, bringing together factors from different fields (Dörnyei 1994:274). Taking into account previous studies on the subject, Dörnyei has produced a motivation framework consisting of Language Level, Learner Level and Learning Situation Level (Dörnyei 1994:279).

Dörnyei's three levels coincide with the three basic components of the L2 learning process: the L2 itself, the L2 learner and the L2 learning environment. These levels reflect three different aspects of language: the social dimension, the personal dimension and the educational subject matter dimension (Dörnyei 1994:279). The Language Level focuses on motives related to various aspects of the L2, such as the culture which it conveys and its potential usefulness (Dörnyei 1994:274). The Learner Level includes two motivational components: the need for achievement, and self-confidence, which are considered by Dörnyei to be major motivational subsystems in foreign language learning situations (Dörnyei 1994:274). The Learning Situation Level concerns intrinsic and extrinsic motivational conditions related to the course, the teacher and the group (Dörnyei 1994:280).

Since my study deals with the pedagogy of foreign languages in general, including less commonly spoken languages, it would be useful to look at Balboni's (1994) description of motivation as he found it when working as a teacher of Italian. According to him (Balboni 1994:75), there are three main sources of motivation: pleasure, need and duty. Concerning duty as a source of motivation, he points out that it creates an affective filter and prevents real acquisition. Concerning need, Balboni underlines that in foreign language teaching it provides the basis for communication: "Queste espressioni ti serviranno per poter usare un treno in Italia" [These expressions will enable you to take a train in Italy] (Balboni 1994:77). However, in his opinion, need ignores cultural implications, since after buying a train ticket one will have to take into account the artistic and historical value of what one sees in Italy. Consequently, need as a source of motivation does not work with all learners. Balboni argues that the strongest motivation comes from pleasure and he goes on to list its various forms: pleasure in learning for the sake of learning, pleasure in overcoming challenges, pleasure in variety, pleasure in systematizing and understanding, and pleasure in playing games (Balboni 1994:75-76).

### 2.3.5 Metalinguistic knowledge

Another important intake factor is Metalinguistic Awareness. It has been studied by Gass and Selinker (2009), who write that

it is an important aspect of language learning, it refers to one's ability to consider language not just as a means of expressing ideas or communicating with others, but also as an object of inquiry (2009:302).

One of the issues involved in Metalinguistic Awareness is the ability to compare two language systems in order to discover both common elements and differences. Research has shown the value of such an ability in L2 teaching. Gass and Selinker (2009:302) argue that “the ability to think about language is often associated with an increased ability to learn languages”. Cook (1992: para. 3) points out that a heightened Metalinguistic Awareness may impact other aspects of cognition by shaping the cognitive processes of L2 development and use. One of the areas in which Metalinguistic Awareness turns out to be necessary is translation, since translating requires thinking about a language, and this is different from being involved in its pure use (Malakoff & Hakuta 1991:142).

In the past, much classroom work engaged learners simply in this type of conscious study, making them aware of the target language, but neglecting classroom practice activities. Gass and Selinker (2009:302), indeed, point out how, even nowadays, non-native speakers in a classroom setting often spend more time on metalinguistic activities, for example studying the rules of grammar, than on activities involving direct use of the language. Gass and Selinker (2009:302) discuss other ways of increasing Metalinguistic Awareness in learners in a classroom. For example, they suggest that learners should be made aware of errors in their speech. The more learners are made aware of unacceptable speech, the greater opportunity they have to make appropriate modifications, although there is limited evidence as to the long-term effects of these modifications (Gass & Selinker 2009:360).

Having looked at some key concepts in foreign language pedagogy and before considering its development, I will now move on to a discussion of the central role which English Language Teaching (ELT) has played in shaping it. This does not have the goal of establishing any language hierarchy, but simply of facing objective historical facts in an attempt to better understand what has happened and why.

### 3 THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY AS A WHOLE

Foreign language pedagogy as a whole has been considerably affected by ELT because English has been and is the most important foreign language to be taught at a global level. After World War II quite a large amount of money and intellectual resources were invested in research into the teaching of the English language, and this has provided an important model for foreign language pedagogy in general: when one is dealing with foreign language pedagogy, one generally applies the principles and achievements of ELT. Consequently English, besides being a means of cultural and economic rule, turns out also to be an instrument of pedagogical domination. However, my experience as a teacher of English, Italian and Norwegian has shown me that the application of procedures worked out for and tested on English does not automatically work with other languages, especially with the less spoken, and therefore less taught, languages.

#### 3.1 The hegemony of English

Cultural colonization does not necessarily concern the language spoken by a community but mainly depends on the general attitude towards the hegemonic culture. I will provide a few examples showing how attitude matters more than language in promoting subordination to ruling cultures.

A few years ago, the Walt Disney Company produced an animated film entitled *The Search for Christopher Robin* (Geurs 1997), in which a linguistic misunderstanding plays a major role. The misspelling of the word *school* as *skull* turns out to be the central factor in the whole story. Christopher Robin writes a message to his friends, informing them that he is going to *skull*, meaning *school*. When his friends read the message they start looking for him and end up at a



frightening place, the *skull rock*. The misunderstanding is cleared up when Christopher Robin comes home from *school*.

Since the film depends on the problems arising from this misspelling, it makes sense only in English -not, for example, in Italian, where *school* is *scuola* and *skull* is *teschio*. Nonetheless, it was dubbed into Italian and many Italians bought it for their children, as they bought other films in the Winnie the Pooh series even though the Italian dubbed version made no sense. It was not clear at all why Christopher Robin's friends looked for him at the *skull rock*. The reason why the film was popular was not because of its content, but because it was a Winnie the Pooh cartoon. This shows that people's willingness to accept anything coming from "trusted" sources, regardless of the content, provides the basis for cultural dependence, which is so strong that it happens even outside the domain of a common language.

Another example highlighting how cultural models spread is the success of rock songs outside the USA. When rock music started, the content of the songs was not intelligible to the overwhelming majority of people in many countries, whose knowledge of English was very poor. This was especially true in Italy. Nonetheless, rock songs were very popular among the young.

The last example I want to provide concerns an Italian film from the 1950s, *Un Americano a Roma* (De Laurentis & Vanzina 1954), in which the main character, the late actor Alberto Sordi, impelled by the myth of America, tries to imitate the American way of speaking without knowing the English language. In so doing he utters sounds without any meaning, producing an extremely comic effect.

However, although cultural subordination does not necessarily depend on the language spoken, the language may play an important role, and the English language has indeed promoted the cultural and economic hegemony of English-speaking countries. In this respect, it would be worth mentioning Ivor A. Richards, one of the most influential figures in English literary criticism in the 20th century. In his book, *So much nearer. Essays toward a world English*, he advocated the global hegemony of English:

There is an analogy between the conception of a world order and the design of a language which may serve man best [...] If rightly ordered, and developed through a due sequence, the study of English can become truly a humane education. May not such a language justly be named "every man's English"? (Richards 1968:241).

The ruling position of English was not, however, generally accepted. One of the most authoritative voices questioning it was Mahatma Gandhi. Referring to India, he wrote: "To give millions a knowledge of English is to enslave them. The foundation that Macaulay laid of education has enslaved us" (Gandhi 1921: 90). And also: "English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother tongues" (Gandhi 1959: 202). However, in spite of Gandhi's and others' criticism, English has spread all over the world, and although the number of native speakers of English is shrinking, the number of those speaking it as their second language is rising (Graddol 2006:60).

While half a century ago English was in second place for the number of native speakers of the language in the world, after Mandarin, some estimates now suggest that it is in fourth place, after Mandarin, Spanish and Hindi, and even its position there is being challenged by Arabic (Graddol 2006:60). However, things change if we look at second language users of English, who may be approaching the figures of Mandarin.

The number of English language learners is constantly growing worldwide and, according to Graddol, by around 2040 there will be 3 billion English speakers in the world (Graddol 2006:107). English is now becoming the main language in Asia. In this respect it is to be noted that even China decided to make English obligatory in primary schools in 2001 (Graddol 2006:95), part of its strategy for economic development. It seems that the rise of global English is not being stopped, as is also shown by what is happening in Europe.

The Council of Europe's language policies have produced a new focus for foreign language study across Europe through the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001), which represents a wider ideological project to improve citizens' awareness of the multilingual nature of Europe. Its aim is to encourage and promote multilingualism in Europe, where there are currently 24 official and working languages (European Union, n. d., languages). The problem with the European project is that all languages are considered equally important. In theory, English is no more important than German or Latvian. In practice, in order to function the European institutions need a common language, and for this purpose they have adopted English, giving it, de facto, a special status.

### 3.2 New Englishes - new pedagogies

In order to describe the role of English in the contemporary world, Kachru (1985:12-13) used the image of three concentric circles. In the "inner circle" English is used as the first language, in the "outer circle" it is used as the second official language and in the "expanding circle" it is used as a foreign language. In 1997 the "expanding circle", i.e. people speaking English as a foreign language, included more than 750 million people, compared to 375 million first-language speakers and 375 million second-language speakers (Nunn 2005:66).

Crystal (2003:6) gives slightly different figures. According to him, first-language speakers are around 400 million, second-language speakers are around 400 million and foreign-language speakers are around 700 million. On this basis he suggests that the total number of English speakers in the world in 2000 was 1.5 billion, amounting then to a quarter of the world's population. Although, he says, "75% of the world have little knowledge of English or none at all", he argues that "one in four is an impressive proportion", since "no other language has ever been spoken by so many people in so many places" (Crystal 2002:10).



While the “native” use of English is declining statistically (Graddol 1999:68), communication among non-native speakers now represents 80% of global English use (Finster 2004:9). This inevitably affects the nature of the language. As Crystal argues,

no regional social movement, such as the purist societies which try to prevent language change or restore a past period of imagined linguistic excellence, can influence the global outcome (2003:141).

The rise of global English has introduced the concepts of English as Lingua Franca (ELF) and English as International Language (EIL).

The new international role of English has inevitable consequences for the way it is taught. The two traditional models in English Language Teaching (ELT) are teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) (Graddol 2006:82). Graddol suggests that the EFL tradition emphasizes the importance of emulating native-speaker language behaviour, in that stress is on grammatical accuracy and native speaker-like pronunciation (2006:83).

According to Graddol (2006:84), ESL arose from the need of the British Empire to teach local people sufficient English to permit the administration of large areas of the world by a relatively small number of British civil servants and troops. This policy implied that it was not necessary to impose a metropolitan spoken standard and, as a consequence, many local varieties of English, the “New Englishes”, emerged from contact with local languages (Graddol 2006:84).

Following the rise of English as a global language and its new characterizations as ELF and EIL, new pedagogical models are developing, one of which is CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), which arose from curriculum innovations in the mid 1990s. In this framework, a subject is taught in the target language rather than in the learners’ first language. In CLIL classes tasks are designed to allow students to learn how to use the new language as they learn the new subject content (British Council, n.d., English Teaching). CLIL is very popular in Finland (Nikula 2010, Ute et al. 2010, Nikula 2012), where it is used even in primary and middle schools, with excellent results, as I have witnessed myself from my own children’s experience in the schools of Kortepohja and Viitaniemi, in the town of Jyväskylä.

Another pedagogical framework related to the rise of global English is English for Young Learners (EYL) (Graddol 2006:88). This approach refers to introducing the study of English in primary schools rather than secondary schools, with the purpose of creating a bilingual population. A considerable number of countries, among them Colombia, Mongolia and Chile, have adopted the project of making the population bilingual. In pursuing this goal, they no longer look to the USA or UK as models but to the Netherlands or Finland (Graddol 2006:89).

The emergence of ELF and EIL also raises some challenging pedagogical questions. One of these is the function of competence which, according to Nunn

(2005:72), should be considered in more depth. McKay (2002) argues that native competence is inappropriate as a goal of global English and that

those changes that do not impede intelligibility should be recognized as one of the natural consequences of the use of English as an international language (McKay 2002:127).

In this picture the development of “English” and “Englishes” is difficult to predict and impossible to control (Nunn 2005:64).

From the perspective of ELF and EIL it is anachronistic to think that learners should adopt a native speaker accent. Rather, it is inevitable that they will signal their own nationality and other aspects of their own identity through their own way of speaking English (Graddol 2006:117). ELF and EIL require that the way English is taught should reflect the needs and aspirations of the ever-growing number of non-native speakers who use it to communicate with other non-native speakers, e. g. Finns speaking English with a Finnish accent to Germans speaking it with their accent, etc. According to this approach, intelligibility is preferable to native-like accuracy. In this respect, Jenkins (2000) argues for different priorities in teaching English pronunciation. For example, in her opinion, teaching such features as the articulation of “th” as an interdental fricative appears to be a waste of time.

For Crystal (2003:22), in global English a balance has to be sought between the values of “identity” and international “intelligibility”. On the one hand there will be all the advantages created by the spread of English as a means of global communication while on the other the need will arise to sustain local cultures and traditions. The TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) organization reflects this need by emphasizing “respect for diversity, multilingualism and multiculturalism and respect for individual language rights” (TESOL 2015, Mission and Values).

This issue is also discussed by Phillipson, who complains that the rise of global English is leading to “asymmetrical communication” (2009:11), since it is a first language for some people – or has been their primary language of learning – while for others it is a foreign language. He points out that he is not arguing against the use of English, but is emphasizing a commitment to linguistic human rights. For him, strengthening competence in English must go together with keeping cultural and linguistic diversity, locally and globally.

In this respect it is worth looking at what is happening in Scandinavia, where a Declaration on Nordic Language Policy was approved in 2006 by the Nordic Council of Ministers, and promulgated in Danish, Faeroese, Greenlandic, Finnish, Icelandic, Norwegian, Sami, Swedish and English (Nordisk ministerråd 2006). The document specifies the language rights of all residents in any Nordic country, sets out goals for language policy and identifies four issues to work on: language comprehension and language skills, the parallel use of languages, multilingualism, and the Nordic countries as a pioneering region in language policy. The Declaration sets as its goal the parallel use of English and the languages of the Nordic countries. In commenting on this document, Phil-

lipson (2008:252) points out that although “parallel competence” in two languages has yet to be clarified, this is the first time that any government-level language policy in this area has been made explicit, and he appreciates the fact that language policy is not merely being left to market forces.

### 3.3 The appropriation of English

It is worth noting that while English is becoming a global language which “no longer belongs to its natives” (Nunn 2005:69), there is growing concern to prevent it from damaging national languages and cultures. Asmah Haji Omar, from Malaysia, in dealing with the question of whether English is a linguistically imperialist language, writes: “English is now looked at as an entity which can be separated from English culture”, and invites readers “to learn English but not to ape the Western [meaning Anglo-American] culture” (1996:532).

Canagarajah (1999) sees English as part of the linguistic repertoire and identity formation of millions of people since their birth and recognizes its central role in transnational relations. At the same time he expresses his opposition to “linguistic imperialism” and emphasizes the need for “strategies of appropriating English according to local values and interests” (Canagarajah, n. d. para. 2). In his opinion, English can be seen “as a heterogeneous language made up of diverse varieties of equal status, each with its own norms and system” (Canagarajah n. d. para. 4). He also argues that

It is time to reshape pedagogy and linguistic theories to address the concerns of those who enjoy (or those who desire to develop) hybrid proficiencies and identities (Canagarajah 2007: 2<sup>nd</sup> question, para. 3).

To this effect, he suggests that the label “non-native speakers of English” should be dropped and replaced with the expression “multilingual speakers of English” (Canagarajah 2007: 2<sup>nd</sup> question, para. 3). Canagarajah reports an example of the appropriation of English, the case of the Tamil students who opposed Western cultural models of English and started to use it according to their own needs and values, reinterpreting and rewriting their textbooks, which had been produced by Anglo-American authors (Canagarajah 1999:197).

The goal of appropriating English is likely to be widespread in Tamil society, although outside the students’ circle it might lack a consistent ideological bedrock. I reached this conclusion on 7 April 2015, in one of my train journeys from Jyväskylä to Helsinki, after meeting Prabhu, not the researcher N. S. Prabhu, mentioned in this study, but an Indian from the state of Tamil Nadu. Prabhu spoke excellent English, he was quite sociable and willing to talk and it was therefore easy to start a conversation. After finding out that he was an Indian, I spoke to him about my interest in the contribution of Indian researchers to the pedagogy of foreign languages. When I mentioned Kumaravadivelu and Cana-

garajah, although he did not know them, he recognized their names as belonging to a Tamil cultural background.

After witnessing his pride in my appreciation of these Tamil researchers, I decided to ask him about the role of English in Tamil society, and it seems to me that what I found out is worth reporting. Prabhu told me that that Tamil was his mother tongue and that he did not speak Hindi at all. In order to communicate with non-Tamil speakers in India he used English. He did not know anything about the Tamil students' attempt to appropriate English, but when I told him of this, he found it obvious, since he was proud of his language and culture yet, at the same time, he saw English as an indispensable tool of communication not only worldwide, but even within his own country. Prabhu's attitude cannot, of course, be considered representative of the whole of Tamil society, but it seems to me that there is ground to believe that his is not an isolated case.

In this section considering the emergence of various forms of English in the contemporary world, I would lastly like to mention Pennycook (2000:116), who has made an important contribution to this debate by highlighting how "the notions of appropriation and hybridity have been crucial to postcolonial studies". He uses the expression *Postcolonial performativity* (Pennycook 2000:116) to indicate the exploration of the "worldliness of English", focusing on the concepts of "appropriation and performance" (Pennycook 2000:116). On this basis, according to Pennycook, "it becomes important to acknowledge [English] [...] not merely as a language of imperialism, but also as a language of opposition" (1994:262).

### 3.4 Foreign language teaching: English vs. other languages

Because of its central role in global communication, English is not simply *one of the languages of the world* and the reasons why one learns it are generally different from the reasons why one learns other languages. The decision to study a language other than English might depend on very special and personal interests. The reason why one studies Finnish or Italian is generally not practical, since for this, global English is much more suitable; probably the purpose is a better understanding of Finnish or Italian culture.

What Balboni (1994) writes about the study of Italian may concern many other languages as well:

Ci paiono del tutto effimeri e poco produttivi gli sforzi che vengono compiuti in molti paesi e da parte di molti insegnanti per accreditare una presunta convenienza strumentale della conoscenza della nostra lingua. Si può viaggiare in Italia, goderne il cinema e la letteratura, commerciare proficuamente con aziende italiane anche senza conoscere l'italiano [...] Quando accenniamo all'utilità formativa dell'italiano in quanto lingua ci riferiamo al contributo che l'apprendimento di questa lingua (al pari di qualsiasi altra lingua "inutile") può dare alla culturizzazione della persona, alla sua socializzazione ed alla sua autopromozione [We consider unproductive the efforts made in many countries by many teachers to emphasize a would-be practical

and instrumental value in the knowledge of Italian. It is possible to travel to Italy, enjoy Italian cinema and literature, and even profitably deal with Italian companies, without knowing the Italian language [...] When we hint at the educational usefulness of the Italian language we think of the contribution that the study of this language (as of any other "useless" language) can give to the education, socialization and human growth of a person] (Balboni 1994:20-21).

Balboni points out the cultural value of the Italian language and he argues that it is essential to work out an approach which is not merely practical, simply aiming at communication. For this, he advocates what he defines as an *educational-communicative* approach (Approccio formativo-comunicativo) (Balboni 1994:12).

It cannot be disputed that people's exposure to other foreign languages is not comparable to their exposure to English. English is everywhere, it is the global language and, as Phillipson (2008:250) puts it, it functions as the *lingua economica* (the language of corporate neo-liberalism and Americanization), the *lingua emotiva* (the language of Hollywood myth-making, of youth culture and pop music), and the *lingua academica* (serving as the dominant language of publications, international conferences, and increasingly as a medium for content learning in secondary and higher education).

The big difference in terms of exposure makes the pedagogical strategies applied to English unsuitable for other languages. However, since current ELT practices are often experienced as the only way to go, any foreign language pedagogy is expected to conform to them. In this respect I would like to offer some examples from my own experience. Once, while I was trying to provide my students with the basics of the Italian language by asking comprehension questions about short, simple stories, a student in one of my beginners' courses asked me to give them some activities based on more creative use of the language. She did not consider that "more creative" use of Italian was impossible without any knowledge of some basic linguistic elements, which is what I was trying to give my students. On another occasion, while I was doing some reading comprehension activities with beginners, using simple stories, some students asked me for vocabulary closer to everyday life situations.

What is worth noting is that in both cases the students' expectations were influenced by their prior experience of studying English, and they felt that it was "natural" to apply to the study of Italian the same criteria they were used to in their English studies. It did not occur to them 1) that the exposure they had had to English could not be compared with their contact with the Italian language and 2) that in learning foreign languages there is a deeper dimension than memorizing the phrases and words to be used while shopping or ordering something to eat in a restaurant, things which students can do much better in English. In any case, I think that reducing languages to phrase book lists is a real impoverishment of their function.

In this chapter I have discussed the central role of ELT in foreign language pedagogy as a whole. Now I will go on to outline developments in foreign language pedagogy in the last few decades, which have been characterized by a

proliferation of methods and their eventual crisis, leading to the rise of a post-method perspective.

## 4 THE RISE AND FALL OF METHODS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

The last 50 years of the history of foreign language pedagogy have been characterized by the rise of a huge number of teaching methods. They often overlap in their theoretical principles and classroom practices. Sometimes, as Rivers (1991) points out, what looks like a radically new method is simply a variant of existing ones presented with "the fresh paint of a new terminology that camouflages their fundamental similarity" (Rivers 1991:283).

### 4.1 Before method

#### 4.1.1 Grammar and translation

It is essential to point out that for centuries the pedagogy of foreign languages consisted mainly in the study of grammar and the use of translation. After World War II, it was felt that foreign language teaching needed to be more efficient, and that the focus on grammar and translation was not producing the best possible results.

In the late 17<sup>th</sup> century the philosopher John Locke had already theorized and advocated a different approach. In *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* he wrote: "The right way of teaching a language is by talking it into children in constant conversation, and not by grammatical rules" (Locke 1998: Section 162). And later:

I would fain have any one name to me that tongue, that any one can learn, or speak as he should do, by the rules of grammar. Languages were made not by rules or art, but by accident, and the common use of the people. And he that will speak them well, has no other rule but that [...] Men learn languages for the ordinary intercourse of society and communication of thoughts in common life, without any farther design in the use of them. And for this purpose, the original way of learning a language by conversation not only serves well enough, but is to be preferred as the most expedite,



proper and natural. Therefore, to this use of language one may answer, that grammar is not necessary (Locke 1998: Section 168 para. 4).

Locke's views on language pedagogy, however, were not as successful as his political theories. The modern world has been shaped politically by Locke's theory of liberal democracy, but only in the 1980s can one find pedagogies that share his views on language learning.

The study of grammar and the use of translation were the only way to learn foreign languages until the 1950s, when the world, because of its economic development, turned English into a global language. The study of grammar and the use of translation were considered inadequate, and new and more effective ways to help the spread of English were developed.

Different methods for teaching foreign languages systematically came and went, but the old way, based on the study of grammar and the use of translation, did not really disappear. In spite of all the attacks, it proved stronger and more rooted than the new theorists thought. Under the surface of the brand-new theories that seemed to be monopolizing the debate and the studies, the old way continued to be used by teachers and students. Have we not seen students using their bilingual dictionaries all the time? Do we teachers not do it ourselves while studying a new language? Are new editions of bilingual dictionaries not being printed all the time, filling the bookshops' shelves? Does the use of a bilingual dictionary mean anything other than translation?

It is indeed a fact that in spite of the attacks from the new theories, translation continued to be widely used, but out of political correctness, or conformity to fashion, one had to ignore this, pretending that it did not happen. Nowadays the need for translation is openly recognized, not only because it avoids the clumsiness of using gestures, miming and blackboard drawing in the foreign language lesson, but also because it has the advantage of clarity, which makes the pedagogical process easier.

An important researcher who re-established the importance of the study of grammar and the use of the learner's native language and, consequently, the legitimacy of translation, is Stern (1992:279 and foll.), one of the postmethod theorists. Not only has grammar-translation never died, then, but it is once again claiming a major role in foreign language teaching.

## 4.2 The rise of method

In my opinion, although there are researchers who use the label "method" for the study of grammar and the use of translation (e. g. Hubbard et al. 1983:32; Kumaravadivelu 2006:109), these can hardly be considered as such, since they did not depend on clear theoretical premises but on habit and tradition which had lasted for millennia before the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first theories which seem to me to fully deserve that label in foreign language pedagogy are the Structural-situational method and the Audio-lingual Method.



#### 4.2.1 The Structural-situational Method and Audio-lingual Method

In his book *Verbal Behaviour*, the psychologist Skinner applied the theory of conditioning to an analysis of the way humans acquire their first language. He suggested the “behavioural nature of linguistic processes” (2009:14) which, although in a “much more subtle way”, are subject to the “stimulus-response” pattern (2009:13).

Skinner’s theory was developed by the Behavioural school of psychology, which provided the basis for a foreign language pedagogy in which the constant drilling of students was followed by positive or negative reinforcement by the teacher. Mistakes were immediately criticized and correct utterances were praised. Learning a language was considered to be a mechanical process depending on repetition and the creation of habits. As Kumaravadivelu (2006:97) points out, this pedagogy was the bedrock of the Structural-situational Method in Britain and the Audio-lingual Method in the United States (Kumaravadivelu 2006:97).

Kumaravadivelu (2006:97) makes clear that already in the 1940s the British applied linguists Hornby, Palmer and West started developing the principles and procedures of what was later to be called the Structural-situational method, based on the principles of selection, gradation and presentation. Selection concerned the choice of lexical and grammatical content, gradation the organization and sequencing of content, and presentation the activities of classroom teaching (Kumaravadivelu 2006:98).

Kumaravadivelu (2006: 98) reports that while British applied linguists were engaged in developing the Structural-situational method, once the US became involved in World War II American applied linguists were asked by their government to devise effective, short term and intensive courses to teach conversational skills to army personnel who could work as interpreters and translators. American applied linguists established what was called the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP), which moved away from the traditional reading- and writing-oriented language teaching to an emphasis on listening and speaking. After the war, the programme evolved into a method of language teaching that sought to make pedagogy more effective by linking it to practical social applications (Kumaravadivelu 2006:98).

According to Kumaravadivelu (2006: 97-98), between the British Structural-situational Method and the American Audio-lingual Method, there are clear similarities, and he uses the label Audio-lingual Method to cover both. In my research I will be following this line.

Kumaravadivelu (2006: 103) outlines the main features of the Audio-lingual Method. It depends on a range of form-based input; in it, teaching is teacher-fronted and the learner’s attention is drawn to grammar. Audio-lingual lessons follow a presentation/practice/production pattern. A carefully constructed dialogue is presented, learners hear the tape and repeat and memorize the dialogue. Then the new items are practised through drills. Lastly, dialogues

similar to the one which has been studied are produced. When all this is done, learners

are believed to have developed adequate linguistic and pragmatic knowledge/ability to use the newly learned language for communicative purposes outside the classroom (Kumaravadivelu 2006:107).

Rutherford (1987:4) uses the expression “accumulated entities” to describe this procedure, and Kumaravadivelu defines it as “a linear additive process” (Kumaravadivelu 2006:90).

Kumaravadivelu (2006:109) argues that the Audio-lingual Method was a “milestone” in the history of foreign language teaching. In it, for the first time, teaching was dealt with in a systematic way.

#### **4.2.2 The Communicative Method (Or Communicative Language Teaching)**

The theoretical foundations of the Audio-lingual Method were shaken by the rise of *Cognitivism*. The term *Cognitivism*, also called *Mentalism*, refers to a theory of language learning based on the views of Noam Chomsky, who published a strong attack on Skinner's views (Chomsky 1959) in which he argued that

a direct attempt to account for the actual behavior of speaker, listener, and learner, not based on a prior understanding of the structure of grammars, will achieve very limited success (Chomsky 1959: last para. before notes).

Although this was not Chomsky's intention, his views had a considerable influence on second language learning research and also turned out to be important in language pedagogy, proving decisive in promoting a new approach.

A significant contribution to the new line in language pedagogy was the task which the Council of Europe gave to a group of applied linguists in 1971; it was to work out a new way of teaching foreign languages. Wilkins (1972), one of the members of the group, proposed a notional/functional syllabus containing such semantic-grammatical notions as duration, frequency, quantity, dimension and location, and such communicative functions as greeting, warning, inviting, requesting, agreeing and disagreeing.

This syllabus was later expanded by van Ek (1975), who identified the basic communicative needs of European adult learners and produced an inventory of notions, functions, topics and grammatical items necessary to express them. In 1976, Wilkins wrote the book *Notional Syllabuses*, which discussed communicative functions in depth. The new approach materialized in the Communicative Method, or Communicative Language Teaching, which was based on the principle that language is a system for expressing meaning. Consequently, its components are not simply grammatical but also functional, its main purpose being communication. This new pedagogy tended to reject the use of the learner's mother-tongue in the classroom. It questioned memorization-based learning and emphasized meaningful

learning, without, however, neglecting the study of grammar. Further contributions were made by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983), who provided teachers with detailed guidelines, including instructions on classroom activities.

The new pedagogical approach advocated the integration of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It emphasized interactional activities and produced a wide variety of classroom procedures, like information gaps, pair work, group work, role-play and so-called “problem-solving”, in an attempt to move teaching from a series of mechanical activities to a simulation of meaningful exchanges. One of the main sources of communicative activities was the book by Littlewood (1981) *Communicative Language Teaching - An Introduction*, largely based on the sharing of information and the negotiation of meaning.

As Kumaravadivelu (2006:125) argues, the main problem with Communicative Language Teaching was that learners were provided with standardized functions in stereotypical contexts and it was up to them to store the sample utterances and retrieve and reformulate them when needed in communication. According to Kumaravadivelu, however, although

for some this is too difficult and disappointing an interpretation to digest [...] there are no fundamental differences between Audiolingual method and Communicative Language Teaching (Kumaravadivelu 2006:130).

For example, they share an explicit focus on grammar, along with the belief in a linear and additive way of learning and the pattern of presentation/practice/production. Consequently, Kumaravadivelu argues that “the term communicative revolution is an overstatement” (2006:130).

### 4.3 The crisis of method

#### 4.3.1 The Natural Approach and Communicational Approach

In the 1980s, there appeared several meaning-oriented approaches, the main ones being the Natural Approach (Krashen & Terrel 1983) and the Communicational Approach, developed by N. S. Prabhu in a project in the city of Bangalore, in South India, which was referred to as the Communicational Teaching Project (Prabhu 1987). According to Kumaravadivelu (2006:137), these two approaches argue that language development is incidental, meaning-focused, comprehension-based, cyclical and parallel.

Language development is taken to be incidental (Kumaravadivelu 2006:137) because it is thought to happen

simply by engaging in a variety of communicative activities, in particular reading and listening activities, during which the attention of the learner is focused on the meaning rather than on the form of language (Hulstijn 2003:349).

Krashen strongly supports this view, stating that

humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input [...] If input is understood and there is enough of it, the necessary grammar is automatically provided (Krashen, 1985:2).

Krashen confirms the incidental character of L2 development by emphasizing acquisition, which is an unconscious process, over learning, which is conscious. It must be noted, however, that Krashen does not completely exclude the role of intentional learning. Prabhu (1987:69-70), on the other hand, believes that language development is exclusively incidental, and he consequently rejects any explicit grammar teaching. He argues that

it is unreasonable to suppose that any language learner can acquire a deployable internal system by consciously understanding and assimilating the rules in a linguist's grammar (Prabhu, 1987:72).

The concept of incidental learning is controversial. There are researchers who question it, pointing out that learners need to pay conscious attention to language. I will mention some of them. Widdowson (1990:161) maintains that "learners do not very readily infer knowledge of the language system from their communicative activities". Swain (1991:241), for his part, argues that

by focusing entirely on meaning, teachers frequently provide learners with inconsistent and possibly random information about their target language use.

In the Natural Approach and Communicational Approach, language development is considered to be meaning focused (Kumaravadivelu 2006:138), which means that "the acquirer is focused on the meaning and not on the form of the message" (Krashen, 1982:21).

But, Gregg (1984) and McLaughlin (1987) have shown that there are numerous examples of how grammar study can be of great benefit to students who are learning by some sort of communicative method. Kumaravadivelu (2006:139) writes that "the emphasis on an exclusively meaning-focused activity ignores the crucial role played by language awareness". In this respect, it is worth mentioning some experiments conducted in the 1980s and 1990s (Doughty, 1991; Lightbown and Spada, 1990; Spada, 1987; Van Patten & Cadierno, 1993), which show that focusing on form *and* meaning is more useful than focusing on either one or the other. In particular, Spada (1987) conducted a study on three intermediate level classes of an ESL programme. Class A received form-based instruction, Class B received both form- and meaning-based instruction, and Class C received meaning-based instruction. Her research showed that Class B made a significant improvement, much better than either Class A or Class C. This led her to the conclusion that "neither form-based nor meaning-based instruction in itself is sufficient, but rather, both are required" (Spada 1987:153).

In the Natural Approach and Communicational Approach, language development is supposed to be comprehension-based, not production-based (Kumaravadivelu 2006:140). Prabhu (1987:78) points out that, unlike produc-

tion, which involves a public display which can cause insecurity and anxiety in the learner, comprehension involves a safe, private activity. This position has been refuted by Swain (1985:249) who, through the concept of comprehensible output, argues that production “may force the learner to move from semantic processing to syntactic processing”, and more recently by Kumaravadivelu (2006:141), who emphasizes the role played by the learner’s output in shaping L2 development.

According to the Natural Approach and Communicational Approach, language development is cyclical and parallel, not sequential and additive (Kumaravadivelu 2006:141). This means that linguistic input is not to be presented in chunks following an order of priorities, but rather on the basis of the criteria of wholeness and completeness. The emphasis on the parallel character of language development explains why the Natural Approach and the Communicational Approach reject the linearity and systematicity of the Audio-lingual and Communicative Methods.

The Natural Approach and the Communicational Approach argue that “language is best taught when it is being used to transmit messages” (Krashen and Terrel 1983:55). In this pedagogy, syllabus construction is not so important. Concerning work in the classroom, Prabhu (1987:46) suggests three types of activities: information-gap, reasoning-gap and opinion-gap. As for information-gap activities, he suggests pair work in which each member of the pair has a part of the information needed to complete a task. In reasoning-gap activities, the learner has to derive new information from what he knows, through inference, deduction and reasoning. Opinion gap activities consist of discussions on controversial issues. While the Natural Approach uses all of these activities, the Communicational Approach prefers the reasoning-gap type.

In order to understand the spirit of the pedagogical line followed by the Natural and the Communicational Approaches, it may be useful to quote the conclusion which Krashen reached in his presentation at the 1991 Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics. There he explained what he was trying to achieve, emphasizing that “it is possible that ‘no pain, no gain’ does not apply to language acquisition” (Krashen, 1991:423). However, this view has been questioned by Romeo (2000), according to whom

Certainly this may be true for some learners and in all likelihood it is true for more communicative methods when compared to older methods. But the majority of us have had to struggle to be able to understand and speak a language, no matter how much exposure to “comprehensible input” we have had (2000: Conclusions para.2).

Besides Romeo, Kumaravadivelu also is very critical of the Natural and the Communicational Approaches. He argues that

the maximization of incidental learning and teacher input, and the marginalization of intentional learning and learner output render learning-centred methods empirically unfounded and pedagogically unsound (2006:156).

By “learning-centred methods” Kumaravadivelu (2006:134) means the Natural and Communicational Approaches. However, although the Natural Approach and the Communicational Approach are still referred to as “methods” by Kumaravadivelu, I think that, because of their rejection of systematicity, they may hardly be considered as such. In my opinion, they show the crisis in the very concept of method and its inadequacy to deal with foreign language pedagogy. To an extent they are an anticipation of the spirit of what is called Postmethod.

## 4.4 The death of method?

### 4.4.1 Questioning the search for the best method

Theoretically, the choice of the best foreign language teaching methods should depend on a comparison designed to judge the learning outcomes they can each lead to in a given period of time; such a quantification would have to be carried out through well designed and objective tests. Brumfit (1984:18-19), however, has argued against the objectivity of the testing of teaching methods on the grounds that human beings are not mechanical in their learning responses.

The issue of comparing methods has also been discussed by Prabhu (1990), who questioned the search for the best method. Concerning the testing of methods he argued that “the ideal of objective and conclusive demonstration is not only an unrealised one, but an inherently unrealisable one” (Prabhu 1990:169). He also underlined “the futility of attempts to objectify method evaluation” (Prabhu 1990:170), maintaining that the development of language ability is

a process that is organic rather than additive, and continuous rather than itemisable. This means that at any stage of the growth process, there is not only the growth achieved so far, but a potential for further growth (Prabhu 1990:170).

For him, the problem is that “language testing can only hope to give us evidence on the actual growth achieved at the stage of testing, not on the potential generated for further growth” (Prabhu 1990:170).

According to Prabhu (1990:171), the notion behind any objective evaluation of methods is that there is something in a method that is of itself independent of anyone's subjective perception of it. A method, in this view, is a set of procedures that involves a prediction of its results. The fulfillment of such a prediction depends either exclusively or mainly on an accurate application of the procedures, not on the perceptions of those who apply them. Prabhu goes on to say that “we find it necessary to think of good teaching as an activity in which there is a sense of involvement by the teacher” (Prabhu 1990:171), a view which he emphasizes, writing:

The greater the teacher's involvement in teaching, the more likely it is that the sense of involvement will convey itself to learners, getting them involved as well and help-



ing to create that elusive but highly regarded condition in the classroom: teacher-learner rapport (Prabhu 1990:173).

In Prabhu's opinion, it is more worthwhile to pursue the question of the teacher's involvement than the notion of an objectively best method. A similar position was held a few years earlier by Hubbard et al. (1983:37), who argued that it is very difficult to demonstrate scientifically what is or what is not a "good" method, and that success in the teaching profession seems to depend on factors that are difficult to measure, such as the personal qualities of the teacher and the teacher's ability to get on well with his or her students.

According to Allwright and Baily, "for a long time we thought that the teaching method was the most important thing - that all we had to do was find the right method", but, they acknowledge, "we were wrong" (1991: xvii). They also maintain that since "some teachers seem to succeed however out-of-date and out-of-fashion their methods are", what does matter "is what happens when teachers and learners get together in the classroom" (Allwright & Baily 1991: xv).

#### 4.4.2 Beyond method through eclecticism

Methods are based on and meant to be used in idealized contexts. They are far from real life in the classroom, in which teachers choose and follow procedures not associated to any particular theory, feeling that no single method can help them cope with the challenges of everyday teaching. Kumaravadivelu (2006:157) points out that language teachers faced with real life situations have always been flexible in their use of methods. Being aware of the inadequacy of abstract theories, "teachers try to derive a method of their own and call it eclectic method" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:169). More than two decades earlier, the same view was expressed by Hubbard, Jones, Thornton and Wheeler, who wrote words which, although specifically addressed to ELT, are relevant in foreign language pedagogy as a whole,:

Probably most teachers of EFL nowadays, if asked what method they use, would reply that their approach is eclectic. By this, they mean that they do not follow any single method, but rather that they use a selection of techniques. Such an approach to TEFL has many advantages. For one thing, it is much more flexible and can easily be adapted to suit a wide variety of teaching situations (Hubbard et al.1983:37).

They added:

If we condemn blind chasing after methods, we should also condemn the blind adoption of techniques. It may turn out that an eclectic approach to TEFL is nothing more than a bundle of techniques which a certain teacher has encountered by chance and adopted quite arbitrarily. (Hubbard et al. 1983:38).

This warning is important because it draws attention to the fact that an eclectic attitude must not rest on random choice, but on "the knowledge and the skill necessary to be responsibly eclectic" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:170).

#### 4.4.3 The final blow

Towards the end of the 1980s the disillusionment with methods became stronger and stronger, as is shown by the very harsh views expressed by Pennycook (1989:597), who wrote that the notion of method is a reductive way of thinking, since it “diminishes rather than enhances our understanding of language teaching” (1989:597). A similar position was held by Nunan (1989:2), who wrote that method is for “the dustbin”. These views show the development at that time of a new attitude towards foreign language pedagogy, based on the rejection of the very concept of method. In 1991, at a conference at Carlton University in Ottawa, Allwright gave a talk entitled “The Death of Method”. With this “deliberately contentious title” he wanted to emphasize “the relative unhelpfulness of the existence of methods” (Allwright & Baily 1991:1). He pointed out some of the problems with methods: for instance, that they arouse pointless rivalries on irrelevant issues, and that they give the impression that all the main questions in foreign language teaching have been answered. By providing a “cheap” externally derived sense of coherence, they prevent the development of an internally derived sense of coherence, which is personally “expensive” but more valuable (Allwright & Baily 1991:7-8). For Allwright and Baily,

in order to help our learners learn, it is not ‘the latest method’ that we need, but rather a fuller understanding of the language classroom and what goes on there (Allwright & Baily 1991: xviii).

To sum up, in this chapter I have shown how, after millennia in which foreign language pedagogy was dominated by the study of grammar and by translation, in the last 50 years we have seen the rise and fall of a plethora of methods which have all eventually turned out to provoke widespread dissatisfaction. In order to describe the atmosphere of general disillusionment, I would particularly like to highlight the expression “death of method”, coined by Allwright (1991).



## 5 POSTMETHOD ERA

The condition described by Allwright (1991) as the “death of method” paved the way for the rise of several Postmethod pedagogies. As Kumaravadivelu (2006:184) has pointed out, Postmethod pedagogies take into account local and particular conditions, they are context sensitive and they come from teachers and their daily practice. Similar views are expressed by Canagarajah (2007), who argues against the application of abstract theories:

Use your location as your starting point for your scholarship, theorization, teaching, and thinking. Draw from your own resources, there is no need to look elsewhere. Build on your roots, your family and community foundations (2007: answ. to quest. 3).

Postmethod has provided the conceptual horizons and the foundation for this research.

After outlining how Postmethod came into being, I will discuss some Postmethod pedagogies, which represent “an attempt to deal with the complex issue of exploring alternatives to method, rather than taking the failed path of finding alternative methods”, as Kumaravadivelu (2006:214) expresses it. To the three examples provided by Kumaravadivelu (2006: 185 and foll.), i. e. Stern’s Three Dimensional Framework, Allwright’s Explanatory Practice Framework and his own Macro-strategic Framework, I will add Thornbury’s *Dogme* Movement, which seems to me to fully meet the criteria of a Postmethod pedagogy. I will also add my own pedagogical experience and experimentation.

### 5.1 Three Dimensional Framework

Stern’s Three Dimensional Framework may be considered the first attempt to provide a consistent Postmethod pedagogy. Stern was the head of the Modern Language Centre at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education from

1968 until 1981. In 1983 he published *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*, in which he set out his rejection of method, entitling Chapter 21 "The Break with Method". In the book he argued that not even an eclectic approach would be of any help. He thought that method had to be replaced with a framework consisting of strategies and techniques, where strategies are concerned with guidelines and techniques with practical action. In his book, *Issues and Options in Language Teaching*, published posthumously in 1992, he specified that strategies are different from methods, since

they operate with flexible sets of concepts which embody any useful lessons we can draw from the history of language teaching but which do not perpetuate the rigidities and dogmatic narrowness of the earlier method concept (Stern 1992:277).

Stern's strategies concern three areas (Kumaravadivelu:187): the Intralingual-Crosslingual Dimension, the Analytic-Experiential Dimension or Code-Communication Dilemma, and the Explicit-Implicit Dimension. Let us look at each of these dimensions in detail.

The first dimension concerns the use of the L1 in foreign language pedagogy. Technically, when discussing the use of the L1 in teaching the L2, we speak about intralingual and crosslingual strategies. The former exclude the use of the L1 and the latter make use of the L1 in teaching the target language. In the last few decades there has been a widespread tendency to the former, i.e. to reject the use of the L1 in teaching the L2. Such a position has taken two forms, a stronger one, seeking to ban L1 from the language classroom altogether, and a weaker one, urging as little use as possible of L1 in the classroom. A hostile attitude to the use of the L1 was expressed, for example, in Audio-lingualism, whose proponents recommended that the L1 should not be used when the new language was being taught (Brooks, 1964:142). Similarly, Howatt wrote that

the monolingual principle, the unique contribution of the twentieth century to classroom language teaching, remains the bedrock notion from which the others ultimately derive (1984:289).

Further, Scrivenor (1994:192) mentions L1 only in the list of problems as "students using their own language".

Cook, on the other hand, opposes this line by refuting the argument from L1 learning (Cook 2001:406), according to which teaching should be based on the way monolingual children acquire their first language. Cook maintains that "the argument for avoiding the L1 based on L1 acquisition is not in itself convincing" (2001:406).

The view that successful L2 acquisition depends on keeping the L2 separate from the L1 resumes Weinreich's theory that the goal of teaching is "coordinative bilingualism", in which the two languages form distinct systems in the mind, rather than "subordinative bilingualism", in which they form one system (Weinreich 1953:39). On this assumption, teachers explain the L2 word, define or mime its meaning, or show pictures without translating, in the long-term

hope that this will build up L2 as a separate system. However, this argument ignores the fact that the two languages are interwoven in the L2 user's mind (Cook 1994, Obler 1982, Locastro 1987). Cook (2001:418) argues that trying to put languages in separate compartments in the mind is doomed to failure since they are connected in many ways. He also argues that the L1 might provide the "scaffolding" support that learners need to build up their L2.

The rejection of the L1 might also depend on the argument for second language use in the classroom. This proposes that the teacher can maximize the provision of useful L2 examples by avoiding the L1. The Communicative Teaching view is that

Many learners are likely to remain unconvinced by our attempts to make them accept the foreign language as an effective means of satisfying their communicative needs, if we abandon it ourselves as soon as such needs arise in the immediate classroom situation (Littlewood, 1981:45).

In response to this argument, Cook (2001) maintains that even though "it is clearly beneficial to expose the students to as much L2 as possible [...] this is not necessarily incompatible with the use of L1 in the classroom" (2001:409), since the maximal provision of L2 input does not deny L1 a role in learning and teaching.

According to Cook (2001:410), the view that the use of L1 should be avoided is untenable, since "L2 learning is not L1 acquisition and L2 users are not the same as L1 users". Cook (2001:410) also points out that pressure from the anti-L1 camp has prevented language teaching from looking rationally at ways in which the L1 could usefully be employed in the foreign language classroom. However, despite the opposition to the use of L1 in teaching L2, there have been such approaches as the New Concurrent Method, Community Language Learning and Dodson's Bilingual Method, which have actively created links between the L1 and L2 with the common purpose of positively using the L1 in the classroom (Cook 2001:412-413).

Cook (2001:405) also argues that "dismissing L1 out of hand restricts the possibilities for language teaching", and that "there is no logical necessity why communicative tasks should avoid the L1". He feels that "rather than creeping in as a guilt making necessity, L1 can be deliberately and systematically used in the classroom" (Cook 2001:418), and that "bringing the L1 back from exile may lead not only to the improvement of existing teaching methods but also to innovations in methodology" (Cook 2001:418). Stern (1992:281) complains that "many writers do not even consider cross-lingual objectives", and emphasizes that "the L1-L2 connection is an indisputable fact of life" (1992:282); on this basis he argues for a flexible use of cross-lingual techniques.

Concerning the simultaneous use of multiple languages in communication and education, recent contributions from the field of sociolinguistics are worth a mention. In particular one can cite the Translanguaging approach, which in Garcia's (2009:140) words

is the act performed by bilinguals of accessing different features of various modes of what are described as autonomous languages, in order to maximize communicative potential. It is an approach to bilingualism that is centered, not on languages as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals in order to make sense of their multilingual worlds.

Also to be mentioned in a sociolinguistics perspective are studies by Blackledge and Creese (2010:17) which emphasize a “plural linguistic practice”.

Another controversial issue in language teaching has been the role of form and message, the code-communication dilemma (Kumaravadivelu 2006:187). Stern advocates a mixture of concern with formal features and meaning, because both might prove useful. In this respect, he writes that there is

no reason to assume that one strategy alone offers the royal road to proficiency. Therefore some kind of combination of these two approaches appears to be the best policy to adopt pending more convincing evidence of the greater effectiveness of either one or the other (Stern 1992:321).

In terms of classroom work, Stern suggests the use of activities which explicitly focus on linguistic features and also the use of games, information-gap activities and what he calls “problem-solving” tasks, with the aim of creating “the conditions for real communication” by means of “an element of unpredictability” depending on “true inference” (Stern 1992:316).

The question of whether L2 learning is a conscious or unconscious process has provoked considerable controversy in language pedagogy circles. It involves the relationship between incidental and deliberate learning. Stern uses the expressions “explicit” and “implicit” to refer to the strategies involved in the two processes. According to him, both “implicit” and “explicit” strategies contain helpful elements, and he argues that we should

bear both strategies in mind and treat the explicit and implicit options as opposite ends of a continuum. In practice we expect the two strategies to be combined, but the mix will be varied according to the language topic, the course objective, the characteristics of the students and the needs of the teaching situation (Stern 1992:345).

In conclusion, Stern’s Three Dimensional Framework is extremely flexible in dealing with the controversial issues of language teaching debate. Kumaravadivelu argues that by selecting the middle path, balancing the fundamental features of the intralingual and crosslingual, the analytic and experiential and the explicit and implicit, Stern’s framework “certainly rejects the rigidities associated with the concept of method, and looks beyond” (2006:193).

## 5.2 Allwright’s Exploratory Practice Framework

Exploratory Practice is the result of Allwright’s disillusionment with an overwhelmingly technicist approach to classroom research and can be characterized

by its goal of working out ethically based teaching strategies (Allwright 2005:353). In the attempt to directly solve practical classroom problems, Allwright's Exploratory Practice opposes Action Research because of its use of standard academic research techniques (2005:354-355). The use of familiar classroom activities as investigative tools, rather than elaborate academic research techniques, ensures sustainability, Allright (1997a:369) argues. Exploratory Practice involves a relationship of collegiality and mutuality, bringing together teachers and learners in a common effort to promote understanding and professional development (Allwright 2005:357).

In describing the features of Exploratory Practice, Allwright uses the Friends of the Earth's slogan, "think globally, act locally" (Allwright 2000b chapt.1). He argues that we need some global principles for our work, and we need to show how they could actually be put into practice in particular situations (2000b: 1. Para. 4). However, as he explains, from global principles to local action is not a one way traffic, because local action will contribute to the ways we think about the principles (2000b: 1. Para. 4). Trying to "think globally" will be a matter of trying to decide what the fundamental principles are behind what we are trying to achieve (2000b: 1. Para. 4 a). Then we can put the principles into practice in our own immediate context, in order to "act locally" (Allwright 1997b chapt.1). The relationship between the two key ideas of thinking and acting is characterized by mutual stimulation: local thinking will also affect global thinking and, as a consequence, the general principles (Allwright 1997b subsect. 8.3).

Exploratory Practice emphasizes working with "puzzles", rather than "problems" (Allwright 2000b subsect. 3.1, para. d). In order to avoid the negatively loaded notion of a "problem", the idea is to reformulate a "problem" as a "puzzle", typically by turning it from a "how" question into a "why" one. For example, someone who wants to solve the problem of having unmotivated learners should not start by inventing clever ways of motivating them, but by trying to find out why they are not motivated (Allwright 2000b subsect. 4.1). As he writes:

Sometimes we find that a serious prior attempt to understand so changes the nature of the perception of the situation that it no longer seems sensible to see it as a problem at all (Allwright 2005:361).

According to Allwright,

Exploratory Practice, despite its name, is ultimately more concerned with the quality of life for people in language classrooms, than with the quality of the work done there (Allwright 2000b, subsect. 8.4).

Allwright (2000b subchapt. 8.1) contends that Exploratory Practice is still being developed as "work in progress" and will never reach a final form because, by definition, it is trying to be appropriate to circumstances, and circumstances will inevitably change.

### 5.3 Kumaravadivelu's Macrostrategic Framework

In the early stages of his reflections on L2 pedagogy, Kumaravadivelu expressed his scepticism about "existing teacher education programs", which provide teachers with "knowledge that may not even be relevant to their local needs" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:199). This led him to look

for effective ways of using the traditional classroom interaction analysis to see how teacher education can be made more sensitive to classroom events and activities (Kumaravadivelu 2006:199).

Already in the early 1990s he became convinced that

since second/foreign language (L2) learning/teaching needs, wants and situations are unpredictably numerous, we cannot prepare teachers to tackle so many unpredictable needs, wants and situations; we can only help them develop a capacity to generate varied and situation specific ideas within a general framework that makes sense in terms of current pedagogical and theoretical knowledge (Kumaravadivelu 1992:41).

On further reflection he became more and more disillusioned with the very concept of method, and this led him to question the idea that language teaching operates in a non-existent a-historical, a-social and a-political space (Kumaravadivelu 2006:200). From here he went on to read about poststructuralism, postmodernism and post-colonialism and realized that

the borders between the personal, the professional and the political are indeed porous, and that we are all constantly crossing the boundaries whether we know it or not (Kumaravadivelu 2006:200).

His studies resulted in an article in which he first used the expression "Post-method" (Kumaravadivelu 1994:27 and foll.), echoing Lyotard's book of 1989, entitled *The Postmodern Condition*. In the following years, he continued to apply "postmodern and postcolonial thoughts to critique the traditional ways of classroom interaction analysis" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:200), expressing his views in his article, "Towards a Postmethod Pedagogy" (Kumaravadivelu 2001).

Kumaravadivelu's most fully developed framework appeared in the book *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching* (Kumaravadivelu 2003), in which he outlined his Postmethod framework in terms of macrostrategies and microstrategies. Kumaravadivelu's macrostrategies are "general plans derived from currently available theoretical, empirical and pedagogical knowledge related to L2 learning and teaching", and they are, "method-neutral" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:201). Macrostrategies are implemented through microstrategies, i. e. "classroom procedures that are designed to realize the objectives of a particular macrostrategy" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:209). The number of microstrategies is variable, depending on local learning and teaching situations, which give endless possibilities.



## 5.4 The *Dogme* movement

The Dogme movement is another example of a challenge to established method-based pedagogy. In February 2000, Scott Thornbury wrote an article entitled “A Dogma for EFL” (Thornbury 2000:2), in which he invited ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teachers, trainers and writers to join him in a pedagogical “vow of chastity”. He adopted the principles and name of the Danish Dogme 95 film collective, whose intention was to rid film-making of its obsessive concern with technique and to rehabilitate a cinema foregrounding the story, and characters’ inner life. Following the article, an active discussion group was formed on the web.

On the assumption that “language learning is both socially motivated and socially constructed” (Thornbury, n. d., Scott Thornbury Plenary Speaker), Thornbury seeks alternatives to models of instruction that are mediated primarily through materials and whose objective is the delivery of “grammar mc nuggets” (Thornbury 2010a: para.2). He commits himself to promoting a “poor” pedagogy, that is, a pedagogy unburdened by an excess of materials and technology (Thornbury 2010b: para.3), and advocates the exploitation of

the learning opportunities offered by the raw material of the classroom, that is the language that emerges from the needs, interests, concerns and desires of the people in the room” (Thornbury 2010a: para.2).

In Thornbury’s “poor” (2010b: para.3) pedagogy photocopies are proscribed, the OHP is banished, grammar presentation has to be squeezed into 5 minutes, and “real talk” has to form the core of the lesson (Thornbury 2000:2). He argues that

Teaching should be done using only the resources that teachers and students bring to the classroom - i.e. themselves- and whatever happens to be in the classroom (Thornbury 2000:2).

Temporal and geographical alienation are banned: learning takes place in the here and now (Thornbury 2000:2). Thornbury’s purpose is

to restore teaching to its pre-method ‘state of grace’ - when all there was was a room with a few chairs, a blackboard, a teacher and some students, and where learning was jointly constructed out of the talk (Thornbury 2000:2).

One has to admit that this sounds rather idealistic, reminding one of a lost “golden age”, or Rousseau’s idea of a natural condition perverted by civilization or John Locke’s ideal “state of nature”. It seems to me that this “state of grace” never existed, and the pre-method condition of teaching was not as idyllic as Thornbury assumes. Nonetheless, Thornbury’s represents an interesting attempt to implement a context-sensitive Postmethod pedagogy.

The exponential growth in educational technologies since 2000 represents a challenge to Dogme, and following these developments the Dogme communi-

ty itself has begun to abandon its original principles. Thornbury in fact posted a message on the Dogme discussion group's website, announcing its imminent end. He wrote that the fact that the site is closing as a discussion group does not mean the end of Dogme, rather, "the fact that it no longer needs a home is testimony to its vigour" (Thornbury 2010a: para.5).

## 5.5 An incessant work in progress

The four frameworks I have discussed above are examples of how Postmethod pedagogies work. They reject the inflexible structure which is part of methods and endeavour to develop pedagogical strategies based on the flexibility needed to cope with the moving and ever-changing reality in the classroom. They all are conceivable and possible only in a method-free context and perspective. However, they are completely different from one another, proving vital, productive and rich in their rejection of a non-dogmatic pedagogical line.

Since these frameworks are by their nature so contrary to the inflexibility of methods, they are not meant to be integrally accepted by pedagogues who, rather, are supposed to actively and responsibly select, *apis more modoque*, what best suits their strategies. As Hubbard et al. suggested three decades ago, addressing English language teachers: "Adopt those [techniques] which are successful. If something works use it" (1983:37).

These frameworks do not exhaust the endless potential of Postmethod pedagogies. They offer themselves as materials for reflection to teachers, who should "theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize" (Kumaraavadivelu 2006:173), planning their own pedagogical strategies. These frameworks leave space for further pedagogical experiments like my own, which emphasizes the usefulness of a focus on the emotions and has its roots in my long experience as a teacher, prompted by the view that teaching is a permanent and incessant work in progress. In order to describe such a view of teaching, I would like to use Heraclitus' words, as reported by Socrates in Plato's *Cratylus*:

Heraclitus is supposed to say that all things are in motion and nothing at rest; he compares them to the stream of a river, and says that you cannot go into the same water twice (Plato n. d.).



## 6 DISCOVERING THE SPIRIT OF POSTMETHOD

My long overview, dealing with the key concepts in foreign language pedagogy and discussing how methods have risen and fallen, provides the theoretical context within which to locate my research, which I can now proceed to present. The bedrock of my pedagogical line and my studies has for a long time been a Postmethod perspective, although initially I was not aware of this. I was driven in my pedagogical research by dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of current methods and by the wish to make my teaching as effective as possible. Becoming acquainted in the second half of the last decade with Postmethod acted as a powerful stimulus to my research, since it provided my pedagogical line with a more consistent theoretical framework.

As Kumaravadivelu has pointed out, most teachers do not adhere totally to one method but

try to develop a sense of what works in the classroom and what doesn't, based on their intuitive ability and experiential knowledge. In a clear repudiation of established methods teachers try to derive a method of their own (Kumaravadivelu 2006:169).

This is what I have been doing myself since the very start of my career as a teacher of English in Italian Lycees in the late 1980s. At that time I did not know anything about Postmethod theories, which had not even emerged. I was simply dissatisfied with the straightjacket imposed on my work by methods and their practical manifestation, textbooks. One of the things which most depressed me was the dialogues at the beginning of each unit in the textbooks of the time. Although I lacked any knowledge of Postmethod pedagogies, I had considerable determination and a strong sense of professional dignity, which led me to refuse to serve as a passive instrument of theorists who designed strategies that were remote from the daily challenges and problems that I met in the classroom. I wanted to have fun and I wanted to find motivation in my work. What propelled me onwards in my efforts was the appreciation I seemed to get from my students.

## 6.1 The beginning of my quest

My dissatisfaction with current methods in foreign language pedagogy encouraged me to look for new and more effective ways of teaching. I knew that in northern Europe people spoke fluent English although it was not their mother tongue, and I wanted to find out what the reasons for this were, thinking that it would give me inspiration for improving my pedagogy. I therefore designed a very simple questionnaire and sent it to some schools in Denmark and Norway (See Appendix 7). The questions were about the pedagogical line, the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, the study of grammar and the use of translation. Most of the schools responded and I was astonished to find out that ways which seemed to me to be rather traditional were widely used. This made me wonder still more what the secret of their success was.

One of the Danish teachers was so kind as to invite me to go to her school in Viborg (Northern Jutland), in August 1991, and I accepted the invitation. In Denmark I noticed that while young people spoke good English, older people did not. The way English was taught in schools took it for granted that students already had good prior knowledge of the language. Furthermore, grammar was taught in Danish, and translation was part of schoolwork. I found all this extremely interesting, since I used to explain grammar in English, and avoided translation. I also noticed that there were not many hours of English per week. I was puzzled, but also determined to find out what was behind young Danes' mastery of English.

In the days I spent in Viborg I became acquainted with Danish daily life. One thing that struck me was that foreign films on TV and in cinemas were not dubbed, as in Italy, but were subtitled in Danish - thus keeping their original language. Films play an important role in modern society and culture, and since the original language in the overwhelming majority of films on the world market is English, they are an incredibly powerful vehicle for the spread of this language.

In the same summer, I went to Iceland for a week and there I witnessed the same pattern as in Denmark. The young spoke excellent English, and films on TV and in cinemas were in the original language with subtitles in Icelandic. This seemed to me to explain why young people spoke English so well. School did not do anything special, but simply improved on something that students had already learned outside it, and which was part of their daily life. I was not completely satisfied, however, because I realized that Icelandic and Danish, being Germanic languages, have similarities with English, even if the thousands of French loan words from the time of Norman rule in England considerably differentiate English from its kindred Germanic languages.

What proved decisive in my quest for an explanation was my first journey to Finland, where I went after writing to a few schools to ask for contacts in the mid 1990s. Besides visiting schools, I lived the everyday life of Finns, and again I was impressed by the way young people spoke English. Again I noticed that

films on TV and at the cinema were in the original language with subtitles. In schools, grammar was taught in Finnish and translation was quite common. In brief, the pattern was the same as in Denmark and Iceland, but here the background language, being Fenno-Ugric, had nothing to do with English. Thus, I thought I had confirmed the answer to my question: exposure to the spoken language as heard in the media, e. g. television, played a major role.

The central function of TV in spreading a foreign language is also shown by people's remarkable knowledge of Italian in Albania. This does not depend on the efficiency of Albanian schools, but on the RAI (the Italian public broadcasting company), whose broadcasts regularly reach Albania.

The journeys I made to northern Europe gave me much useful information about the way foreign languages are taught and learnt. I realized that school is not the only factor playing a role in the process, and that widespread mastery of English in that part of the world might be favoured by the social and cultural context. This does not reduce the function of schools, which are central to the attempt to improve the quality of education. My journeys provided me with new input and insights for my pedagogical reflections, and oriented my thinking more and more clearly towards seeing the psychological involvement of learners as the key to successful pedagogy.

## 6.2 My early teaching style

My pedagogical experimentation and research led me to create my own teaching pattern, which towards the end of the 1990s had the following features. I started each class with a joke, asking students to repeat it before giving them the punch line. I sometimes asked them riddles, which students simply saw as jokes. Then I read aloud a short text, which was no longer than one page and, after asking comprehension questions, I randomly chose some students to make an oral report of the story. If there was time, lessons were concluded with a song, which was simply translated, and then sung by the class.

Almost three decades later, I was very pleased to find that Cozolino (2013:187), obviously independently of my pedagogical reflections, had reached similar conclusions on the usefulness of stories. According to Cozolino, storytelling has played an important role in the history of mankind, since

the accumulation and advancement of knowledge was completely dependent on the compulsion to hear and tell stories and on the brain's ability to remember and repeat them (Cozolino 2013: 189).

The very complexity of the human brain has been shaped by the action of narratives guiding and organizing thinking (Cozolino 2013: 188). Cozolino also argues that "stories contain all of the elements required to stimulate neuroplasticity and learning" (2013: 191). The pedagogical impact of storytelling is signifi-

cant, since it causes the integration of the functions of both hemispheres of the human brain (Cozolino 2013: 190).

As part of my pedagogical approach, I sometimes also explained some basic grammar. My grammar teaching covered very few items, since I was more interested in expanding my students' vocabulary. I was very far from what Thornbury (2000:2) calls "Obsessive Grammar Syndrome", although at that time I did not know the Dogme movement at all. Nor did I know of Lantolf and Thorne, although I reached the same conclusions as they did. I was therefore extremely pleased, years later, when I found their view:

learning an additional language is about enhancing one's repertoire of fragments and patterns that enables participation in a wider array of communicative activities. It is not about building up a complete and perfect grammar in order to produce well-formed sentences (Lantolf & Thorne 2006:17).

With my pedagogical practices I was appealing to the students' emotions, and my impression was that they liked this quite a lot. Some years ago I got some unexpected and very rewarding feedback: I found out that towards the end of 2008 quite a few of my old students had formed a "Giuseppe Caruso Fan Club" on Facebook. Curious, I had a look at the names, of which there were over 100, and found students from my early teaching years, at the end of the 1980s, until more recent times. The group seems to have been closed down, but before they were removed from the web I was able to save the messages which some former students wrote on the web page from 3 November 2008 until 29 April 2010 (See Appendix 4). I examined their messages in order to try and understand what those students were most impressed by in my style of teaching.

According to a rough calculation, in my 17-year-long career as a high school teacher of English, I should have had a total of between 600 and 700 students, so a membership of over 100, amounting to roughly 15% of the total number of students I have taught over the years, is not an insignificant sample. The group's title was: "Al big Caruso e ai suoi democratici metodi di insegnamento" (To big [sic!] Caruso and his democratic teaching methods) (Facebook n.d.), a title that emphasized their interest in my way of teaching. There were 47 messages on the web page, written by 36 different students, with comments ranging from simple appreciation to outright enthusiasm. Five students explicitly mentioned working on songs, and five the use of jokes.

The students must have seen the use that I made of one-page stories as challenging. The report they had to produce was seen by them as a problem they had to deal with. I called all this *listening comprehension*, and 2 of the 36 students explicitly mentioned it. It should be noted that quite a few of them (8) emphasized some aspect of my lessons which was an essential part of my emotional style, e. g. the use of numbers which I kept in a little bag and which I drew out when I had to choose the students who were expected to make the report. This was obviously a source of suspense and tension in the lesson, but students liked it and found it fair, especially because in this way they knew that they could blame chance, not me, for the choice. Although chance was unpredictable, they were all in the same boat.

### 6.3 The British Council lectures

Although the established methods were turning out to be unsuitable, school authorities still expected teachers to employ them. Those teachers who decided to ignore them tried to keep a low profile, as if they were doing something to be ashamed of, that needed to be kept hidden. I, however, did not think that it was enough to simply build my own niche; I felt that something had to be done at a public level to legitimize the rejection of methods. I was also convinced that teachers did not have to feel guilty or behind the times for ignoring them.

From 1998 to 2004, following an invitation from Ms Jan Hague, the then Language and Education Projects Manager of the British Council in Rome, I gave a series of six lectures in which I outlined a framework rejecting the inflexibility of current methods and advocating a flexible pedagogical line with the focus on emotions. At that stage I was not aware that I had assumed a Post-method perspective. I only reached this awareness a few years later, when I came across Kumaravadivelu's book, *Understanding Language Teaching*, from 2006. However, I would like to give a short account of these lectures, not as an exercise in self celebration, but to show the effort I made to break away from the "political correctness" of methods.

In the first lecture, "Grammar and Translation Revisited", of 22 January 1998, I advocated a rejection of any dogmatic positions in foreign language pedagogy. I pointed out that, in order to be successful, teachers need a pragmatic and flexible attitude that enable them to cope with the daily problems they are faced with. I also expressed my perplexity at the rejection of grammar and translation and argued that they can be useful tools to be used in a pedagogical context in which the overriding purpose has to be communication.

Concerning grammar, I argued that it has to be explicitly taught and this has to be done in the students' mother tongue. However, I also suggested a considerable reduction in the amount of grammar to be taught, on the assumption that teaching grammatical rules in detail would clash with the emphasis on language as communication. My position was that too much concern with accuracy might cripple communication, because when students' minds are stuffed full of rules, they will probably be blocked all the time by the fear of making mistakes. I argued that the energy needed to pursue the impossible goal of grammatical perfection would be better employed in an effort to expand vocabulary. Since even native speakers make grammatical mistakes, expecting grammatical perfection from learners is a forlorn hope, and a mistake in itself. A few grammatical errors do not prevent communication, poor vocabulary does. To emphasize my view I stated the "90% theory", according to which it is preferable to dismiss the goal of 100% accuracy and accept a certain number of mistakes, which I symbolically quantified as 10%, deriving from ignorance of minor rules, than be unable to communicate. I must here make clear that these percentages were not based on any real statistical ground, but had a purely symbolic function, meant to emphasize the basic idea.

In the lecture I also expressed views which are reminiscent of Thornbury's Dogme movement (Thornbury 2000), although I must mention here once again that at that stage I did not know anything about this movement, and that I became familiar with Thornbury's views only much later. I argued that although teachers might think that they cannot do much if they lack high-tech equipment in their schools, it is wrong to link success in teaching to the availability of advanced technology. Teachers can do a lot even without any technological equipment, as is the case in most schools all over the world. I did not mean that high-tech is useless, but simply that it is non-essential, because language is a natural phenomenon and teaching it has to be natural too. I underlined too that there is no need to refuse to use the students' mother tongue in the classroom. It is more efficient, I argued, to simply provide the translation of new words instead of using miming and blackboard drawing, which can prove clumsy, time consuming and distracting.

In my second lecture, "A Day in the Life of an Italian EL Teacher: Coping with the Constraints", of 14 January 1999, I highlighted the inadequacy of methods in dealing with the daily problems with which a teacher is faced. I argued that many methodological approaches have been put forward outside the context in which they have to be applied, based as they are on an ideal vision of school and of students. When they are used in real contexts and with real students they prove a failure. Years later I found out that taking into consideration the cultural context and real classroom problems is one of the foundations of Postmethod pedagogies (Kumaravadivelu 2006:184).

In the lecture I listed some of the problems in Italian schools which are an obstacle to the adoption of any teaching strategy:

1. Cheating. This is quite common in Italian schools and universities. Even in the matriculation examinations it is taken for granted. However, cheating undermines all educational strategies, preventing students from learning.

2. In the Italian context, group work is not very useful, because it often means that most of the students simply rely on work done by the more active ones.

3. The Italian school system requires a formal oral test, called "interrogazione", to be given during lessons. This has important implications. One is that students keep trying to avoid it. Another is that while one person is being tested, the rest of the class do nothing. Although a teacher might give tasks to the students who are not being tested, if these other students are not also tested at the end, they will not feel motivated to work, and this will cause new problems. Furthermore, the oral test requires "witnesses", and if the class are working, for example on a reading comprehension task, there cannot be any "witnesses", because, unless a teacher exempts some students from work, which would be unfair. Thus, to be on the safe side, teachers find it much easier not to give any students any work during the "interrogazione". However, this considerably reduces the time available for actual teaching.

4. The timetable is not designed to meet any educational needs. For example, it ignores the students' attention span by not allowing for any breaks,



except one of 15 minutes, in the whole school day. This is different from, e.g., Finnish schools, where there are 15 minute breaks between lessons and a longer break for lunch.

5. There is an emphasis on literary criticism in foreign language teaching in Lycees, where the 3rd year students, aged 16/17, are expected to study excerpts by Shakespeare in the original language of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Why students who have a limited knowledge of English should be asked to study passages in Shakespeare's original language is rather perplexing.

6. For the matriculation examination in Lycees, students have to study several pages of literary criticism in English with no other choice than to memorize and repeat the content passively, like parrots. Trying to be creative would get them into trouble because they would be likely to make more mistakes, which would affect their final marks.

If teachers want to survive in such an obsolete system as that operating in Italian schools, they will inevitably have to find their own way of doing so, independently of any methods created by theorists who are unaware of the conditions there. In the lecture I emphasized the importance of motivation not only for students but also for teachers. If teachers are not motivated, it will be extremely difficult for them to motivate their learners. Motivation is related to self-confidence, which depends on realistic expectations, involving taking into consideration the reality of school life as well as teachers' own limitations. For example, behaving like native speakers is something that few non-native English language teachers can do, and it is unnecessary. In fulfilling their task, which is helping students learn, teachers need not know everything, and need not even pretend to. Sometimes students will ask for the meaning of words or phrases and teachers will feel at a loss because they cannot answer. Still, it must be accepted that teachers cannot know everything. Once this is taken for granted, teachers will look at their role in a different way, through different eyes, and will gain more self-confidence.

On 9 March 2000 I lectured on "Grammar and Communication", showing how one-page stories might prove extremely useful for work in the classroom. I found a confirmation of this intuition of mine much later. It was not until early in 2015 that I came across Cozolino's (2013:187) reflection on the usefulness of stories in pedagogy. In the 1980s there were books for ELT which contained short texts, e.g. the series by Hill (1985), but they are no longer in print. Nonetheless, teachers can make their own material, and although it takes time, it is rewarding. Anything may be used for this purpose. To show how easy it is, I tried an experiment in my lecture: I tore out pages from an old book and gave them to those present, asking them to make some changes to the text in order to turn it into a self-sufficient narrative. I did not mean that material should be taken at random - of course it must be selected - but with this procedure I wanted to give an example of how possible and easy it is to create teaching material. One-page stories can have a variety of uses: they can be exploited for reports, or for listening or reading comprehension. I also showed how to exploit picture stories and how to make them out of comics, or with stick figures.

In the lecture I dismissed as nonsense the attempt to set Oxford English as a model, arguing that if it is true that the study of a foreign language enables us to communicate with its native speakers, thus allowing us to better understand their culture, it is equally true that English is special, different: there is more to it than that, since it is not simply one of the many foreign languages in the world. It is the tool for communicating with the world, the modern *lingua franca*, as Graddol (2006:87) makes clear. I also discussed the implications this has for pedagogy. Teachers need not concentrate on American and British culture and literature, they need not focus on the particular idioms or sorts of slang used in the UK and in the USA, and they need not set Oxford English as their model. Rather, they should tell students that there is not one official way of pronouncing English, and that, besides Oxford English there are, for example, Australian English, New Zealand English, American English, Scottish English, and so on and so forth. Years later I found that the issue of teaching world Englishes had been addressed by researchers, among them Kachru (1982: 355-366).

In order to support my argument, I provided this funny example of New Zealand English, jokingly called Kiwese (New Zealand Herald 24 March 2012).

Brist - part of human anatomy between "nick" and "billy"  
 Bugger - as in mine's "bugger" than yours  
 Dimmer Kretz - those who believe in democracy  
 Error Buck - language spoken in countries like "Surria", "E. Jupp" and "Libbernon"  
 Ekka Dymocks - University staff  
 Guess - flammable vapour used in stoves  
 Buzniss - common type of degree  
 Chick Out Chucks - supermarket point of sale operators  
 Colour - violent forecloser of human life  
 Fashion Chups - Fish 'n chips  
 Cuss - Kiss  
 Thuck - thick  
 Muddle - As in "middle" of the room  
 Duck Hid - term of abuse directed mainly at men  
 Phar Lap - NZ's famous horse was christened "Phillip" but was incorrectly written down as Phar Lap by an Australian racing official who was not conversant in Kiwese.

It was my intention to illustrate the fact that there are several native variants of English and that one could not label them as "correct" or "incorrect". For instance, no one could say that New Zealanders pronounce English "wrongly".

My fourth lecture, which I gave on 22 February 2001, was entitled "Sam (uel Johnson) and the Art of ELT", echoing the novel *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Pirsig (1974). In the lecture I exploited a passage from Samuel Johnson's "Preface to Shakespeare", in order to express again my opposition to the inflexibility of methods. I pointed out that the passage shows foreign language teachers the flexibility they need in their job. The reason why I chose a literary passage is that the history of literature is part of the studies that Italian foreign language teachers have to undergo. This is the passage I was referring to:

**Samuel Johnson (2014):***Preface to Shakespeare*

The necessity of observing the unities of time and space arises from the supposed necessity of making the drama credible. The critics hold it impossible that an action of



months or years can be possibly believed to pass in three hours, or that the spectator can suppose himself to sit in the theatre while ambassadors go and return between distant kings or towns besieged. It is time to tell the critics that it is false that any representation is mistaken for reality. If the spectator imagines himself in Alexandria and believes that his walk to the theatre has been a voyage to Egypt he may imagine more. He that can take the stage for the palace of the Ptolemies may take it in half an hour for the promontory of Actium. Delusion, if delusion be admitted, has no certain limitations. Imitations produce pain or pleasure not because they are mistaken for realities but because they bring realities to mind. The unities of time and place arise from false assumptions and by circumscribing the extent of the drama lessen its variety. They are not essential and are always to be sacrificed to the nobler beauties of variety and instruction.

I discussed Samuel Johnson's emphasis on Shakespeare's rejection of Aristotle's theory, which assumed that the purpose of art was the pursuit of mimesis, i.e. the faithful imitation of reality, by rigidly following the unities of time, space and action.

When talking about the passage, I drew the teachers' attention to the inconsistency of a "politically correct" foreign language pedagogy. In particular I questioned the normal practice of speaking English all the time and avoiding translation, even while giving instructions or explaining grammar, as if teachers were native speakers unaware of their learners' mother tongue. Although this practice has the goal of providing full immersion in a real language context, I emphasized that in fact teachers are not in a real English-speaking environment, but in an Italian school, with 2 or 3 hours per week, and classes of 30 students who are tired, frustrated and unmotivated. I argued that the priority should be to help those students develop a positive attitude towards English and make them become independent learners.

In the lecture "Humour in ELT", of 15 October 2002, I discussed one of the pillars of my developing emotional framework, focusing on the value of humour-based activities in English classes as warm-ups, time-fillers, or a way to reduce tension. In particular I looked at how to use one-liners, jokes, limericks, humorous maxims, riddles and tongue-twisters. As far as tongue-twisters are concerned, I now think that in fact they are not very useful because they might be a problem even for native speakers, but at that time I was not yet aware of the problem.

The title of my last lecture, which I gave on 5 October 2004, was "An Imagination-centered Approach to English Language Teaching". In it, I emphasized the usefulness of exploiting the imagination in ELT, and argued that teachers can make fullest use of it by preventing students from *entirely* relying on visual or non-verbal communication: teaching should rely mainly on the power of words. Images are self-explanatory, and through them students will understand immediately; but this understanding will not have come through words. This can be seen in Mr Bean's films, Pink Panther cartoons and silent films, where the message is conveyed without any words. The English language teacher's aim should not simply be to help students understand, it should be to let them *learn* English. When miming, drawing or showing pictures to help students understand, the emphasis is on non-verbal factors. Of course, communication con-

sists of non-verbal as well as verbal factors, but perhaps the foreign language teacher's task is primarily to teach verbal communication.

Visual and non-verbal communication saves students the effort of inferring the meaning from the context, but it also means that the impact of any foreign language teaching strategy is weakened. In practical terms, English language teachers can exploit anything for which students need English while using their imagination. This does not mean that the use of images and films must be abandoned altogether; they can certainly be helpful, depending on the way they are exploited. For example, students can be asked to comment on or to tell picture stories. Today I am aware of the naivety behind these iconoclastic positions, but they may be of some value in showing my efforts to find my own way, free from the inflexibility of methods.

#### 6.4 The articles in the journal *Englishes*

I wanted to be as active as possible in publicizing my attitude of non-conformity and the teacher's right to experiment in order to do their job more rewardingly and, consequently, more effectively. Therefore, at the same time as I was lecturing at the British Council in Rome, I also wrote two short articles for the Italian journal for English Language teachers, *Englishes* (See the texts in full in Appendix 8).

The first article, entitled "Grammar and translation revisited", appeared in issue number 6 of 1998. In it I suggested a pragmatic and "non-ideological" attitude towards grammar and translation which, in spite of the disfavour in which they were currently held, could still "be part of an effective way of teaching" (Caruso 1998:16).

I claimed that the failure of a pedagogy based on the assumption that a foreign language could be learnt only through the use of translation and the study of grammar was undeniable. I emphasized, however, that

a completely different story is to consider translation and grammar as useful tools to be put in a teaching/learning context in which the purpose is communication (Caruso 1998: 16).

I argued that their usefulness consists in facilitating the learning process by favoring language awareness in a classroom context, where the natural use of the foreign language would be unthinkable, for such reasons as the limited time available (2/3 hours a week), class sizes of 20/30 students, and the widespread lack of motivation.

I also offered some ideas on how to make the study of grammar and the use of translation "tools of a communicative approach" (Caruso 1998:16). Concerning grammar, I wrote that it would be wise to reduce the number of rules that had to be taught, since "teaching grammar in depth is part of the grammar/translation approach, and it collides with language as communication"

(Caruso 1998:16). Since stuffing students' minds with rules would instill in them the feeling that language is rules and not communication, they might "be blocked by the FEAR they may make mistakes all the time". In the article I expressed my conviction that an "extreme preoccupation with accuracy might [...] cripple communication, while fluency and the knowledge of words will make communication possible" (Caruso 1998:16). The energy spent on the study of small grammatical details would be better spent on expanding students' vocabulary, because if "few grammatical errors will not prevent communication, poor vocabulary will" (Caruso 1998:17). As far as translation was concerned, I suggested having students translate from their mother tongue into the target language sentences focused on specific grammatical items.

However, although the study of grammar and the use of translation are useful and, I added, necessary, on their own they are not enough, since "the real secret for success" in teaching a foreign language is that "the language must be used" (Caruso 1998:17). In this respect I suggested a very simple activity: an oral report on a short passage the students have listened to and I concluded that teachers could creatively think of other ways themselves.

The second article, entitled "The study of literature in ELT: is it time for a change?", appeared in issue number 10 of the journal, published in 2000. In it I highlighted the irrationality, absurdity and ineffectiveness of the way English literature is dealt with in the Italian Lycees, where students who are at the beginners' stage as far as the study of English is concerned are expected to study passages by Shakespeare in the original 16<sup>th</sup> century language. I also questioned the idea that teachers "have to torture [...] students with literary technicalities as if they ought to be trained to become literary critics" (Caruso 2000:52).

I pointed out how teachers found it rewarding to make students study literature in the way they had done themselves at university, but in so doing they forgot that their task was "the teaching of English in an effective and successful way" (Caruso 2000:52). Priority ought to be given to providing students with the tools to communicate in English, rather than to keeping the teachers happy. On this issue I have a different view now, since I have become convinced that teachers need not always sacrifice their own interest. However, I still believe that expecting teen-agers, who are mostly beginners in the study of English, to grapple with Shakespeare's English is rather absurd.

I ended the article with some advice on what might be done when looking at literature in the foreign language classroom. First of all, it would make more sense to focus "on contemporary authors that provide a linguistic model closer to the language students really need if they want to communicate" (Caruso 2000:53) and, in addition, instead of studying texts in the chronological order in which they were written, a thematic study might be more profitable. It would also be useful to reduce the emphasis on the structural analysis of texts. I concluded that, although "this is not the revolution the school needs [...] these suggestions might make our [teachers'] work and the students' more sensible and more effective" (Caruso 2000:53).

The two articles did not present any dramatically new views of mine, since they dealt with the issues I had discussed in the British Council lectures, sometimes in the same words. I realize now that the positions taken in the articles are rather naïve and simplistic, lacking the breadth that my acquaintance with Postmethod approaches seemed to add. Nonetheless, the articles demonstrate my commitment to making public my dissatisfaction with a rigid system that stifled any original and personal contribution that teachers might make to foreign language pedagogy. The articles also show the direction in which my aspirations for change were leading me at that stage in my professional life.

## 6.5 Further developing my pedagogy

I gave my last lecture for the British Council a couple of weeks before leaving for Finland, where I was appointed lecturer in Italian at the University of Jyväskylä with a five-year contract. If I had not left I would have given the seventh lecture, which was going to be on what I then called “Problem-solving approach”. However, not only did my new job not stop me reflecting on foreign language pedagogy, but it gave me a new awareness which enabled me to deepen it further. It was at the University of Jyväskylä that I could put my emotional framework for language teaching fully into use. There were two main reasons for this. The first was that there I could work freely, without any of the constraints I was faced with in the school in Italy. The second was that there I became acquainted with the theories of Postmethod pedagogy, which provided me with the knowledge I needed to further develop my emotion-focused pedagogy.

What proved decisive in my reflections was finding Kumaravadivelu’s book, *Understanding Language Teaching*, published in 2006. The book helped me in many ways. First of all, it showed me that my old dissatisfaction with method was shared by many important researchers. Secondly, it made me acquainted with the richness and potential of Postmethod pedagogy. Thirdly, it enabled me to look at the history of foreign language pedagogy from a new angle and a new perspective. What I appreciated in Kumaravadivelu’s position was the idea that teachers can successfully cope with the daily challenges posed by the unpredictable and changing classroom reality only if they “theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize” (Kumaravadivelu 2006:184). I was particularly impressed by Kumaravadivelu’s view that by breaking with the inflexibility of methods, foreign language pedagogy “has just set sail in uncharted waters”, facing “new challenges as well as new opportunities” (Kumaravadivelu 2006:161).

In this chapter I have outlined the way my emotional framework took shape, urged on by my dissatisfaction with existing methods since the very start of my profession as an English language teacher. My pedagogical approach went through hesitation, uncertainties, and trial and error until it reached a decisive stage in its development when I came across Postmethod theories, which

encouraged me in my emotion-focused pedagogical experimentation. In the next chapter I will discuss the theoretical foundation of an emotion-focused framework in foreign language pedagogy.

## **7 FOCUSING ON EMOTIONS**

In this chapter I will outline research on the role of emotions in pedagogy in general and in foreign language pedagogy in particular. Furthermore, I will link existing research to my own pedagogical experimentation, discussing the three areas on which my emotional framework is focused, namely puzzles, humour and songs.

I would like to point out that although I have been experimenting in these three areas since joining the teaching profession, my acquaintance with the studies to which I am referring here occurred only slowly and gradually. It is to be noted that at first I lacked a consistent theoretical background and I simply proceeded by trial and error. It was later a matter of professional satisfaction and pride to find out that my intuitions had been and were the object of study by important researchers; discovering them enabled me to widen my horizons and considerably improve my teaching.

### **7.1 Overview of research on the role of emotions in foreign language teaching**

#### **7.1.1 The focus on emotions in pedagogy in general**

In order to highlight the features of a badly organized school system, Goleman (1996:95) asks: "Who does not recall school at least in part as endless dreary hours of boredom punctuated by moments of high anxiety?". When school is like this, besides being an educational failure, it is an enormous waste of human resources and energy. I think that researchers' efforts should be focused on pursuing a different model of school, and an effective way of doing this could be taking into account emotions.

Fredrickson (2013: 7) highlights how strongly human beings are affected by the experience of positive emotions which, although they are "subtle and brief", spark off "powerful forces of growth". As far as pedagogy is concerned,

Sylvester (1995:86) writes: "Emotion drives attention and attention drives learning". Hargreaves (1998:835) maintains that "emotions are at the heart of teaching", and he strengthens his point with his claim that

good teachers [...] are emotional passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and their classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy (1998:835).

To understand why and how emotions affect learning it is worth looking at the issue from a physiological point of view. The limbic system, located above the brain stem, interprets the emotional value of incoming stimuli, deciding whether they are good, bad or neutral. On the basis of its interpretation, it either opens or closes access to the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for working memory, that is the capacity of attention that holds in one's mind the facts which are essential for completing a given task or problem.

According to Goleman (1996:30), because of the connections between the limbic structures and the neocortex, emotions are crucial to effective thought to the extent that they can disrupt thinking itself. The signals of such emotions as anxiety and anger can sabotage the ability of the prefrontal lobe to maintain working memory. This is the reason why continual emotional distress can create deficits in children's intellectual abilities, crippling their capacity to learn.

Of the studies on the role that emotions play in learning, it is worth mentioning Vail (1994) who, in dealing with children's psychology, points out how,

faced with frustration, despair, worry, sadness, or shame, kids lose access to their own memory, reasoning, and the capacity to make connections (Vail n.d., How emotions affect the brain, para.1).

She argues that scared children perform poorly, and do not learn new information well, since anxiety is the enemy of memory. She also writes:

Emotion is the on / off switch for learning [...] The emotional brain, the limbic system, has the power to open or close access to learning, memory, and the ability to make novel connections (Vail n.d., How emotions affect the brain, para.2, 4).

Barbalet's work on the theory of emotion is useful for its foregrounding of the emotional context of learning. He argues that distance between people in social settings, particularly as it can be seen in learning settings, is a strong indicator of acceptance or rejection by those to whom one turns for recognition, especially parents, teachers and peers (Barbalet 1998:86). According to Barbalet (1998:86), confidence has its basis in social relationships, through which a person gains acceptance and recognition. Conversely, anxiety and fear have their basis in situations in which a person is denied acceptance or recognition.

A special condition that shows the central function of emotions in pedagogy is *flow*, which was studied by Csikszentmihalyi (2008), a psychologist from the University of Chicago. Flow is



the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at a great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it (Csikszentmihalyi 2008:4).

For Goleman, in flow one experiences “a feeling of spontaneous joy, even rapture”; it is a state in which “people become utterly absorbed in what they are doing” (Goleman 1996:91). Access to flow can occur when people find a task they are skilled at, and engage in it at a level that slightly challenges their skills (Goleman 1996:91). According to Csikszentmihalyi:

People seem to concentrate best when the demands on them are a bit greater than usual [...] if there is too little demand on them, people are bored. If there is too much for them to handle, they get anxious. Flow occurs in that delicate zone between boredom and anxiety (1986, para.10).

According to Goleman (1996:92), in flow the brain “quiets down”, because there is a lessening of cortical arousal. This state is “an oasis of cortical efficiency” (1996:92), allowing one to tackle the most challenging tasks with a minimum expenditure of mental energy. Worry, fatigue and nervousness cause a blurring of the precision of cortical effort, with too many superfluous areas being activated (Goleman 1996:92-93). For Goleman (1996:95), pursuing flow through learning is a more humane, natural, and also a more effective way to marshal emotions in the service of education and, I would add, of language education.

### 7.1.2 The focus on emotions in foreign language pedagogy

After this short overview of the literature on the importance of the emotions in teaching in general, I would like to focus on the role which emotions can play in foreign language teaching. First of all, it would be useful to mention Pavlenko’s studies on the relationship between emotions and bi- and multilingualism (2002, 2005, 2012). Pavlenko questions Chomsky’s monolingual ideology (2005:3), which is still the prevailing one, even though more than half of the world’s population experience emotions in more than one language (Pavlenko 2005:240). Her stated purpose is the pursuit of her “life-long project of rewriting monolingual linguistics to fit the real world – messy, heteroglossic, and multilingual” (2005:xii). She argues that

considering that the majority of the world population is bi- or multilingual, the perspective that takes into consideration bilingualism, heteroglossia, and linguistic diversity is a much more productive orientation toward linguistic theory or, for that matter, any theory of the human mind, including language and emotions research (2005:xiii).

Pavlenko has recently discussed affective processing in bilingual speakers, theorizing a condition of “disembodied” cognition (2012: 405) which might be of great interest for studies on the relationship between emotions and learning.

Arnold (1999:2) argues that more attention to affective aspects could lead to more effective second language learning. Teachers need to be aware of how



to overcome problems created by negative emotions, and how they can rouse and exploit more positive and facilitative emotions.

Dewaele (2011:36) points out that emotions are the driving force behind SLA (Second Language Acquisition) and that the ability to understand and communicate emotions in a foreign language is the key to successful social interactions in it. He therefore suggests that learners should try to develop this ability. In his opinion, teachers should present the target language not just as a tool for communication, but as an opportunity for learners to expand their symbolic selves and get emotionally and cognitively involved (Dewaele 2011:37). He points out that

users who learn a language only through formal instruction have a clear and long-lasting disadvantage compared to those who combine classroom learning and authentic interaction" (Dewaele 2011:35).

Consequently, he suggests, "Foreign language teachers might be able to counter the lack of authentic interactions by introducing various types of emotional discourse in the classroom" (Dewaele 2011:35).

According to Dewaele, "emotion is at the basis of any learning or absence of learning" (2011:24). When a stimulus is positively assessed, it will positively affect the amount of attention and effort given to it by the learner. When a stimulus is negatively assessed, the learner will devote less attention and effort to it, and this feeling may cause avoidance in the future (Dewaele 2011:24). Boredom and anxiety are, for Dewaele, the main causes for the lack of progress in foreign language learning, and they depend on the emotional climate in the classroom (Dewaele 2011:25).

Having realized the importance of the focus on emotions, in developing my approach I concentrated on three areas in which students' emotions can be involved and exploited in foreign language pedagogy: solving puzzles, singing, and humour. These three areas have been, and are, the backbone of my pedagogy. They are not meant to be taken to exhaust the range of possibilities a teacher can exploit in an emotional framework; they are simply what I personally have worked on and what I offer for reflection to other researchers and teachers. One might develop this approach further by exploring other areas. What I have done so far is simply take the first step into a limitless field.

## **7.2 Rousing students' curiosity and the desire for a challenge through solving puzzles**

Solving puzzles is one of the three areas on which my emotional framework is focused. It is useful because it teases learners, arousing their curiosity and provoking their interest in the challenge involved in searching for the solution to simple puzzles and problems. By "puzzle-solving" I mean what has traditionally in foreign language pedagogy been labelled "problem solving".

### 7.2.1 Problem solving and learning

The standard theory of problem solving, initially outlined by Newell, Shaw, and Simon (1958), focuses on how human beings respond when they are confronted with unfamiliar tasks (Langley & Rogers 2005: *The Standard Problem Solving Theory*, para.1 ). In his classic text on problem solving, Polya (1973:15) defined it as "finding a way out of a difficulty, a way around an obstacle, attaining an aim that was not immediately understandable".

Since in problem solving one is faced with a situation in which the best course of action is not immediately obvious, the route from problem to solution has to be found through different stages. These are indicated by Mayer and Hegarty (1996:34) as problem translation, problem integration, solution planning and solution execution. The first step involves translating the available information about the problem situation into internal mental models. The second step involves combining the different pieces of information together into a coherent structure. The last two steps consist of developing and carrying out the plan for solving the problem. The formulation of a solution strategy depends on successful transformation of the problem into the correct internal mental model.

Problem-solving theory has had a considerable effect on teaching. By 1988, Murray, Olivie and Human had completed several studies on young students' understanding of particular concepts before, during and after instruction. These experiences led them to conduct two teaching experiments based on the idea that

learning occurs when students grapple with problems for which they have no routine methods. Problems therefore come before the teaching of the solution method. The teacher should not interfere with the students while they are trying to solve the problem, but students are encouraged to compare their methods with each other, discuss the problem (Murray et al. 1998:169).

An emphasis on problem solving has led to the rise of Problem-based Learning (PBL), that is "an instructional strategy in which students confront contextualized, ill-structured problems and strive to find meaningful solutions" (Rhem 1998:1). In order for students to learn, they have to be faced with a problem which is put in such a way as to enable them to realize that they need some new knowledge to solve it. Such a procedure motivates students, who understand why the new knowledge is needed (McMaster University 2013: *What is PBL?*, para. 1). Students working in a PBL environment should be skilled in problem solving or critical thinking or "thinking on your feet", as opposed to rote recall (McMaster University 2013: *PBL and Problem Solving*, para. 1).

### 7.2.2 "Problem solving" in L2 pedagogy

The term "problem solving" was adopted by L2 authors to indicate activities involving the search for a solution to would-be "problems". For example, it was used by Winitz and Reeds (1975), who argued that language learning is essentially "a problem-solving activity" (Winitz & Reeds 1975:3). So called "prob-

lem-solving" activities started being used in the Communicative Teaching Method (Kumaravadivelu 2006:120) and they continued to be used in Natural and Communicational Approaches (Kumaravadivelu 2006:147). Even in Post-method pedagogy they are still considered to be effective procedures, as Kumaravadivelu (2006:190) shows.

Such procedures have been used in a variety of ways in foreign language teaching pedagogies. The Communicative Teaching Method emphasizes meaningful communication and uses information-gap activities in which one learner in a pair-work exchange knows something that the other learner does not. Littlewood (1981) provided a whole range of such activities. The Natural Approach and Communicational Approach try to involve learners in meaningful interactions based on what they call "problem solving" tasks, in which one has to search for solutions, on the assumption that work on meaning-making will lead to mastery of the target language. Kumaravadivelu (2006:147) has classified the procedures used by the Natural and the Communicational Approaches as information-gap activities, reasoning-gap activities and opinion-gap activities. In Postmethod pedagogy "problem-solving" tasks have been recommended by Stern, who advocates the simulation of real communication by using information-gap activities with "an element of unpredictability" (Stern 1992:316).

Examples of what are presented as "problem-solving" activities are found in such books as *Play Games with English* (Granger 1981), *Word Games with English* (Howard-Williams & Herd 1986), and *Puzzles for English Practice* (Methold 1978). The book *Jigsaw Tasks and Problem-solving Activities* (Klippel 1984) provides a wide choice of such activities. In "jigsaw tasks" each student has one or more pieces, which may be sentences from a story or parts of a picture or comic strip, that have to be fitted together. Participants have to interact in order to fit the pieces together correctly. In what Klippel (1984) calls "problem-solving" activities, learners have to find solutions to various types of problems, working individually, in pairs or groups.

In this overview, I would also like to mention Bourke's (1992:3) "problem-solving approach to grammar". Bourke argues that in traditional textbooks one finds a progression from examples through explanation to exercises. He considers this model to be "seriously flawed", because it is "teacher-centred", based on "minimal learner participation", and "largely predictable, boring and unchallenging" for the learner (1992:2). Moreover, its basis is the assumption that grammar is delivered "in prefabricated chunks" (1992:2). Bourke argues that in a "problem-solving approach to grammar", learners themselves "work inductively towards a solution" (1992:3). Students "are not given the rule or allowed to look it up in a grammar book", but instead they are faced with examples of the grammatical problem, "which they analyze and from which they induce a generalization" (1992:3). Thus, as Bourke argues (1992:3), learners play an active role in discovering significant facts for themselves.

Instead of pattern drills, substitution tables and gap-filling exercises, which are "notable for their yawn provoking banality, meaninglessness and lack of contextualization" (Bourke 1992:8), students should be presented with

what he calls a “problem-solving task”, in the form of a short dialogue or a narrative which provides a meaningful context for the problem (1992:4). In the process of this “problem-solving approach to grammar” Bourke draws attention to the following stages: problem finding, data analysis, hypothesis forming, hypothesis testing, rule revision, and final rule formulation (Bourke 1992:12).

However, there is no general agreement on the usefulness of “problem solving” in foreign language pedagogy. In this respect, I would like to mention the scepticism of Sheen, who writes:

given the great difficulty of learning the grammar and vocabulary of a foreign language, these cannot be learnt effectively as a by-product of communicative activity, or simply by carrying out problem-solving activities (Sheen 2003:226).

### 7.2.3 Why “puzzle solving” rather than “problem solving”

I have shown now that the expression “problem solving” is widely used in L2 teaching. However, I myself find it inappropriate and misleading. I must point out that, as I have shown in the previous subsection, problem solving is an extremely sophisticated scientific theory: it makes sense in dealing with complex issues, and special training is required on the part of teachers to prepare suitable material and on the part of students to use it. Because of their simple structure, the so-called “problem-solving” activities currently adopted in L2 pedagogy should rather be understood as puzzles, or bridge-the-gap activities, for which no real “problem-solving” strategy is necessary. For example, in interactions meant to find the information needed to bridge a gap, asking obvious questions will provide the solution. Using problem-solving procedures for the simple activities employed in foreign language pedagogy would be like using big game hunting equipment to catch a fly!

Bourke’s (1992:1) “grammatical problem-solving” is probably the only case in which a strategy is needed, and which would therefore, partially, justify the use of the label “problem solving” in foreign language pedagogy. Apart from some of the techniques suggested by Bourke to deal with grammar, it seems to me that what are generally presented as “problem-solving” activities in fact are extremely simple puzzles, which do not require any genuine “problem-solving” strategy at all. Therefore either one must declare that “problem solving” as used in L2 pedagogy has a very loose relationship, or no relationship at all, with the scientific theory of “problem solving”, or one uses a different term. Rather than “problem-solving”, it would probably be better to call these activities “puzzle-solving”. There is one more reason why I am inclined to use “puzzle solving” instead of “problem solving”. It is the reason that Allwright (2005:365) suggests in describing his Exploratory Practice Framework: in his opinion the term “puzzle” is preferable to “problem” because of the negative connotations of the latter.

Anyway, regardless of the terminology, I argue that such simple activities are essential in an L2 teaching strategy and they should be used systematically, because looking for a solution to as many simple puzzles as possible will grad-

ually develop L2 competence. Teachers themselves can easily create the kind of material needed for these activities, and they should do it themselves, for various reasons. First of all, the material has to be tailored to suit the level and needs of a particular class. Secondly, if puzzle-based activities are available for English and the more widely spoken languages, little or nothing is available for the less spoken languages. Thirdly, teachers' pride and motivation are increased by the use of their own material. And lastly, puzzle-based teaching calls for a considerable number of activities, all of which are unlikely to be found directly in books; it must be the teachers' responsibility to create them.

Puzzle-solving activities are not directly associated with any particular method or pedagogy. They are extremely flexible and can be used for individual work, and in pair- and group-work interactions. They are not affected by the fall of methods: they have outlived that, having been adopted in Postmethod frameworks as well. Their pedagogical value is undeniable, since they provide motivation by arousing learners' curiosity and presenting them with a challenge.

### 7.3 The role of songs and music

Music, too, can profitably be used as a pedagogical tool. Suggestopedia, a method introduced by the Bulgarian psychotherapist, Georgi Lozanov (1978), uses classical music to relax students, on the principle that relaxation supports learners' retention of vocabulary and language structures. However, in Lozanov's method there is no work on songs.

The value of songs in foreign language teaching seems to be gaining recognition, and songs are now found in a number of course books, for example: *Eine kleine Deutschmusik* (Kind 1983); *Shout!* (Nolasco 1998), an ESL course, including a song every two chapters; *Enjoy the Music* (Rubies 1997), a short course using songs as the basis for ESL; *Gente que canta: canciones para estudiantes de español* (People who sing: Songs for students of Spanish) (Corpas 1999); *Singing Grammar* (Hancock 1998), which uses songs to teach English grammar; and *Tune in to English: Learning English through familiar melodies* (Kind 1980).

Songs increase motivation in the classroom. In discussing the value of pedagogical work on songs, Failoni (1993:104) argued that

the addition of music [meaning songs] to the foreign language classroom as a teaching method may be a way to focus student's attention, and produce a more committed learner.

Purcell (1992) argues that while listening over and over again to a narration or dialogue might be boring to students, listening to a song many times can seem less monotonous to them because of the rhythm and melody (Purcell 1992: Establishing goals, para.2). For Millington (2011:136), "songs, in particular choral



singing, can help to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere that makes the classroom a non-threatening environment”.

A big advantage of using songs in FLT is that they involve the whole brain in the learning process. As Borchgrevink (1982: 154-156) writes, “singing and almost any musical performance implies extensive integration and cooperation between the hemispheres”. This view is shared by Iudin-Nelson (1987:84), according to whom songs in the language classroom make use of bimodal instruction, since music is processed in the right brain and speech in the left. The Contemporary Music Approach highlights the combination of the non-verbal processes of the right hemisphere of the brain with the verbal analogic-based processes governed by the left hemisphere, with the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of learning (Anton 1990:1169). This approach considers singing “one of the most effective memory aids available to us” (Anton 1990:1169). Through songs, intonation and pronunciation are learnt naturally and grammatical structures are reinforced (Anton 1990:1169).

In order to fully demonstrate the potential of songs, it is appropriate here to give some information about involuntary mental rehearsal, which is the general term used in psychology for mental playback. When this phenomenon is related to contact with a foreign language, it is called *din*. The *din* phenomenon was first discussed by Barber (1980:29-30), who explained it as “words, sounds, intonations, and phrases, all swimming about in the voices of people I talked with”. Krashen (1983:41) defines *din* as “an involuntary rehearsal of words, sounds, and phrases”, which shows that the natural language acquisition process is taking place.

The *din* triggered by music is called by Murphey (1990) the *Song Stuck in My Head Phenomenon* (SSIMHP). While, according to Krashen (1983:44), *din* seems to wear off after a few days, Salcedo (2002:59), who studied the effects of songs on text recall and involuntary mental rehearsal, points out that the SSIMHP may stay for years. Wilcox (1996:10) argues that, “as the song or melody persists in one’s head long after the audible singing has stopped, the music continues to enhance the learner’s mental stimulus”. Salcedo also writes that “advertisers are experts at using this technique to promote catchy slogans and jingles that we sometimes just can't forget!” (2002:79). In this respect, Murphey (1990:57) suggests that “perhaps the advertisers have some secrets teachers could learn”.

The use of songs as a memory aid is highlighted by a number of researchers, e. g. Failoni, who writes (1993:98) that “Many people often remember rhyme, rhythm or melody better than ordinary speech”. McElhinney and Annett (1996:399) argue that “the integration of the temporal aspect of a tune with the text might promote better organization of material and consequently enhance recall”.

Concerning the emotional implications of the exploitation of songs in foreign language teaching, Murphey and Alber (1985:794) argue that pop songs might be considered the “motherese of adolescence” and can provide the second language learner with valuable input. For them, a song is a non-threatening,

non-demanding, affective and communicative “teddy bear-in-the-ear” (Murphey & Alber 1985:794). Murphey (1989:3 and foll.) reports a study on the top 50 English songs in the European Hot 100 in *Media and Music* of Sept. 12, 1987. The study reveals that 80% of the songs had to do with love in one of its three phases (beginning, established, ending). It shows that 94% of the songs had no specification of time whatsoever and 80% no indication of place. When times and places were mentioned, or implied, they were usually vague. Moreover, 62% of the songs made no gender reference. According to Murphey (1989:5), this non-specificity allows songs to “happen” wherever and whenever they are heard. Because of their vague referents, they may be appropriated by listeners and assigned individual meaning (Murphey 1989:5). A song becomes part of the situation in which it is heard, since listeners tend to associate what is happening to them with the songs they are listening to (Murphey 1989:5).

Murphey suggests in particular the use of pop music with younger learners: it presents authentic language, and is significant for the young as “it brings their youth culture into the classroom, giving it value, and making school more relevant to them” (Murphey 1985:13). Music thus serves as a powerful stimulus in the classroom, but “teaching for this peak relevance demands that teachers continuously assimilate current material from the present” (Murphey 1985:13). For Murphey this does not mean that a hit song a year later, or traditional folk songs, will not be beneficial in ELT, “but these songs will not have the intense relevance of what is vibrating in the students’ heads” (Murphey 1985:13).

In his discussion of pop songs, Murphey (1989) also focuses on their linguistic features, maintaining that they correspond to the reading level of an American child after five years of schooling. Besides, the number of words per minute of pop songs is about half the rate of normal conversational speech. Consequently, he argues that

Pop songs are affective, simple and repetitive, with psycholinguistic and neuropsychological qualities that may make their discourse extremely useful in the classroom (Murphey 1989:4).

Although Murphey is concerned with ELT and his focus is on songs in English, his findings are applicable to foreign language teaching as a whole. A number of other researchers, besides Murphey, have discussed the value of songs. Ludke (2009:8) points out that through songs it is possible to teach vocabulary, grammar, listening comprehension, speaking skills, pronunciation, reading skills and writing skills. She suggests a variety of activities which are simple and easy to implement, meant for teachers without any formal musical training. For Millington (2011:134), too, songs can be considered valuable pedagogical tools: he thinks they can help learners to improve their listening skills and pronunciation, and can be useful in teaching vocabulary and sentence structures. Poliquin (1988:6,7) highlights the improvement in pronunciation skills through the use of songs. Failoni (1993:98), again, argues that “practically all grammar points can be found in music texts, and the texts also offer a wide variety of vocabulary”.



Concerning the way songs should be used, it is worth mentioning the position of the Dogme movement (Thornbury 2000:2), which forbids music that is not actually played in the classroom; it indeed bans all recorded listening material. On this basis, the source of all listening activities should be the students and teachers themselves. As a matter of fact, this is what I did myself in the early stages of developing my emotional framework, when I deliberately refused to use recordings. I first sang any songs myself, and then the class would join in, without using any recorded model. I justified this on the grounds that what mattered most was having fun. Now I consider this position too radical: listening to a recording will not do any harm. On the contrary, it will probably increase students' interest.

The use of songs in the classroom is not, of course, new. I remember that there were one or two songs in the English textbooks I used when I was at school, forty years ago, although we were never allowed to sing them in the classroom, since it was felt that they would *delay* our work. Failoni (1993:98) complains that "all too often, music in the classroom has been relegated to recreation and entertainment status". Millington (2011:134) argues that songs are used relatively ineffectively when they are simply activities between learning. According to him, what is needed is to turn singing a song into a structured task. This might be "one way to help transfer the words in a song into use and maximize the potential of songs as teaching and learning tools" (Millington 2011:139). This is what I advocate myself: the systematic exploitation of songs in foreign language teaching, in order to maximize their incredible potential.

However, we should take heed of Murphey's warning: he suggests that "the actual use of pop songs in the classroom should be kept enjoyable and not spoiled by too much dissection" and artificial substitution drills, which "will kill the original pleasure value" (1985:13). In his view, what matters most is having fun" (1989:4). I have experienced this myself in my lessons, and have realized that there are times when the students are too tired to do very much, and a simple karaoke activity is more than enough.

#### **7.4 The humanizing power of humour**

Another factor which can profitably be exploited in an emotional teaching framework is humour, which can have various applications. Some people claim that laughter, besides relieving pain, also reduces stress and improves the immune system response (Morrison 2008:2). Friedman, Friedman and Amoo (2002: Introduction para.1) point out how humour and laughter can prove helpful to individuals with serious illnesses and disabilities. Besides its therapeutic use, humour is widely exploited in advertising, as is shown in an old study by Stewart and Furse (1986). Weinberger and Gulas (1992: 36) mention research according to which 94% of advertising practitioners see humour as an effective way to gain attention.

Because of its potential, humour must not be overlooked by educators. Friedman, Friedman and Amoo (2002: subsection 3.3, para. 2) show that even a supposedly boring course, such as statistics, can be livened up with interesting and humorous examples, which can transform the statistics classroom into a more effective learning environment. Excellent examples of how profitably humour can be exploited in lecturing are provided by Ken Robinson. There are several videos on the web showing his lectures. The one entitled *On Passion* (Youtube, n.d.) is a good example of his special style. The video opens with the students in the auditorium singing happily. Then Ken Robinson starts his hilarious 50-minute lecture on creativity and passion, in which he makes humorous comments and tells anecdotes and funny stories from his own personal life. I tried to count the number of times he elicits a burst of laughter from his audience, but it was not easy because it is a continuous flow of humour and fun. However, there seemed to be more than 60 outbursts in 50 minutes! More than 20 times he giggles himself. As the audience's reaction testifies, the impact is impressive.

According to Goleman:

One way to help someone think through a problem is to tell them a joke. Laughing, like elation, seems to help people think more broadly and associate more freely (Goleman 1996:85).

This happens because humour promotes connectedness which, as has been clearly shown by Lieberman (2013: 11), is a basic human need and is conducive to psychological well-being. The link between connectedness and humour is emphasized by Cozolino (2013: 87), according to whom "all forms of humour serve human bonding by communicating that we accept and care for each other". He also argues that "teacher-student attunement" in the classroom "creates states of mind and brain that make students better able to incorporate, recall and use new information" (Cozolino 2013: 18).

Morrison (2008:28) encourages educators to use humour in order to increase learners' capacity for memory retention and to support an optimal learning environment. Furthermore, she advocates the exploitation of the positive energy of humour, which she calls "humergy" (Morrison 2008:13), to promote a balanced lifestyle and reduce stress. She points out that, while fear and stress inhibit learning, leading to actual memory loss (Morrison 2008:67), humour increases memory storage and retrieval (Morrison 2008:2-3). She also argues that "maximizing our capacity to use language through the skillful use of humor will increase the number and speed of the neural connections in the brain" (Morrison 2008:3). Morrison's views are shared by Cozolino, who argues that humour reduces anxiety (Cozolino 2013:89), and that minimal stress and arousal encourage the biochemical processes conducive to neuroplasticity (Cozolino 2013:18), that is, the ability of neurons to connect with one another (Cozolino 2013:159). Cozolino (2013:90) also highlights the following benefits of humour and laughter for learning: the improvement of memory recall, an increase in

understanding and attention, the activation of brain growth hormones and stimulation of the brain regions processing abstract thinking.

It is also worth quoting what Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the founder of a humanistically oriented pedagogy, later developed into the worldwide Waldorf school network, wrote about humour in education: "There should be some humor in the instruction since otherwise memory will suffer" (Steiner et al. 1998:246).

Taking into account the views mentioned above, it can be argued that humour can play an important role in foreign language pedagogy. In particular I recommend the regular use of jokes in the classroom. This has been part of my emotional framework since the very start. In a joke book or on a joke web-site one can select jokes according to different criteria, such as their length, the time available, their subject, the type of humour that will make sense to the class in that particular cultural context and, lastly, the grammatical items involved. As far as how to use them is concerned, the teacher might simply tell a joke, or more directly involve the class with activities including gap filling, putting jumbled parts in order, guessing the punch line, listening comprehension, reading comprehension, telling each other a joke in pair work, and so on.

## 7.5 A wonderful opportunity

In this chapter, I have discussed the theoretical foundations of an attempt to exploit emotions in foreign language teaching. In particular, I have shown how this can be profitably done in three areas: puzzles, songs and humour. I have exploited these three areas myself, after realizing the pedagogical effectiveness of focusing on emotions, which happened at the very start of my teaching career. However, I have to admit that initially my efforts were far from being systematic, for two main reasons: firstly, because I lacked the thorough and consistent theoretical framework which I have built up over time and, secondly, because I had to fight the bureaucracy, inflexibility and inefficiency of the Italian school system. Eventually, in the autumn of 2004, I was offered the wonderful opportunity to apply my pedagogical approach free from the constraints of bureaucratic narrow-mindedness. I was appointed as a lecturer in Italian at the University of Jyväskylä, where I had the chance to systematically apply my emotional framework in foreign language pedagogy.

## 8 SYSTEMATICALLY APPLYING AN EMOTIONAL FRAMEWORK: MY PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIMENTATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

### 8.1 General information on my experiment

This pedagogical experiment was carried out at the University of Jyväskylä for four academic years with students from the following courses: Italian ITAA125 (Kielten Laitos - Language Department, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009) and Norwegian (Kielikeskus - Language Centre, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011).

TABLE 2 Courses and number of students involved; nominal course duration and actual time used for the assessment of the students' progress.

COURSE	NO. OF STUDENTS	LESSONS/HOURS	LESSONS/HOURS BETWEEN ENTRY AND FINAL TESTS
Italian 2007-2008 2nd semester (ITAA125)	11	13/19,5	9/13,5
Italian 2008-2009 (ITAA125)	6	26/39	24/36
Norwegian 2009	8	20/30	16/24
Norwegian 2010	6	20/30	NO FINAL TEST

As the table above shows, the total of the students involved in this experiment is 31. It might be objected that it is too small to be of any significance. However, the research is not meant to provide a pattern to be applied to any context. Rather, its purpose is to offer material for reflection on the implementation of an emotional framework in foreign language teaching. This will hopefully make my study worthy of consideration, regardless of the number of people involved. It is to be emphasized that my approach in the collection and analysis of data was qualitative. This involved regularly eliciting students' feedback in order to

obtain information about their reactions to my emotional framework. Consequently, none of the numerical data, e.g. that concerning the improvement in the students' proficiency, is used for any statistical analysis, but it is presented as an indicator of how the course was organized, how the students' coursework was carried out and how their test results developed. The results of the proficiency tests are shown here along with the students' feedback to illustrate the fact that the students seemed to work purposefully, that they seemed to progress and that they also possibly enjoyed the lessons. Finally, regardless of the positive numerical results, those tests show how serious my effort was in carrying out my research.

The pedagogical experiment entailed work on puzzle-solving activities, humour and songs, i. e. the three areas on which my emotional framework focuses. The students were informed of the project at the beginning of the courses and most of them agreed to be involved. As I needed the students' attendance, in order to encourage them to come, we agreed that by attending a minimum number of lessons they would be exempt from the formal, final examination. Their assessment would be based on the activities done in the classroom.

In the Italian course in the academic year 2007-2008, I used practices which I had developed during my 17 years as an English language teacher in the Italian Lycee. Through trial and error I realized that adjustments were needed, and in the following year, 2008-2009, in the new Italian course, I improved the assessment procedure, and some of the activities. In the Norwegian courses, which were a big challenge for me, since I had never taught Norwegian before, I adopted the improved pattern of the second Italian course.

Although the numerical data concerning the assessment of the students' proficiency do not play a central role in this research, I would like to give some details about the tests I used. The tests were based on multiple choice listening comprehension tasks designed by myself (See Appendix 1). They were meant to be used as normal activities in my courses and thus they should not be taken as standardized language proficiency tests. Nonetheless, they may be useful in providing information on the improvement in the students' proficiency. In order to make my study more substantial, I did use the criteria of simple triangulation: 1) the final assessment of Italian 1 and both the entry and final assessment of Italian 2 consisted of two tests, designed to calculate the average result; 2) in both Italian courses the final tests were the same, and in both Norwegian courses the entry test was the same.

I prepared the tests as follows. For the Italian courses, I chose stories from an Italian book for children (Malerba 2004). For the Norwegian courses I used folk tales from the collection by Asbjørnson and Moe (2012). Both the Italian and the Norwegian stories were meant to be read, not listened to, so it was necessary to make some changes in order to make the material suitable for listening comprehension. The difficulty of the entry tests and the final tests had to be approximately the same, in order for it to be possible to make a reliable comparison, and it seemed to me that the stories for each of the two stages somehow provided approximately equivalent language difficulties.

Each test for the Italian courses was made up of 12 sets of choices, while each test for the Norwegian courses had 10 sets of choices. In both cases, the tests concerned comprehension of the text. It is possible that using a standardized test would have given a more reliable, or a more generalizable, result of the students' language proficiency. However, tests like that are simply not available in either Italian or Norwegian. Further, my focus here was not on examining the development of the students' proficiency per se. Rather, the focus was primarily on examining and developing the teacher's pedagogical framework, and this is why a teacher-designed test also seemed the most appropriate tool.

The first semester of the first Italian course is not included in this study as it was a sort of preparation for my research and was used for adjusting the criteria and procedures. It is to be noted that I decided to skip the final assessment test in the 2010 Norwegian course. I made this decision because the students' initial level as shown in the entry test was much higher than it was in the same entry test in 2009 (90% correct answers, as against 52.5%), and I did not feel I would be able to raise it any further. Thus I chose primarily to exploit the course to test the students' reaction to my emotional framework.

The entry test was not always carried out in the first lesson. In the 2007-2008 Italian course, it was done in the second lesson. The final test was never done in the last lesson. In the second semester of the 2007-2008 Italian course, which consisted of 13 lessons, it was done in the tenth and eleventh lessons. In the 2008-9 Italian course, which consisted of 26 lessons, it was done in lessons 23 and 25. In the 2009 Norwegian course, it was done in the seventeenth of the twenty-lesson course. The choice in each case depended on my wish to involve as many students as possible in the assessment tests. I had to take into consideration that theoretically those who had attended the agreed minimum number of lessons might then stop coming, and so the final tests had to take place before most students reached that minimum.

I would also like to briefly discuss the relevance of my pedagogical experiment in terms of the time it involved, which ranged from 19.5 hours in the first Italian course to 39 in the second Italian course. If one uses English as a comparison, intensive EFL course providers estimate that 300-400 hours of study are required for one IELTS (International English Language Testing System) level (Graddol 2006:96). In the British Council in Rome, to offer another example, each of the 9 levels of the courses they offer (from beginners to advanced) consists of 90 hours of study (British Council Italy, n.d.). In the light of these data, the hours covered by my experiment are not many. They are not insignificant, though, since my ambition was not to lead students to a perfect mastery of the foreign language in question. My goal was simply to test the students' reaction to my emotional framework during some typical university-level courses, and for this purpose even the little time available proved precious.

Finally, an important consideration is that in almost all the courses I was faced with very heterogeneous classes as far as knowledge of the language was concerned. This turned out to be a challenge, not a drawback.

## 8.2 Description of the course activities

I will now describe in detail the activities I used. Some are quite common in foreign language teaching, others I have designed myself. They cover all three areas of my emotional framework: songs, puzzles and humour.

### Work on short texts

The bulk of the activities in the classroom consisted of work on short texts and such activities took up most class time, too. This is synthesized in the table below. Short texts, by which I mean “one-page stories”, provided material for the following puzzle-solving activities:

- gap filling
- ordering jumbled parts
- finding the error
- asking questions to fill the gaps
- multiple choice
- reading comprehension
- listening comprehension.

Work on a short text, which might involve several activities in a sequence, was concluded with students telling each other the story in pairs or groups, and sometimes producing a summary, a comment or a report in writing.



TABLE 3 The activities I have done on short texts

RC	students read the text on their own	teacher and students discuss the solution together	teacher reads or recording is played	students provide a title for the text	students answer comprehension questions	teacher reads or recording is played	students write a commenta summary/ a report
LC	students listen to the recording or to the teacher reading						
MC	teacher reads or recording is played while students choose the right options						
FLL	words might be provided or not						
JMB	students order jumbled parts						
ERR	students look for error/s deliberately inserted by the teacher						
ASK	pair work: one has the complete text, one has the text with gaps to be filled by asking questions						
RC reading comprehension; LC listening comprehension; MC multiple choice; FLL fill in the blanks; JMB jumbled parts to be ordered; ERR look for the error; ASK questions to fill gaps							

### Pair-work and group interaction

In the activity which I have indicated as ASK in the table above, there was pair-work interaction in which one of the pair had the complete text and the other had the text with blanks to be filled in by asking questions. There was also pair-work interaction in the activity which involved telling each other the story. Pair- or group-work interaction was also involved in the following activities:

- One student had a picture and gave instructions to another, who had to make a drawing, following the instructions. Questions were allowed, if needed.
- Word game: one student thought of a word and the other had to find it out by asking yes/no questions.
- *Guess Who? Game* (Coster 1979). This is a game for two players, each of whom has a board with the pictures and names of 24 people on it. Each player chooses one of the 24 people. The players take it in turns to ask yes /no questions to find out who their opponent has selected. Although Italian and Norwegian translations of the game already exist, I used my own translation.

### Other activities based on individual work

While the short texts could be used for individual or pair/group-work, there were some activities which required only individual work:

- Solving a crime presented in a picture story and writing the solution down
- Writing the missing captions for cartoons
- Matching daily life expressions and drawings ...
- Answering riddles
- Matching jokes and punch lines

- Matching cartoons and captions
- Answering a personality questionnaire
- Completing a word chain: the students had to find a new word from an existing one by changing, adding or deleting a letter and allowing definitions given by the teacher
- Writing the punch line for jokes they are given with the punch line missing

### Work on songs

As far as work on songs was concerned, the following activities were used:

**Reconstructing the text.** First I let the students listen to the song without any interruption, then I stopped it several times to let them write down the words. Next I let them listen to it again without any interruptions. Lastly I gave the students the text so that they could check for themselves how much they had understood of it, and we all sang the song together.

**Reading comprehension.** Students first read the text of the song and answered some comprehension questions on it, and then their answers were discussed. Finally, they listened to the song again and sang it together.

**Gap filling.** The students were given the text with blanks to be filled in using the single words provided. When they had finished, the words they had inserted were discussed in the class, and last of all the complete text was provided and the song was listened to and sung together.

### Work on short films or video clips

When working with film material I began by explaining some key words and expressions. Then students were given a sheet of paper with some comprehension questions to answer while watching the video clip, which was shown more than once. We discussed the answers in the class, and then the students had to remember the story and tell it to each other, working in pairs. Finally they might be asked to write a short summary of the film, or a comment on it. Preparing suitable video clips is not a problem if one works on AVI format films and uses editing software.

### Work on grammar

In the Italian courses I did not need to work on grammatical explanations, because grammar was dealt with in other parallel courses which the students of Italian attended as part of their studies. However, grammar was systematically discussed in both Norwegian courses. I took it for granted that the students already knew Swedish, which is obligatory in Finnish schools, and I thought that it would be easy for them to learn Norwegian grammar because of the similarity between the two languages. I gave very short, simple explanations and had the students do some exercises, which we then discussed together. Apart from the extreme simplification, which is advocated by Thornbury (2000:2), and responding to the stu-

dents' wish to check if they had done the exercise correctly by discussing the solutions in the classroom, there was little that was original in the work on grammar which, in any case, was not the focus of the two Norwegian courses.

The following table shows the number of times the different activities were used in the lessons in the four courses. The numbers outside the brackets refer to the part of the course in which the students' progress was assessed, the numbers in brackets refer to the entire course. Concerning Norwegian 2, although there was no final assessment of proficiency, the data has been provided here since it will be related to the students' feedback.

TABLE 4 Occurrence of the activities in the lessons

ACTIVITIES	COURSES			
	Italian 1 - 13 lessons	Italian 2 - 26 lessons	Norwegian 1 - 20 lessons	Norwegian 2- 20 lessons
<b>WORK ON SHORT TEXTS</b>				
Reading comprehension	1 (2)	13	7 (9)	8
Listening comprehension	5 (6)	15	4 (5)	5
Multiple choice	1 (2)	3	2	2
Provide title	1	12 (13)	2	2
Gap filling	1 (2)	5	5 (6)	4
Jumbled parts	2	6 (7)	3	2
Find the error		2		2
Questions to fill gaps	2 (3)	5	2	
Tell each other the story	8 (11)	20	9 (11)	8
Write report or summary	2 (3)	9	6	4
Work on jokes/provide punch line*				9
<b>WORK ON SONGS</b>				
Reconstructing text	2 (4)	4		
Reading comprehension		4	2 (3)	6
Gap filling		1	4 (5)	4
<b>WORK ON VIDEOS</b>				
Comprehension questions	2 (3)	1 (2)	1	1
Written report or summary	1 (2)	0 (1)		
Tell each other the story	0 (1)			
<b>INTERACTION*</b>				
Instructions for drawing		3	1	
Guess word	1	2		1
Guess who game		1	1	1
<b>INDIVIDUAL WORK</b>				
Match drawings and daily life expr.				1
Match cartoons and captions	1	1	1	2
Solve picture police case	5 (7)	18	6	8
Write captions for cartoons	1 (2)			
Riddles		1		18
Matching jokes and punch lines			2	2
Personality questionnaire	2 (3)	7		
<b>WORK ON GRAMMAR</b>				
Explanation			8 (10)	8
Exercises			3 (4)	8

The comparison of the four courses shows that the **reading comprehension** activity using one-page stories was used only twice in Italian 1, but played a more central part in the other courses, occurring in half of the lessons in Italian 2, 9 times out of 20 in Norwegian 1 and 8 times out of 20 in Norwegian 2. The **Listening comprehension** was used in more than half of the lessons in Italian 2, almost half of the lessons in Italian 1, and a quarter of the lessons in the two Norwegian courses. **Providing titles for stories** was used in half of the lessons in Italian 2, but was rarely used in the other courses. **Ordering jumbled parts** was used in one in four lessons in Italian 2, seldom in the other courses. The most frequent activity in all the courses was **telling each other the story**, which was used in more than three-quarters of the lessons in Italian 1 and 2, while in Norwegian 1 and 2 it was used in half of the lessons. **Writing reports or summaries** was used most of all in Italian 2, where it was used one time out of three, while in the other courses it was seldom used. **Solving picture police cases** occurred in two thirds of the lessons in Italian 2 and in less than half the lessons in the other courses. Some activities were not performed in all the courses: for example, **find the error**, which was used only in Italian 2 and Norwegian 2. **Questions to fill the gaps** occurred in one fifth of the lessons in Italian 1 and 2, very seldom in Norwegian 1 and never in Norwegian 2. **Drawing by following instructions** was only used in Italian 2 and Norwegian 1. **Guess the word** was not used in Norwegian 1 and the *Guess Who Game* was not used in Italian 1. **Matching jokes and punch lines** were used exclusively in the Norwegian courses, and **personality tests** only in the Italian courses. **Providing the punch line to jokes** was used only in Norwegian 2. **Riddles** were almost exclusively used in Norwegian 2, where they were, however, used regularly. **Work on songs** was done in all the courses, but it simply consisted of text reconstruction in Italian 1 and was more varied in Italian 2 and Norwegian 1 and 2.

The variety in the frequency and type of activities depended on my realization that some of them turned out to be more interesting or more useful, and it also depended on my discovery of new ones. The courses may be described as work in progress, being characterized by permanent experimentation. Norwegian 2 was the course in which the three areas of my emotional framework (songs, puzzles and humour) were most fully exploited, thanks to the experience I had gained and the gradual improvement I had made in the previous courses. Norwegian 2 was also the course in which the exploitation of songs reached its peak, since they were used in half of the lessons. Furthermore, in this course I asked riddles in almost every lesson and put considerable emphasis on jokes. In spite of these differences, the students' appreciation in the four courses, as expressed in their feedback, was constant. This might mean that, regardless of the changes, the atmosphere of the courses did not depend on any particular activity, and the students' perception remained unchanged.

### 8.3 Features of individual courses

#### 8.3.1 Italian 1 - academic year 2007-2008

##### Activities during the lessons

Since the first semester must be considered a trial period, it is not included in this study. The table below shows the number of times the activities were used in the second semester of the course. The numbers outside the brackets refer to the part of the course between the entry test and the final test, the numbers in brackets refer to the entire course.

TABLE 5 The number of times the activities were used in the lessons

<b>ITALIAN 2007/2008 second semester: 13 lessons</b>	
<b>WORK ON BRIEF STORIES</b>	
Reading comprehension	1 (2)
Listening comprehension	5 (6)
Multiple choice	1 (2)
Provide title	1
Gap filling	1 (2)
Jumbled parts	2
Questions to fill gaps	2 (3)
Tell each other the story	8 (11)
Write report or summary	2 (3)
<b>WORK ON SONGS</b>	
Reconstructing text	2 (4)
<b>WORK ON VIDEOS</b>	
Comprehension questions	2 (3)
Written report or summary	1 (2)
Tell each other the story	0 (1)
<b>INTERACTION*</b>	
Guess word	1
<b>INDIVIDUAL WORK</b>	
Match cartoons and captions	1
Solve picture police case	5 (7)
Write captions for cartoons	1 (2)
Personality questionnaire	2 (3)

The assessment of the students' progress was to be carried out in nine lessons, from the one in which the entry test was done (lesson 2), to the one before the final test (lesson 10).

Most of the work in the classroom revolved around one-page stories, for which there were various types of stimulating activities, especially comprehension questions and telling each other the story, but also ordering jumbled parts,

filling the gaps, and providing titles. All these activities might be related to puzzle solving, which was also more directly used in half of the lessons, through the use of simple police cases that the students had to solve. Work on songs was not significant, since they were rarely used and the activities on them involved only the reconstruction of the text. The exploitation of humour involved work on funny stories, but not joke telling.

### Students' background and reasons for studying Italian

The students were asked to provide information on their previous studies by answering the following questions: 1) Where have you studied Italian before? 2) How long? 3) Have you been to Italy? 4) Where? 5) How long? They were also asked to give their reasons for deciding to study Italian.

I only report the replies of the students who took both the entry and the two final tests. On the basis of the information which I was given and the results of the tests I have outlined the students' profiles. In order to maintain confidentiality, students have been given false names.

**Berta** had a previous knowledge of French and Latin, which seemed to make things easier for her. Her marks were **92%** in the first test and **96%** in the final test.

**Eeva** was an absolute beginner; in the first test she scored **25%**, and in the final test **33%**.

**Fiona** had already studied Italian at high school, which accounts for her score of **75%** in the first test. In the final test she had the same: **75%**. The lack of progress between the two tests probably means that her interest in the language, which depended mainly on her hoping to go to Italy to study, failed to have any further effect.

**Greta** had some previous knowledge of Italian, a background of Romance studies and a strong affective motivation, depending on two factors: firstly, the fact that she liked Italy, and secondly, the awareness that, in her own words, she was "distinguishing herself from the mass, by studying something special". This accounts for her high score in the first test, **100%**, which obviously could not be higher in the final test, where it was the same, **100%**.

**Jenni** did not give much information. However, from what she wrote about her journeys to Italy and her study of Italian when she was still in high school, we can assume that she had a strong motivation, which accounts for her high score in the first test, **83%**, and in the final test, **92%**.

**Kati's** excellent results (she scored **100%** in both the entry test and the final test) seem to depend on three factors: her gift for languages, prior acquaintance with another Romance language, French, of which she highlighted the similarity with Italian, and the feeling that by studying Italian she was doing something "special and uncommon", which increased her motivation.

**Laura** was a beginner. She had been studying Italian for a year and had attended only basic courses. Therefore her result in the first test, although not particularly high, **50%**, is remarkable. In spite of her interest in Italy and Italian

language and her plan to go to Italy as an exchange student, the comparison of the first test with the final one, 54%, shows no significant improvement.

**Noora** did not have a long record of Italian studies, which she had started two years before, and so her very good results (in the first test 92% and in the final test 96%) seem to be related to several other factors: her knowledge of French, her interest in Italy and Italian culture, her hope to teach Italian in the future and, finally, the feeling which she shared with Greta and Kati of belonging to a special group.

### **Students' feedback**

At the end of the course I asked the students to give me their feedback. I wanted it to be anonymous because this would allow them to express their opinions more freely. There was no itemized pattern and therefore the students could write whatever they wished about the course. The reason why the number of students who gave me feedback, 12, is bigger than the number of students whose proficiency was assessed, 8, is that for the proficiency assessment I only considered those students who took the entry test and both final tests. The table below shows the items in the students' feedback. As it shows, 11 students out of 12 expressed an entirely positive judgment. One student expressed mixed feelings by saying that even though "it is quite boring to work long with one text [...] of course it's also useful for learning the vocabulary". I would also like to mention that two students highlighted that the course was "different" from and "nicer" than other language courses.





### The assessment of proficiency

The final test consisted of two different sets of multiple choice questions testing students' comprehension of a short, one-page story, and administered on two different days. For the purpose of my research I only considered students who attended both sessions, and ignored the ones who missed one or other of them. The table below shows a small improvement: while the average percentage of right answers for the entry test is 77%, for the final test it is 81%.

TABLE 7 The number and percentage of right answers in the entry test and in the two final tests in the 2nd semester.

	Entry test		Final test 1	Final test 2	Average of both final tests	
<b>Berta</b>	11	92%	12	11		96%
<b>Eeva</b>	3	25%	3	5		33%
<b>Fiona</b>	9	75%	11	7		75%
<b>Greta</b>	12	100%	12	12		100%
<b>Jenni</b>	10	83%	12	10		92%
<b>Kati</b>	12	100%	12	12		100%
<b>Laura</b>	6	50%	7	6		54%
<b>Noora</b>	11	92%	11	12		96%
	<b>74/96</b>	<b>77%</b>			<b>77.5/96</b>	<b>81%</b>

### 8.3.2 Italian 2 - academic year 2008-2009

On the basis of my experience in the first course, assessment was carried out more efficiently in Italian 2. Work on songs, which previously consisted only of the reconstruction of the text, was enriched with new activities: filling the gaps (the students were given the text of the song with blanks to be filled in with the words listed) and reading comprehension (the students were asked to read the text and answer some questions).

### Activities during the lessons

TABLE 8 The number of times the activities were used in the course.

ACTIVITIES ITALIAN 2008/2009 26 LESSONS	
<b>BRIEF STORIES</b>	
Reading comprehension	13
Listening comprehension	15
Multiple choice	3
Provide title	12 (13)
Gap filling	5
Jumbled parts	6 (7)
Seek the error	2
Questions to fill gaps	5
Tell each other the story	20
Write report or summary	9
<b>SONGS</b>	
Reconstructing text	4
Reading comprehension	4
Gap filling	1
<b>VIDEOS</b>	
Comprehension questions	1 (2)
Written report or summary	0 (1)
<b>INTERACTION*</b>	
Instructions for drawing	3
Guess word	2
Guess who game	1
<b>INDIVIDUAL WORK</b>	
Match cartoons & captions	1
Solve picture police case	18
Riddles	1
Personality questionnaire	7
Word chain	2

The figures outside the brackets indicate the activities used before the assessment test, while the figures in brackets include those after the test. As happened with Italian 1, most of the work in the classroom was done on short humorous texts, which provided the basis for various activities, as can be seen in Table 8, above. Asking comprehension questions and telling each other the story were used almost every time, as was the activity of solving police cases, which is probably what can be more directly and more clearly described as puzzle solving. Reading comprehension, listening comprehension and providing a title were used in half or more than half of the lessons. Filling the gaps was done in

about one fifth of the lessons, ordering jumbled parts in about one quarter of them. Work on songs took more time and was more varied than in Italian 1. Personality questionnaires were used in more than one lesson in four.

### **Students' background and reasons for studying Italian**

The students were asked the following questions: 1) Why do you study Italian? and 2) Where and how long ago did you start?. I only considered the replies of the students who took both the entry and final tests. On the basis of the information I was given and the results of the tests I outlined the students' profiles. Students have again been given false names.

**Camilla's** progress in the two semesters of the academic year was remarkable: in the entry tests she scored **37%**, and in the final tests **75%**. She started the study of Italian only two years before the course, which explains the poor result in the entry test, but her strong motivation enabled her to avail herself of all the opportunities offered by the course. Her motivation depended on her interest in Italy and Italian culture, and on the conviction that by studying Italian she was doing something original and special, distinguishing her from the mass,

**Danielle** started "many years ago", as she wrote, probably in connection with her studies of Romance languages. The result of the entry tests, **54%**, showed her potential, which was probably developed by the course work, since she improved to **71%** in the final tests.

**Flora's** inclination towards Italian seemed to rest on a mythical image of Italy which, although it was not based on facts, did play a role in encouraging her to study the language. She was a middle-aged Russian and was young at the time when Italy was much appreciated and loved in the Soviet Union. She was very motivated and it was remarkable that in the entry tests, after only one year of studying Italian, she scored **75%**. Her strong motivation led her to achieve a score of **92%** in the final tests.

**Gloria** seemed to have a strong determination and an old interest in the Italian language. She started studying it when she was in high school and took all the Italian courses which her school offered. Therefore at the beginning of the course she had a strong basis. She scored **79%** in the entry tests and managed to reach **92%** in the final tests.

**Kukka** seemed very motivated in her studies and was going to go to Italy as an Erasmus exchange student. She had started studying Italian only the previous year, but she had already spent nine months in Italy, during which time she had had considerable exposure to the language. This explains the excellent result in the entry tests, **96%**. Her motivation led her to reach the highest result in the final tests: **100%**.

## Students' feedback

### Feedback on the first semester

In the first semester I obtained anonymous feedback from 6 students. Since I did not ask any specific questions, the students could write whatever they wanted about the course. The number of students whose proficiency was assessed is lower than the number who gave me their feedback because in the assessment I only considered those who took all four tests. As the table below shows, all the students expressed positive views on the course.

TABLE 9 The items in the 1st semester feedback in Italian 2

ITALIAN 2 - 1ST SEMESTER						
NO. OF STUDENTS	6					proportion
POSITIVE						all
NEGATIVE						
<b>WHAT STUDENTS HIGH-LIGHTED</b>						
USEFULNESS						4/6
PROFICIENCY PROGRESS						3/6
VARIETY						1/6
FUN						2/6
<b>PREFERENCES</b>						
POLICE STORIES						1/6
WORK ON STORIES LC						4/6
SONGS						2/6
FILM CLIPS						1/6
INTERACTIVE ACTIV						1/6
<b>SUGGESTIONS</b>						
MORE SPEAKING						1/6
WORK FASTER						1/6

### Final feedback

Only 5 students gave final feedback. However, it was totally positive. One student even expressed the wish that all practical writing and speaking courses could be like this. One of the students conveyed the conviction that her improvement in proficiency was due to the course. The small number of students producing final feedback depends on the fact that it was elicited in the second to last lesson, when only the ones who liked the course came: those who did not have much interest in it, having reached the agreed minimum attendance, were no longer coming.

TABLE 10 The items in the 2nd semester feedback in Italian 2

ITALIAN 2 2ND SEMESTER					
NO. OF STUDENTS: 5					proportion
POSITIVE					All
NEGATIVE					
<b>WHAT STUDENTS HIGH-LIGHTED</b>					
USEFULNESS					1/5
PROFICIENCY PROGRESS					1/5
RELAXED ATMOSPHERE					3/5
FUN					2/5
<b>PREFERENCES</b>					
LISTENING COMPR.					1/5
<b>CRITICISM</b>					
SLOW WORK					1/5

### The assessment of proficiency

This time I thought it would be useful to give the students two entry tests and two final tests and calculate the average results for each pair. In this way the drawback of miscalculated homogeneity was somehow minimized. I kept records only of those students who took both entry tests and both final tests. As the table below shows, the average result of the two entry tests is 68%, and the average result of the two final tests is 86% - an increase of 18%.

TABLE 11 Assessment of students' proficiency

	ENTRY				FINAL			
	TEST 1	TEST 2	Average result		TEST 1	TEST 2	Average result	
<b>Camilla</b>	8	1	4.5	37%	12	6	9	75%
<b>Danielle</b>	9	4	6.5	54%	8	9	8.5	71%
<b>Flora</b>	9	9	9	75%	11	11	11	92%
<b>Gloria</b>	9	10	9.5	79%	12	10	11	92%
<b>Kukka</b>	12	11	11.5	96%	12	12	12	100%
			41/60				51.5/60	
			<b>68%</b>				<b>86%</b>	

### 8.3.3 Norwegian 1 - autumn 2009

#### The activities during the lessons

TABLE 12 The number of activities used in the course

<b>ACTIVITIES NORW 1</b>	
<b>WORK ON BRIEF STORIES</b>	
Reading comprehension	7 (9)
Listening comprehension	4 (5)
Multiple choice	2
Provide title	2
Gap filling	5 (6)
Jumbled parts	3
Questions to fill gaps	2
Tell each other the story	9 (11)
Write report or summary	6
<b>WORK ON SONGS</b>	
Reading comprehension	2 (3)
Gap filling	4 (5)
<b>WORK ON VIDEOS</b>	
Comprehension questions	1
<b>INTERACTION*</b>	
Instructions for drawing	1
Guess who game	1
<b>INDIVIDUAL WORK</b>	
Match cartoons and captions	1
Solve picture police case	6
Matching jokes and punch lines	2
<b>WORK ON GRAMMAR</b>	
Explanation	8 (10)
Exercises	3 (4)

The figures outside the brackets in Table 12 indicate the activities before the final assessment test, and the figures in brackets the activities after it. As happened in the Italian courses, classroom work was mostly focused on one-page stories. Telling each other the story was a regular classroom activity. Although it is not exactly a puzzle-solving activity, the students found it both challenging and effective. The most frequent activities were, as before, reading and listening comprehension, checked through questions. This seemed to me to cover the puzzle-solving area, along with such activities as gap filling, giving texts titles, and ordering the jumbled parts of the stories. Puzzle solving was obviously involved in the simple police cases as well. Work on songs was done regularly, but, unlike what had happened in the Italian courses, it did not include text reconstruction. This time humour did not play such a prominent role, since only some of the stories were funny, and jokes were employed only three times. When looking at grammar I used simple puzzle-solving activities, such as exer-



cises that would then be discussed in the classroom. Here, what proved interesting to the students was probably the fact that they were given time to do the exercises themselves and then they had the chance to check whether their version was correct.

### **Students' background and reasons for studying Norwegian**

I have only taken into account the replies of the students who took both the entry and final tests. On the basis of the information I was given and the results of the tests, I outlined the students' profiles. The students have been given false names.

**Brita's** motivation was strong. She highlighted her interest in Norwegian language and culture. She had tried to learn some Norwegian in the past and wanted to go to Norway to work during the summer. Her score in the entry test was 50% and her reported motivation seems to explain the significant improvement in her proficiency, since in the final test she scored 80%.

**Cecilia** did not seem to have any particular motivation. She already knew some Swedish and probably thought that Norwegian would come automatically, without any extra effort. This might explain the fact that her score was lower in the final test, 50%, than in the entry test, 60%.

**Dorotea** had a strong interest in Scandinavian languages, but Swedish, which she knew before starting to study Norwegian, seemed to seriously interfere with the study of Norwegian, preventing the emergence of the distinctive features of the latter. This, in my opinion, explains why no progress was shown in her result, which was 50% in both the entry and the final test.

**Giselle** had been an exchange student in Norway for six months, and also knowing some Swedish, which she had already studied at school, provided her with a useful basis, of which she made the fullest possible use. Her desire not to forget Norwegian is an indication of her strong motivation. Her high score in the entry test, already 90%, was even further improved in the final test, where it was 100%.

**Hilma** was an elderly lady who was not familiar with recent assessment techniques such as multiple choice tests. She might also have felt more anxious than younger students about being tested, and this feeling of anxiety is likely to have affected her result. Lastly, in spite of her fluency in spoken Norwegian, she might not have been used to the written language. All this might explain why, in spite of her strong motivation, that is, the need to communicate with her relatives, she had a very poor result in the entry test, only 30%, and an even worse result in the final test, just 10%. In this case, a different way of assessing competence and progress could have been more appropriate.

**Irja** had a good knowledge of Swedish, but had never studied Norwegian. She came to the course with some motivation, intending "to learn some basics of the language". Her knowledge of Swedish enabled her to score 30% in the entry test. She felt that she did not learn as much Norwegian as she expected,

but the final test, where she had 50%, did show clear progress, which suggests that the process of *conversion* of Swedish to Norwegian did get started.

**Jutta's** is a remarkable case. She had weak motivation at the start (she came to the course because her room-mate did, and because Norwegian was the only language that fitted in her schedule!), but she had studied Swedish for a few years at school, which enabled her to get 30% in the entry test (it is interesting that this is the same percentage as Irja, who had the same linguistic background). Since her mark in the final test was 70%, participation in classes seems to have helped her learn the new language. It is worth noting that she missed only one lesson in the whole course, which also seems to show an interest in the way the course was arranged.

**Karolina's** case resembles Giselle's (the study of Swedish at school for six years, a stay in Norway of six months), and their results in the entry and final tests were almost the same: Karolina's mark was 80% in the entry test and 90% in the final test.

### **Students' feedback**

I obtained anonymous feedback from 8 students, all of whom expressed positive views. As I had done with the Italian courses, I did not provide the students with any itemized pattern, and they could write whatever they wished. The table below synthesizes the students' feedback. I would like to note that one of the students pointed out how different this course was from other language courses. I also wish to offer a couple of quotations from the students' feedback: "Now I understand better Norwegian speech. I dare speak Norwegian" (app. 3, Norw 1, feedb. 2). "It was a great course!" (app. 3, Norw 1, feedb. 8).

TABLE 13 The items in the students' feedback.

NORWEGIAN 1								
NO. OF STUDENTS	8							proportion
POSITIVE								all
NEGATIVE								
WHAT STUDENTS HIGHLIGHTED								
USEFULNESS								2/8
RELAXED ATMOSPHERE								3/8
PROFICIENCY PROGRESS								2/8
VARIETY								1/8
FUN								1/8
COURSE ORGANIZATION								1/8
SPECIAL COURSE								1/8
PREFERENCES								
SONGS								3/8
SUGGESTIONS								
MORE REAL LIFE								2/8
MORE GRAMMAR								3/8
MORE SPEAKING								3/8

### The assessment of proficiency

TABLE 14 The results of the assessment tests

	ENTRY TEST	FINAL TEST
<b>Brita</b>	5	8
<b>Cecilia</b>	6	5
<b>Dorotea</b>	5	5
<b>Giselle</b>	9	10
<b>Hilma</b>	3	1
<b>Irja</b>	3	5
<b>Jutta</b>	3	7
<b>Karolina</b>	8	9
	42/80	50/80
	52%	62%

I took into account only the 8 students who took both tests. The comparison of the entry and the final test shows an average increase of 10%, since the average in the entry test was 52% and in the final test it was 62%.

### 8.3.4 Norwegian 2 - autumn 2010

#### The activities in the lessons

TABLE 15 The number of activities used in the course

<b>ACTIVITIES NOR2</b>	
<b>WORK ON BRIEF STORIES</b>	
Reading comprehension	8
Listening comprehension	5
Multiple choice	2
Provide title	2
Gap filling	4
Jumbled parts	2
Seek the error	2
Tell each other the story	8
Write report or summary	4
Work on joke/provide punch line*	9
<b>WORK ON SONGS</b>	
Reading comprehension	6
Gap filling	4
<b>WORK ON VIDEOS</b>	
Comprehension questions	1
<b>INTERACTION*</b>	
Guess word	1
Guess who game	1
<b>INDIVIDUAL WORK</b>	
Match drawings and daily life expressions	1
Match cartoons and captions	2
Solve picture police case	8
Riddles	18
Matching jokes and punch lines	2
<b>WORK ON GRAMMAR</b>	
Explanation and exercises	8

This was for me a special course. All the students were false beginners, being already good Swedish speakers and already having some knowledge of Norwegian. This explains why the average mark in the entry test was 90%. Consequently, I did not think that I was in a position to advance their knowledge very much, and so I decided not to focus on improving the students' proficiency in Norwegian, but to study their reactions to my emotional framework. This led me to expand the time given to songs, which I used in half of the lessons, and humour, which was made more effective by being associated with puzzle solving through the regular use of riddles. Concerning work on one-page stories, the pattern was not very different from in the previous Norwegian course, apart from the use of finding the error, which I used twice. It is also to be highlighted that I gave them an activity based on solving a crime in 8 of the lessons (out of a total of 20), compared to 6 times out of 20 in Norwegian 1.

### Students' background and reasons for studying Norwegian

The names of these students have also been changed, to preserve students' anonymity. Since two students, Cora and Florence, missed the entry test, I arranged a mid-term test in order to obtain information on their level of linguistic competence. The results are not meant to be compared with the entry test.

**Aino's** mother tongue was Swedish. Her motivation, largely due to having Norwegian friends, seems to be the obvious explanation for her mark of **100%** in the entry test.

**Barbara**, like Aino, had Swedish as her mother tongue. But while Aino, because of her Norwegian friends, had been exposed to Norwegian earlier, and had probably been able to learn quite a lot, Barbara seemed to be a true beginner as far as Norwegian was concerned. Anyway, having Swedish as her mother tongue enabled her to score **70%** in the entry test.

**Cora** had previously studied Swedish and Danish, which is very close to Riksmål, the Norwegian language version I taught in the course. She scored **100%** in the mid-term test, which she took after a few lessons that gave her the chance to convert her Danish to Riksmål, and she was quite successful in this process, thanks to her strong motivation.

**Dagmar** had spent a year in Norway and had a background of Norwegian and Scandinavian studies, which seems to explain her high score in the entry test: **90%**.

**Eero** seemed to be very motivated. He was studying Swedish as his main subject and was also acquainted with the other Scandinavian languages. Furthermore, he had already attended a short Norwegian course. He scored **100%** in the entry test.

**Florence** had studied Swedish at school and had had the chance to use it during her frequent stays in Sweden. She had spent six months in Norway, where she had learnt some Norwegian. This accounts for her high mark in the mid-term test, which was **90%**.

These students, as the results of the tests show, had quite a good basis for the study of Norwegian, depending partly on the fact that some of them were already acquainted with it, and partly on their background of studying Swedish.

### Students' feedback

Only three students gave me their feedback. In earlier courses I had elicited feedback during the lessons, and therefore the students could not but give it to me, although it was anonymous. This time I asked for feedback only from the students who wanted to give it and who kept on coming after the agreed number of attendances was exceeded. I underlined that they did not have to give any feedback if they did not want to. This means that not only were those students motivated to attend the course, but they were also motivated to write their feedback, which was a lengthy and detailed analysis of the work done in

the classroom. Consequently these three reports have great value for me as a sort of "assessments of the course". As before, the feedback was anonymous.

All the students expressed appreciation for the course (1: "In general I liked the course"; 2: "The course has been really interesting"; 3: "I liked this course very much"). But they also highlighted what they disliked. All of them wrote that they would have preferred more emphasis on literature. Two highlighted the fun in the activities. As far as progress in proficiency was concerned, one student claimed that he/she had learned a lot of new words and that his/her skills in Norwegian had improved. One student emphasized the relaxed atmosphere and another one the difference from other language courses. About the activities he/she wrote: "they were a nice exception if you compare them to what we do on other courses". One student mentioned a problem with one of the activities (I had provided the jumbled parts of a joke for the students to put in order without giving them the punch line, which the students were supposed to guess for themselves). The difficulty that I had not anticipated was putting the sentences in order without knowing the conclusion of the story. One more interesting detail I would like to draw attention to is that, in commenting on my explanation of grammar, another student wrote: "It was also a bit misleading what you said about using the indefinite and definite forms. It seemed that there was no difference at all and I don't believe it is like that". However, even after this realization he/she kept on attending the course, as did the others, in spite of the criticism, which was expressed quite openly in the feedback. About my language mistakes in Norwegian, one student showed understanding: "Nobody is perfect!". One wrote: "The course was lots of fun and I will surely recommend it to other students if the course is organized also in the future!".

The previous year's Norwegian course had been a challenge because I had never taught Norwegian before, but I think this was the most challenging group of students of the four courses, and the one which best demonstrates the effectiveness of an emotional framework in foreign language pedagogy.

TABLE 16 The items in the students' feedback

<b>NORWEGIAN 2</b>			
<b>NO. OF STUDENTS 3</b>			<b>proportion</b>
POSITIVE			all
CRITICAL REMARKS			all
<b>WHAT STUDENTS HIGHLIGHTED</b>			
RELAXED ATMOSPHERE			1/3
PROFICIENCY PROGRESS			1/3
FUN			2/3
SPECIAL COURSE			1/3
<b>PREFERENCES</b>			
POLICE STORIES			2/3
WORK ON STORIES LC			2/3
SONGS			2/3
RIDDLES			1/3
PUZZLE SOLVING			1/3
WRITING			1/3
<b>SUGGESTIONS</b>			
MORE LITERATURE			3/3
MORE NATIVE RECORD			1/3
MORE GRAMMAR			2/3
<b>CRITICISM</b>			
ACTIVITY ARRANGEM			1/3
SUPERFICIAL GRAMMAR			1/3
DIFFICULT POLICE STORY			1/3
LITTLE VARIETY IN ACTI- VITIES			1/3
COURSE ORGANIZATION			1/3
USE OF SONGS			1/3



### The assessment of proficiency

TABLE 17 The results of the assessment tests

NORW2010 TESTS	ENTRY	MIDT-ERM
Aino	10	10
Barbara	7	
Cora		10
Dagmar	9	9
Eero	10	10
Florence		9
	<b>29/36</b>	<b>48/50</b>
	<b>90%</b>	<b>96%</b>

The average result in the entry test was 90%. It should be noted that the same entry test was used in the Norwegian course in autumn 2009, in which the average result was 52.5%. A mid-term test was arranged in order to obtain information about the proficiency of the two students who had missed the entry test. Although the average result in the mid-term test was 96%, this does not show any improvement over the entry test, since the students who had taken it scored exactly the same results.

## 8.4 Overview of results

### 8.4.1 Written feedback

TABLE 18 A comparison of the feedback from the four courses. It should be noted that I elicited feedback from both semesters of Italian 2.

	ITAL1	ITAL2 A 1 <sup>st</sup> sem.	ITAL2 B 2 <sup>nd</sup> sem.	NORW1	NORW2
NUMBER OF STUDENTS	12	6	5	8	3
POSITIVE	11/12	6/6	5/5	8/8	3/3
NEGATIVE	1/12				
CRITICAL REMARKS					3/3
<b>WHAT STUDENTS HIGHLIGHTED</b>					
USEFULNESS	9/12	4/6	1/5	2/8	
RELAXED ATMOSPHERE	2/12		3/5	3/8	1/3
PROGRESS IN PROFICIENCY	9/12	3/6	1/5	2/8	1/3
VARIETY	6/12	1/6		1/8	
FUN	7/12	2/6	2/5	1/8	2/3
SPECIAL COURSE	2/12			1/8	1/3
COURSE ORGANIZATION	4/12			1/8	
<b>PREFERENCES</b>					
POLICE STORIES	4/12	1/6			2/3
LISTENING COMPREHENSION	1/12	4/6	1/5		2/3
SONGS	1/12	2/6		3/8	2/3
INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES	1/12	1/6			
RIDDLES					1/3
PUZZLE SOLVING					1/3
WRITING					1/3

First of all, it is to be noted that all the students giving feedback, except 1 out of 12 in Italian 1, expressed positive opinions, showing appreciation of the courses. What the students appreciated was the relaxed atmosphere (especially in Italian 2, second semester - emphasized by 3 students out of 5), the variety of activities (especially in Italian 1 - emphasized by 6 students out of 12), and fun (emphasized by 2 students out of 3 in Norwegian 2, and 7 students out of 12 in Italian 1). Some liked the way lessons were organized (particularly in Italian 1 - emphasized by 4 students out of 12). Some students felt that the courses were "special" compared to the average foreign language class (2 students out of 12 in Italian 1; 1 student out of 8 in Norwegian 1; 1 out of 3 in Norwegian 2). The usefulness of the work done in the classroom was highlighted in almost all the courses, though most clearly in Italian 1, with 9 students out of 12 mentioning it.

Some students expressed a preference for individual activities: the most popular ones were songs (2 out of 6 in Italian 2, first semester; 3 out of 8 in

Norwegian 1; 2 out of 3 in Norwegian 2), solving police cases (4 out of 12 in Italian 1; 2 out of 3 in Norwegian 2), listening comprehension, usually on short humorous stories (4 out of 6 in Italian 2, first semester).

In all the courses there were students who expressed the feeling that they had improved their skills thanks to the work done in the lessons (Italian 1: 9 students out of 12; Italian 2, 1<sup>st</sup> sem.: 3 students out of 6; Italian 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> sem.: 1 student out of 5; Norwegian 1: 2 students out of 8; Norwegian 2: 1 student out of 3).

#### 8.4.2 Attendance as feedback

Just as important as written feedback is students' attendance. Half of the students kept on attending after having already attended the agreed minimum number of lessons to skip the formal final examination, as we had initially agreed. This seems to be a clear sign of interest and this is important feedback to me as a teacher.

In Italian 1, students had to attend a minimum of 9 lessons out of 13; 8 students out of 14 voluntarily kept on attending after that. Italian 2 included two semesters of 13 lessons each. The minimum number of lessons to attend in each semester in order to avoid having to take the formal examination was 9. In the first semester, 5 students out of 11, and in the second semester, 5 out of 10 kept on attending after reaching that minimum number. If in the first semester the students could feel some sort of indirect pressure concerning their attendance, since they were supposed to continue the course and they may have felt that they had to show the teacher that they were interested, in the second semester there can have been no such a feeling, and so the fact that 5 students out of 10 exceeded the minimum requirement is important.

The importance of attendance as feedback is even clearer if one looks at the two Norwegian courses. Norwegian 1 consisted of 20 lessons; the students could avoid having to take the final exam if they attended at least 15 lessons out of 20. 11 students were registered and were marked at the end, and of these 6 attended the course after reaching the agreed minimum requirement. Norwegian 2 consisted of 20 lessons. The level of the students' knowledge was much higher than that of the students in the previous year: Aino and Barbara were Swedish native speakers, Eero was well advanced in Swedish, and Florence, besides speaking Swedish, had spent a long time in Norway. Only six students took the exam at the end of the course. By attending at least 15 lessons it was possible to avoid the examination. Eero and Florence exceeded such a requirement. I would also put Cora with them, because she continued to attend lessons even after taking the exam, which happened, at her request, in the 17<sup>th</sup> lesson. Norwegian is not my mother tongue; I studied it at the University of Rome more than thirty years ago, and have not had much opportunity to use it after that. Therefore it is understandable that in teaching it in the two courses which I gave at the Language Centre of the University of Jyväskylä, I made quite a few mistakes. When this happened in the first of the two courses, I realized that those mistakes, far from being a drawback, were extremely useful. They made it

clear that the students were not attending because I was offering them a perfect language model, but because they felt that there was something in the pedagogical framework they might take advantage of. This was confirmed by the fact that several students kept on attending even after they had reached the agreed minimum attendance. If their purpose had been simply to notch up one more course, they would not have needed to come. By keeping on coming, they voted with their feet, as the saying goes. At the end of the first Norwegian course I found it remarkable that my mistakes did not prevent the students from coming. In the second Norwegian course, when I or the students noticed my mistakes, not only did I not make any attempt to hide them, but I deliberately drew the students' attention to them. My purpose was to see what effect this would produce at the end of the course, after the students had met the attendance requirements. Although even mother-tongue teachers make mistakes, students would expect foreign language teachers - whether native or non-native - to be highly competent. However, in spite of my language mistakes, a significant number of students kept on attending my courses, even when they did not have to.

#### 8.4.3 Comment on the results of the proficiency tests

Table 19 below shows the average results of the entry and final tests in all the courses except Norwegian 2.

TABLE 19 The average results of the entry and final tests in all the courses

ITALIAN 1	
ENTRY TEST	FINAL TEST
74/96 correct answers (77%)	77.5/96 correct answers (81%)
ITALIAN 2	
ENTRY TEST	FINAL TEST
41/60 correct answers (68%)	51.5/60 correct answers (86%)
NORWEGIAN 1	
ENTRY TEST	FINAL TEST
42/80 correct answers (52%)	50/80 correct answers (62%)

The assessment of proficiency was made through multiple choice tests, with the emphasis on listening and reading comprehension. The tests showed an average increase in the percentage of correct answers, which might be seen as a sign of an improvement in the language skills related to listening and reading comprehension. Comparison of the results of the entry and final tests in Italian 1 (second semester) shows an average increase of 4% (from 77% to 81%). In Italian 2, the average results show an improvement of 18% (from 68% to 86%) and

in Norwegian 1 of 10% (from 52% to 62%). In Italian 1, second semester, the number of lessons before the second part of the final test was 9, amounting to 13.5 hours. In Italian 2, both semesters were considered, and the number of lessons before the second final test was 24, amounting to 36 hours. In Norwegian 1, the number of lessons before the final test was 16, amounting to 24 hours.

TABLE 20 The hours and students' improvement in individual courses

	HOURS	IMPROVEMENT
ITALIAN 1	13.5	+4%
NORWEGIAN 1	24	+10%
ITALIAN 2	36	+18%

The figures indicate that: 1) the students showed an improvement in their skills in all the three courses involved in the experiment; 2) the extent of the improvement, as the comparison indicates, seems to be loosely related to the duration of the course; the longer the course, the clearer the improvement in proficiency. However, I am aware that the improvement in the students' performance, as indicated by the results of the tests, may not exclusively depend on the effectiveness of my emotional framework. It might also be due to other reasons: e. g., the fact that students were more familiar with the foreign language after their exposure to it during lessons, or the fact that the level of difficulty of the two tests might not have been exactly the same.

At any rate, as previously argued, the numerical data from the tests does not play any major role in this research, since my emphasis is on gaining an understanding of how students responded to my emotional framework. One observation that unquestionably seems to emerge is that the students were very motivated. They seemed to like my pedagogical framework, and quite a few of them (16 out of 34, taking into account the feedback from all courses) said that their language skills had improved by attending the course (See the analyses of feedback in Sub-section 8.4.1). It is also worth noting that the research participants were all language students, acquainted with foreign language pedagogy and, as such, in a position to compare different pedagogical approaches. Consequently, their judgment on the effectiveness of the coursework is not without any foundation. The students' reported positive impression of the pedagogical framework matters much more to me as a teacher than any numerical data, and I hope this also makes the present study worthy of interest.

## 9 CONCLUSION

In this conclusion I will summarize the features of my emotional framework and the way it has taken shape through my experience as a teacher of English in Italy and a lecturer in Italian and Norwegian at the University of Jyväskylä. I will also explain what I think my original contribution to foreign language pedagogy is. Lastly, I will give some suggestions of issues worth exploring in further development of an emotional framework.

### 9.1 "Bright stars" and "dim street lights"

As Kumaravadivelu (2006:225) writes, "change produces anxiety, particularly if it involves a move from a comfortable climate of familiarity to an unpredictable arena of uncertainty", but he also argues that

when we allow ourselves to be guided by bright distant stars and not by dim street lights, and when we resist the temptation to be lulled by what is easily manageable and what is easily measurable, and are willing to work with doubts and uncertainties, then change becomes less onerous and more desirable (Kumaravadivelu 2006:226).

Kumaravadivelu's view seems to suit exactly what I have been doing since the very start of my career as a teacher of English. When I began, I was utterly dissatisfied with the methods currently being employed, which did not provide me with any help in overcoming the challenges that arose in my daily work. I realized that teaching would be more effective if it appealed to the emotions. Students appreciated this, giving me enthusiasm and strength. My ways were at first naive and confused, but they gradually took shape, through experiment and, inevitably and understandably, a lot of mistakes.

It was my acquaintance with the views of Kumaravadivelu, one of the Postmethod theorists, that proved decisive in my pedagogical research after I started my lectureship in Italian at the University of Jyväskylä. Kumaravadivelu's reflections provided me with the consistent theoretical back-

ground which I lacked. Although I had already been active in a Postmethod perspective without being aware of it, Kumaravadivelu opened a new world, enabling me to reach more mature levels in my teaching.

The basic principle of Postmethod is that one has to take into consideration local relevance. Once one has found procedures which suit a particular cultural environment, one has to bear in mind that they are just that: not applicable to any condition, but suitable in that specific culture. I have witnessed this myself in my job. My long experience as a high school teacher of English in Italy allowed me to shape a teaching style which proved fully successful in the Italian context. When I came to the University of Jyväskylä to work as a lecturer in Italian, I was sure that my tested and appreciated pedagogical style, the result of long reflection and much experimentation, could be automatically applied in the new context. This turned out to be a serious mistake, and I was immediately faced with students' outright refusal and open rebellion.

Once a girl walked out in the middle of my lesson, showing her irritation with my ways, which had worked in the context of the Italian Lycee but were unsuitable in a Finnish university. This reaction taught me that I had to go back to the initial spirit of my pedagogical quest, leaving the "comfortable climate of familiarity" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:226). The "bright distant stars" that had guided me at the start of my career had turned into "dim street lights" (Kumaravadivelu 2006:226). I therefore had to adjust my vision, taking into consideration what the new environment required. In so doing, I soon revived the creative attitude I had had at the beginning of my career and was able to find ways which could suit the new conditions.

## 9.2 Teachers' motivation and sustainable pedagogy

From the very start of my teaching career I felt deeply dissatisfied with the current methods of pedagogy in foreign language teaching and tried to develop my own framework. It was not easy to challenge established pedagogical theories, but I was determined enough to go ahead with it. What drove me on was not the wish to be original at any cost, but the desire to find a personal motivation. To me, the teacher's motivation was, and is, as important as the learners'. I thought that only by being motivated myself could I be in a position to motivate my students. My conviction was, and is, that enthusiastic teachers pass enthusiasm to their students, and that bored and unmotivated teachers cannot ignite any interest in learners.

I wanted to have enjoyment and fun to share with my students. I did not want teaching to be a burden to me, and I did not want learning to be a burden to my students either. I wanted personal and professional satisfaction from my job, and I found it impossible to find any from the pedagogical theories designed and advocated by the so-called "experts" theorizing far away from the actual context in which I was working. I felt that a pedagogical framework fo-



cusing on my students' emotions, and mine, met all these needs, and provided me with the motivation I was looking for.

At the beginning of my experimentation, which coincided with the start of my teaching career, my procedures were extremely primitive, but nonetheless I saw that my students liked them - first of all because of the freshness of my way of teaching, which was completely different from what they were used to. Another reason why they seemed to appreciate my pedagogical style was that they felt that it would lead them somewhere in their learning. If one is convinced that something is effective, it is likely to be effective. With time, thanks to my readiness to take into account the students' reactions, I made considerable improvements in my emotional framework, which has been shaped by the interaction between my students and myself, and has become ever more systematic, more involving and, probably, also more effective.

Besides the students' appreciation, what encouraged me to proceed in my experimentation was the discovery that the issues on which my pedagogical experience and reflection focused were objects of investigation by academics. I found out that the issue of teachers' motivation had been and was being dealt with by many researchers (Czubaj 1996; Ellis 1984; Pelletier et al. 2002; Latham 1998; Silver 1982), in whose studies I found confirmation of my own views. Furthermore, I was pleased to discover that my realization of how strongly a motivated teacher affects the class was shared by such researchers as Stevens and White (1987) and Bishay (1996), according to whom

it is likely that high levels of teacher social interaction on the job are linked to high motivation levels; thus, the possibility that enhanced levels of teacher motivation will lead to superior student achievement cannot be dismissed (Bishay 1996: 148).

Although this was only a feeling, I thought that by seeking a personal motivation in my work I would be able to counter burnout. Therefore, it was particularly interesting to me to find that the importance of teachers' motivation had been emphasized in studies concerning the widespread phenomenon of teachers' burnout. In particular, my attention was caught by Allwright (2000b: subsect. 3.3 para. 1,3; subsect. 4.6 para. 2; subsect. 5.1 para. 2) and Cozolino (2013: 50, 124, 127, 131).

In order to be motivated I felt that I had to be fully emotionally involved in my work. An important aspect of this involvement was related to the creation and use of my own materials and resources, designed to meet the needs of the particular students with whom I was working. Standardized material, designed to suit anonymous students, was no use to me. Creating new material involved energy and time, but I felt that it was worth it, since it was professionally rewarding. My enthusiasm and creativity led me to focus on the importance of the concept of sustainability, which was first theorized by Brown (1981) in a general social context, and was applied to foreign language pedagogy by Allwright, according to whom learners and teachers should work together in a way that is "indefinitely sustainable" (2003:127).

If one emphasizes motivation coming from the emotional involvement that arises from creating and using one's own teaching materials, it stands to reason that the process of producing them has to be sustainable, that is, within the teacher's competence. Teachers should be able to produce materials on the basis of their knowledge and without more stress and effort than is already involved in their daily work. An emotional framework will work only if teachers are able to cope with new and unexpected situations; for this, new materials and resources have to be available all the time. It would be unthinkable for teachers to be continuously producing new materials if this meant a lot of extra effort and specialized knowledge. For an emotional framework to function, I think that it is essential, as Allwright (2005:360) recommends, to "minimize the extra effort of all sorts for all concerned".

I fully and consciously applied the criterion of sustainability as a lecturer in Italian at the University of Jyväskylä, where I was faced with the problem of creating enough new materials for my lessons. What was already available did not suit the emotional framework that I was developing. However, I realized that it was not difficult to produce new materials on a sustainable basis. This simply required imagination, time and the readiness to attune oneself to the students' wave length. Nowadays all the classrooms in the University of Jyväskylä are equipped with internet and a projector, which offer a whole new range of possibilities for teaching, but when I started my lectureship, in the autumn of 2004, these facilities were not yet available. Nonetheless, I was able to involve students with materials which were easy to prepare and which proved interesting to them.

A sustainable emotion-focused pedagogy should avoid unnecessary anxiety and should make what can be considered "physiological" pressure acceptable, since it should aim at rousing positive feelings in learners, who will thus be better equipped to cope with the effort involved in the learning process. In my emotional framework, I did my best to avoid any unnecessary pressure on the students. For example, when I asked comprehension questions on texts, if nobody replied, I did not insist but provided the answer myself and suggested that students should compare it with what they had thought. When we were working on puzzle-solving activities and nobody found the solution, I explained to them that looking for the solution was more important than finding it, because they had to use language in the search and this favoured acquisition.

In spite of my efforts, the work done in the classroom proved tough; but it seemed to me that my students were willing to accept this, after witnessing my attempt to spare them unnecessary anxiety. Here, I can provide an example from one of the Norwegian courses. Once, after some initial work on the text, I said that we would go ahead with more activities on it. Then one of the students expressed the hope that this would not involve *remembering*. In fact it did, because trying to remember what one listens to is an essential part of my classroom practices. In that case, I felt that everybody else was willing to accept it. The girl's reaction showed that there was still anxiety there, despite my empha-

sis on positive feelings, but there was not more anxiety than most students considered acceptable.

What probably has made my pedagogical style successful is that I have, unconsciously, made use of a procedure which has recently been thoroughly described by Cooperrider et al. (2008: xx) as part of Appreciative Inquiry philosophy: "Stimulate creativity [...] Amplifying the power of even the smallest victories [...] Work toward sustainability". By "identifying what is positive and connecting to it in ways that heighten energy, vision and action for change" (Cooperrider et al. 2008: xv), I was able to make my pedagogy more and more satisfying to myself and probably also more effective for my students. Fredrickson (2013:7) has recently shown how powerful the impact of the experience of positive emotions is on human beings, and it seems to me that her study depicts what happened in my classes as a consequence of my emotional framework.

### 9.3 My contribution to foreign language pedagogy

To sum up, I would like to highlight the contribution of this study to foreign language pedagogy. The emotional framework discussed above, which belongs in a Postmethod theoretical context, has focused on three areas involving the exploitation of emotions in the classroom: puzzles, songs, and humour.

Solving puzzles, although under the questionable name of "problem-solving", has long been part of foreign language pedagogy, as I have explained in Sub-section 7.2.2, "Problem-solving in L2 pedagogy", and as is shown, for example, by a book published more than thirty years ago, *Challenge to Think* (Frank, Rinvoluceri & Berer 1982), whose aim was to encourage students to "think creatively" by letting them "face the challenge of problem-solving situations" and "play popular thinking games" (Frank et al. 1982:83). In the book "the language becomes a means to an end" since "the student must grasp a problem through the language and reach a solution using the language" (Frank et al. 1982:83). Songs have also long been used in foreign language teaching; for example, Longman has published books of songs to be used in teaching English, (e.g. Dakin 1968). On the use of songs in the classroom there is also an old Italian book by Papa and Iantorno (1977). One can also mention Helen Doron's schools (n.d.), where children learn English through songs and fun. As for the use of humour in pedagogy, there is a long tradition which can be dated back to the Babylonian Talmud, written 1,500 years ago, in which a sage is mentioned who used to say something humorous before starting lecturing and, as the Talmud explicitly says, the disciples appreciated that (Babylonian Talmud, n.d. p. 96).

In my emotional framework, however, I question the idea that puzzles, songs and humour are only suitable for children, and that they might just be employed in adult education so long as it is only as side activities, or time fillers. What I advocate is their systematic exploitation as central procedures in a strategy meant to strengthen the impact of teaching at any level of education. I fully

agree with Cozolino (2013:xxvii) that “exploration and play, usually consigned to less important after-school activities, are central aspects of natural learning”. The framework which I have been developing, besides taking into account learners’ motivation, also fully acknowledges teachers’ right and need to pursue their own motivation. Both are central to the effectiveness of a pedagogical strategy. In current foreign language teaching, the production of pedagogical material by teachers does not seem to be encouraged, since the textbook is considered sufficient. In contrast, in my emotional framework, teachers are expected and encouraged to create their own teaching materials as part of the strategy to develop their motivation through stronger emotional involvement in their work. Such a creative process is supposed to meet the criterion of sustainability, making use of teachers’ existing knowledge in order to avoid any extra burden.

#### 9.4 Exploring new ways to exploit the emotions: delayed gratification

The exploitation of emotions in foreign language pedagogy opens up a whole world of possibilities. One might let one’s own imagination roam wild in exploring new ways. On the basis of my own experience, as an example I would like to suggest exploitation of the technique of defamiliarization, or estrangement. Technically, this means the frustration of expectation, and it has the effect of keeping attention alert, or rousing it again after the mind has become accustomed to a situation. It is like awakening someone from torpor by throwing a bucket of cold water over them.

The two best-known theories of defamiliarization are the Russian Formalist Victor Shklovsky’s *ostranenie*, and Bertolt Brecht’s *Verfremdungseffekt*.

To Shklovsky, the purpose of art is “to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known”. In this sense “the technique of art is to make objects *unfamiliar*” (Shklovsky 1965:12). The familiar is made unfamiliar in order to re-stimulate perception (Shklovsky 1965:6). As Erlich (1980:177) explains:

by tearing the object out of its habitual context [...] the poet gives a *coup de grâce* to the verbal cliché and to the stock responses attendant upon it and forces us into heightened awareness of things and their sensory texture. The act of creative deformation restores sharpness to our perception, giving “density” to the world around us.

In this way, as Bennett (1979:31) notes, “a renewed and sharpened attentiveness to reality” is promoted.

*Verfremdungseffekt* finds its clearest expression in Brecht’s work, which defamiliarizes both traditional staging and acting. His plays are set in unfamiliar surroundings, gestures are exaggerated and emotional identification is avoided. “The artist’s object,” wrote Brecht (1964:92), “is to appear strange [...] to the au-

dience". By "laying bare the device", Brecht's epic theatre destabilizes conventional observation and "everyday things are raised above the level of the obvious and automatic" (Brecht 1964:92).

I think that the process of defamiliarization, besides being used in literature, might profitably be applied in pedagogy, and in particular in foreign language pedagogy, as part of a strategy meant to increase the impact of teaching on learners. A special form of defamiliarization is delayed gratification. This means not providing immediately what one expects or wishes, and thus increasing desire and interest.

There is an amusing animated film produced by the Warner Bros Company, *Lovelorn Leghorn* (McKimson 1951), in which Prissy, a spinster chicken, shows a melon to a dog, holds it out to him, but does not let him have it. In this way she teases the dog, until his desire for the melon grows and he runs after the chicken to get it. The cartoon shows in an amusing way the effects of delayed gratification, which increases desire and interest, creating a state of higher receptivity. Such a state might prove extremely useful in pedagogy in general, and foreign language pedagogy in particular.

In this case gratification means giving learners what they are expecting or hoping for: e. g. the solution to a puzzle, the punch line of a joke, the answer to a riddle or, at a simpler level, even the solution to an exercise they have worked on. Such a gratification ought to be deferred a little, in order to create a state of enhanced receptivity.

The procedure of delaying gratification has been part of my emotional framework since its early days, as is testified by one of the students who joined the "Giuseppe Caruso Fan Club" formed on Facebook (Facebook groups 37430681145). Sara C. wrote, imitating what I used to do when I told jokes: "one day a man entered into a pub and orderd [sic] a beer!!!!"..."and now before give you the conclusion i'll repeat everything" ahahaah grande caru-soooooooooooooooooooooo =)".

I did not give the punch line immediately; first I told the joke without it, then I asked the students some comprehension questions and, finally, I told the whole joke with the punch line. It is worth noting that the student above, and probably others, paid attention to this detail. I followed a similar procedure while working as a lecturer in Italian and then Norwegian at the University of Jyväskylä. After a puzzle-solving activity, I waited a little before giving the solution. This increased the students' interest in finding out whether they had done the activity correctly.

## 9.5 Bottles, wood, Greek temples and octopuses

One view I have always had, although at the beginning of my teaching profession it was rather hazy, is that language development is cyclical and parallel, not sequential and additive (Kumaravadivelu 2006:141). This view does not

seem to me to be a completely modern notion, since Plutarch expressed a similar position in his work *De auditu*:

For the mind does not require filling like a bottle, but rather, like wood, it only requires kindling to create in it an impulse to think independently and an ardent desire for the truth (Plutarch 1927:257).

This recommendation, which comes from ancient wisdom, should be borne in mind by any teacher. It is what I myself have always been trying to do while teaching and, as their feedback testifies, this seems to have been appreciated by my students.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize that my effort to motivate my students rests on my conviction that they are special and unique individuals whose wish to learn can only be ignited by a flexible pedagogical approach which appeals to their positive emotions in the most varied ways – as in my emotional framework, which seems to be successful. On the basis of my long experience as a teacher, I would suggest that when learners find sense in what they are expected to do, their motivation increases. And I argue that it is very difficult for anyone to find sense in a standardized pedagogy which does not take into account the needs and wishes of the learners in the classroom.

In Southern Italy we still have the remains of many temples from the time of ancient Greek colonization. Their majesty, beauty and strength have challenged time, and after almost three millennia they are still there, objects of admiration and wonder. Looking for an image that would figuratively represent my pedagogical framework, at first I felt that it could be a Greek temple. The roof could represent the emotions, and the pillars the tools for and the forms of their exploitation: humour, songs, puzzles, estrangement, sustainability, involvement, teachers' and learners' motivation, the taste for challenge, fun and enjoyment. But, thinking more deeply, I realized that this could not be a suitable image. I did not need a structure challenging time, immovable in its beauty and perfection. What I wanted was something living, lively, moving, involving, not meant to challenge millennia but enabling me to face the daily challenges I met in my job as a teacher. The image which came to my mind to convey all this was an octopus, because of its extreme flexibility, mutability and the ability to respond to extremely unpredictable environments.

While looking for material to be used in one of my lectures, I came across a video on Youtube showing the amazing mobility of an octopus. The well chosen title of the video was "Poetry in Motion" (Youtube,n.d.). I felt that this was just what I wanted. Not a roof, but a thinking head, not pillars but tentacles grabbing, seizing, surrounding, retracting and extending. The image of the octopus seemed to me to best depict my emotional framework. What appealed to me was not the still, time-challenging beauty of the figures on Keats' Grecian urn (Keats 1996:213-214), but the beauty of life with all its imperfections and varieties.

This research does not conclude with the assumption that my octopus-like emotional framework should be mechanically or automatically applied in



any context. By showing how useful and profitable the focus on emotions might be in foreign language pedagogy, I have not sought to provide a “recipe”, but to tell about an “adventure”, as Cooperrider et al. (2008:xxviii) wrote in their book about Appreciative Inquiry. This word reflects a philosophy which I find familiar in my own practices. My purpose is to invite teachers to start out on their own adventure by implementing an emotional framework which takes into consideration local relevance and their own personality and inclination.

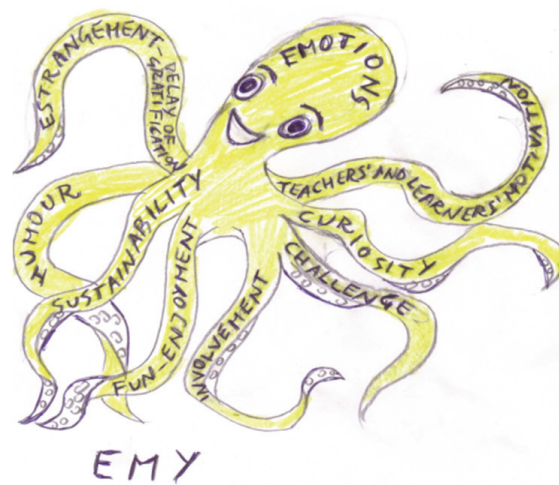


FIGURE 1 The octopus representing my emotional framework in foreign language pedagogy



## SUMMARY

### **Object and methodological approach of the present study**

The present study focuses on a teacher's professional development: it is basically a narrative that shows how my own teaching style - here called an emotional framework for foreign language pedagogy - took shape over time and how I carried out a pedagogical experiment at the University of Jyväskylä from 2007 until 2011. In this teaching experiment, I examined the impact of my emotional framework on a group of foreign language students. The study is qualitative and I am much indebted to Action Research and Exploratory Practice procedures. Hence, the conclusions are mainly derived from the analysis of the students' feedback, and the numerical data from the assessment of the learners' proficiency, through simple tests designed by myself, is presented as illustration rather than as providing statistical information.

The thesis opens with a discussion of some basic concepts and terms in foreign language pedagogy in order to clarify the way they are used later on. The focus is on "method", "approach", "methodology", the difference between "acquisition" and "learning", and the notions of "input", "output" and "intake". The thesis then moves on to discussing the important role which English language teaching has played in shaping foreign language pedagogy as a whole, and the pedagogical questions raised by the emergence of global English as ELF (English as Lingua Franca) and EIL (English as an International Language). The thesis presents the views of researchers who argue that taking for granted the role of English as a means of global communication must go hand in hand with keeping cultural and linguistic diversity (Crystal, Phillipson, Nunn, Canagarajah and Pennycook). Suresh Canagarajah and Alastair Pennycook's emphasis on the notion of the appropriation of English by local cultures is also discussed.

### **Premethod, Method and Postmethod in foreign language pedagogy**

The thesis then outlines the developments in foreign language pedagogy in the last few decades, which have been characterized by a proliferation of methods and their eventual crisis, leading to the rise of a Postmethod perspective. My research highlights how the study of grammar and the use of translation were the only way to learn foreign languages until the 1950s, when the world, because of profound economic changes, turned English into a global language. The study of grammar and the use of translation, which I label as Premethod, were then considered inadequate, and, in order to support the spread of English, more effective ways of teaching it were developed which subsequently became a model for foreign language teaching in general. The first theories which seem to me to fully deserve the title of method are the Structural-situational Method and the Audio-lingual Method, which for the first time dealt with language teaching in a systematic way. Behind them there is Skinner's Behavioural Theo-

ry, which provided the basis for a pedagogy in which learning a language was considered to be a mechanical process depending on repetition and the formation of habit.

In 1959, Chomsky published a fierce attack on Skinner's views. Although this was not Chomsky's intention, his views had a considerable influence on foreign language teaching research. Another significant contribution to new ways of thinking came from the task which the Council of Europe gave to a group of applied linguists in 1971, to work out a new approach in language pedagogy. In 1975, van Ek identified some basic communicative needs and produced an inventory of notions, functions, topics and grammatical items, which was supposed to serve as a guideline for foreign language teaching. The new approach materialized in the Communicative Method, or Communicative Language Teaching. In the 1980s, two other new approaches emerged, the Natural Approach (Krashen) and the Communicational Approach (Prabhu) which, by arguing that language development is incidental, meaning-focused, comprehension-based, cyclical and parallel, showed the crisis in the very concept of method. Towards the end of the 1980s the disillusionment with methods became stronger and stronger. In 1991, at a conference at Carlton University in Ottawa, Dick Allwright gave a talk entitled "The Death of Method", paving the way for the rise of several Postmethod pedagogies, which are context sensitive and arise from teachers and their daily practice. This thesis discusses the main Postmethod pedagogies: the Three Dimensional Framework (Stern), the Explanatory Practice Framework (Allwright), the Macrostrategic Framework (Kumaravadivelu) and the *Dogme* Movement (Thornbury).

### **Discovering the spirit of Postmethod**

This study also discusses the development of my own pedagogical thinking, whose bedrock has for a long time been a Postmethod perspective, although initially I was not aware of this. From the very start of my career as a teacher of English in high school in Italy in the late 1980s, my dissatisfaction with current methods encouraged me to look for new ways of teaching. In this effort I turned my attention to Northern Europe. In the early 1990s I went to Denmark, Iceland and Finland, where I met fellow teachers and visited schools. These journeys provided me with new input and insights for my pedagogical reflections, and oriented my approach more clearly towards the emotional involvement of learners. The present research gives an account of a series of six lectures which I gave at the British Council in Rome from 1998 to 2004, in which I outlined a framework rejecting the inflexibility of current methods and advocating a flexible pedagogical approach focused on emotions.

### **Focusing on emotions**

In the thesis, in order to substantiate my arguments about the importance of the emotions in language teaching, I outline research on the role of emotions in

pedagogy in general, mentioning studies by Vail (1994), Sylvester (1995), Goleman (1996) and Hargreaves (1998). I then discuss the useful role which emotions can play in foreign language teaching, mentioning, among others, Arnold (1992), who argues that more attention to affective aspects could lead to more effective second language learning, and Dewaele (2011), who points out that the emotions are the driving force behind Second Language Acquisition. Having discussed the importance of the focus on emotions, I concentrate on three areas in which foreign language teachers can appeal to students' emotions: puzzles, singing and humour.

I highlight how useful puzzles are in arousing learners' curiosity and provoking their interest. In this section I also refute the wide use of the expression "problem solving" in foreign language pedagogy, which I find inappropriate and misleading. Problem solving is an extremely sophisticated scientific theory which makes sense in dealing with complex issues, but because of their simple structure, the so-called "problem-solving" activities currently adopted in L2 pedagogy should rather be understood as puzzles, or bridge-the-gap tasks, for which no real "problem-solving" strategy is necessary. Anyway, regardless of the terminology, I argue that such activities are essential in an L2 teaching strategy and they should be used systematically.

The thesis points out how songs too can profitably be used as a pedagogical tool. I consider Murphey's contribution to the research in this field, and in particular discuss his views on the general nature of songs, which allows students to appropriate them and assign them individual meaning. I also deal with Murphey's (1990) studies on the *Song Stuck in My Head Phenomenon* (SSIMHP), related to *din*, involuntary mental rehearsal.

As for humour, in the thesis I emphasize that its potential should not be overlooked by educators since, as Cozolino (2013:89-90) makes clear, bringing humour into classroom interaction reduces anxiety, improves memory recall and increases understanding and attention.

### **Applying an emotional framework: my pedagogical experimentation at the University of Jyväskylä**

In the autumn of 2004 I took up a lecturer's post at the University of Jyväskylä, where I decided to carry out a pedagogical project focusing on students' emotional involvement. This thesis presents the results of this experiment, which involved the students from two Italian courses and two Norwegian courses, between 2007 and 2011. The present research reports how I systematically used songs, puzzles and humour with the purpose of involving the students by appealing to their emotions. The total number of students participating in this experiment was approximately three dozen. The courses lasted from 19.5 hours to 39 hours. Although it might be objected that these figures are too small to be of any significance, it needs to be pointed out again that the purpose was not to conduct an experimental study in which learning outcomes would be examined. Rather, the goal was to provide a space where new ideas could be put to the test

and where both the students' and my own reflections would serve as tools for developing teaching practices and a sustainable pedagogical framework.

## Results

During the period of the teaching experiment, I obtained feedback from 34 students. All except one expressed positive opinions about the courses. What they most appreciated was the relaxed atmosphere, the variety of activities, and fun. Some students felt that the courses were "special", as compared to the average foreign language classes. 16 students out of 34 conveyed the feeling that they had improved their skills thanks to the work done in the lessons.

Just as important as written feedback is the students' attendance. In order to encourage them to come, I had informed them that by attending a minimum number of lessons they would be exempt from the formal final examination. It is worth noting that half of the students kept on coming after reaching the minimum number of lessons required. The importance of attendance as feedback is particularly clear if one looks at the two Norwegian courses. Norwegian is not my mother tongue, so I was not offering my students a perfect language model. If they kept on attending, probably they felt that there was something in my pedagogical framework they might take advantage of.

## Conclusion

On the assumption that the teacher's motivation is as important as the learners', in the thesis I emphasize that only by being motivated myself could I be in a position to motivate my students, and I show how a pedagogical framework focusing on my students' emotions, and mine, provided me with the motivation I was looking for. My emotional framework, which belongs in a Postmethod theoretical context, is focused on three areas involving the exploitation of emotions in the classroom: puzzles, songs, and humour. Solving puzzles, although under the questionable name of "problem solving", has long been part of foreign language pedagogy, and so have songs and humour. In my emotional framework, however, I question the idea that they are suitable only for children. What I advocate is their systematic exploitation as central procedures at any level of education. However, although this study shows that my emotional framework has been pedagogically successful, my research does not rest on the assumption that it should be mechanically and automatically applied in any context. I simply offer fellow teachers my experience for reflection, inviting them to create their own emotional framework, taking into consideration their own personality and the circumstances in which they work.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 - THE ASSESSMENT TESTS

All assessment tests are based on multiple choices

#### Italian 1

##### Entry test

Al compleanno di Luigione arrivò Carlone con una lucertola dentro una piccola gabbia. Carlone era il migliore amico di Luigione e gli aveva portato questa lucertola come regalo. Era una lucertola bellissima di una razza speciale e Carlone gli raccomandò di trattarla con cura e di tenerla in casa. Luigione disse che l'avrebbe trattata molto bene. Al compleanno della moglie di Luigione, Carlone arrivò con un altro regalo, un gattino con il pelo a strisce, e anche questa volta gli raccomandò di tenerlo con cura. Le raccomandazioni erano inutili perché Luigione e la moglie non avevano figli e amavano molto gli animali. Tennero in casa e trattarono con cura la lucertola e il gattino che intanto crescevano, crescevano. Luigione e la moglie erano molto contenti. «Guarda come crescono» diceva Luigione. La moglie era felice vedendo la lucertola che era diventata la più grossa lucertola che aveva mai visto. Anche il gatto stava diventando il gatto più grosso che avevano mai visto. Un giorno la lucertola si avvicinò alla moglie di Luigione che camminava scalza e le mangiò il dito di un piede. La donna pianse per il dolore e andò all'ospedale. Un altro giorno il gatto, che era diventato un gattone lungo quasi un metro, mentre giocava con Luigione gli diede per gioco un morso all'orecchio e gliene staccò un pezzo. «Ma guarda questi animali» dicevano perplessi Luigione e la moglie, «noi li alleviamo con tutte le cure come dei figli e loro vogliono mangiarci.» Un giorno arrivò in casa un amico e scappò via spaventato. Luigione e la moglie gli andarono dietro e gli chiesero perché aveva tanta paura di una lucertola e di un gatto. L'amico li guardò sorpreso. «Ma quello è un cocodrillo» disse, «e quella è una tigre!» Luigione e la moglie comprarono due gabbie e portarono il cocodrillo e la tigre allo zoo. Da quel giorno la loro amicizia con Carlone che gli aveva regalato i due animali non fu più come prima. (Malerba 2004: 89)

- 1A. Carlone fece un regalo di compleanno a sua moglie
- B. Carlone fece un regalo di compleanno alla moglie di Luigione
- C. La moglie di Carlone fece un regalo di compleanno a Luigione
- D. Luigione fece un regalo di compleanno a sua moglie

- 2A. Luigione e la moglie non avevano tempo di occuparsi degli animali perché avevano tanti figli
- B. Luigione e la moglie riuscivano ad occuparsi degli animali perché avevano pochi figli
- C. Luigione e la moglie si occupavano degli animali perché erano soli
- D. Luigione e la moglie non avevano figli e a loro non piacevano gli animali

- 3A. La lucertola non cresceva abbastanza ma la donna era ugualmente felice
- B. La lucertola non cresceva ma la donna non era felice
- C. La lucertola cresceva e la donna non era felice
- D. la lucertola cresceva e la donna era felice

- 4A. Luigione e la moglie avevano visto gatti più grandi
- B. Luigione e la moglie non avevano mai visto gatti più grandi
- C. La moglie di Luigione aveva visto lucertole più grandi

- D. La moglie di Luigione aveva visto lucertole ma non gatti piu' grandi
- 5A. La lucertola mangio' un dito della donna mentre questa si avvicinava per accarezzarla
- B. La lucertola mangio' un dito della mano della donna mentre questa le dava il cibo
- C. La lucertola mangio' un dito della donna mentre questa camminava
- D. La lucertola mangio' un dito della mano della donna mentre questa camminava
- 6A. La donna pianse perche' il marito era andato all'ospedale
- B. La donna ando' all'ospedale e il marito pianse
- C. La donna pianse perche' la lucertola le aveva mangiato un dito
- D. La donna porto' la lucertola all'ospedale perche' questa aveva dolore a un piede
- 7A Il gatto stacco' un orecchio dell'uomo aggredendolo per difendersi
- B. Il gatto stacco' una parte dell'orecchio dell'uomo aggredendolo per difendersi
- C. Con un morso il gatto stacco' un dito dell'uomo per gioco
- D. Il gatto stacco' una parte dell'orecchio dell'uomo
- 8A. L'uomo e la donna erano sorpresi del comportamento dei due animali
- B. L'uomo e la donna non erano molto sorpresi del comportamento dei due animali
- C. L'uomo e la donna erano sorpresi perche' i due animali non volevano mangiare
- D. Luigione e la moglie erano sorpresi perche' il gatto e la lucertola mangiavano troppo
- 9A. Un giorno un amico ando' a trovare Luigione e la moglie e spavento' i due animali
- B. Un giorno un amico ando' a trovare Luigione e la moglie e li spavento'
- C. Un giorno un amico ando' a trovare Luigione e la moglie a gli animali lo spaventarono
- D. Un giorno un amico ando' a trovare Luigione e la moglie e questi lo spaventarono
- 10A. Quando l'amico scappo' l'uomo e la donna lo inseguirono
- B. Quando l'amico scappo' gli animali lo inseguirono
- C. Quando l'amico scappo' Luigione fu dispiaciuto ma lo lascio' andare
- D. L'amico era dispiaciuto del fatto che gli animali erano spaventati
- 11A. Luigione e la moglie portarono i due animali in un posto adatto a loro
- B. Luigione e la moglie portarono i due animali a chi glieli aveva regalati
- C. Luigione e la moglie non portarono gli animali allo zoo ma li tennero in gabbia
- D. Quando Luigione e la moglie capirono che i due animali erano una tigre e un coccodrillo li liberarono
- 12A. Luigione e la moglie capirono fin dall'inizio che i due animali erano una tigre e un coccodrillo
- B. Luigione e la moglie non capirono mai che i due animali erano una tigre e un coccodrillo
- C. Luigione e la moglie capirono che i due animali erano un gatto e una lucertola solo quando questi erano gia' grandi
- D. Luigione e la moglie capirono che gli animali erano una tigre e un coccodrillo solo quando questi erano gia' grandi

### Final test 1

Toti era un cane molto educato e obbediente. Faceva la guardia alla casa, si comportava bene con i bambini, dava la zampa ai padroni, era amico del gatto, sapeva distinguere i ladri dagli uomini che venivano nella fattoria per lavorare. "Gli manca soltanto la parola", dicevano i padroni. Ma Toti aveva un difetto: era molto goloso di galline. Un giorno che giocava sull'aia con delle galline gli era successo per caso di assaggiarne una e gli era piaciuta moltissimo. Da quel giorno ogni tanto Toti mangiava una gallina. I padroni lo rimproveravano molto e finalmente riuscirono a convincerlo che doveva lasciare in pace le galline. Toti era un cane educato e obbediente e quando vedeva una gallina si voltava da un'altra parte facendo finta di niente.

Anche i padroni di Toti erano golosi di galline. Ogni tanto ne uccidevano una e la mangiavano bollita o arrostita. Le uniche parti che non mangiavano erano le teste e le zampe e un giorno invece di buttarle via le diedero a Toti come cena. Toti ne fu felice e le mangiò, poi incominciò a fare i suoi ragionamenti. Per alcuni giorni rimase lunghe ore sdraiato sul prato nel tentativo di risolvere i suoi dubbi su ciò che era lecito e su ciò che era proibito a proposito di galline. Alla fine decise che le galline non si dovevano mangiare, ma che si potevano mangiare le zampe e le teste. Toti non perse tempo Andò nel pollaio e mangiò le teste e le zampe a tutte le galline senza mangiare il resto perché era un cane educato e obbediente. (Malerba 2004: 204)

- 1A. Toti era educato ed obbediente ma non gli piaceva il gatto  
 B. Toti era amico del gatto ma non era obbediente  
 C. Toti era educato ed era amico del gatto  
 D. Toti era obbediente ma colpiva il gatto con la zampa
- 2A. Toti pensava che gli uomini che venivano a lavorare erano ladri  
 B. Toti sapeva che gli uomini che venivano a lavorare non erano ladri  
 C. Toti non sapeva distinguere gli uomini che venivano a lavorare  
 D. Toti si comportava bene con i ladri
- 3A Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando i suoi padroni gliene hanno data una  
 B Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando i ladri ne hanno ucciso una  
 C Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando gli uomini che venivano a lavorare ne hanno ucciso una  
 D Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando per gioco ne ha ucciso una
- 4A Dopo avere ucciso una gallina Toti non lo fece più  
 B Dopo avere ucciso una gallina Toti qualche volta lo faceva ancora  
 C Toti era educato  
 D Toti mangiava spesso le galline
- 5A I padroni riuscirono a convincere Toti a non uccidere più le galline  
 B I padroni non riuscirono a convincere Toti a lasciare in pace le galline  
 C I padroni non provarono a convincere Toti a lasciare in pace le galline  
 D I padroni lasciarono in pace Toti
- 6A Ai padroni di Toti piacevano le galline e non le mangiavano  
 B I padroni di Toti non mangiavano le galline perché non gli piacevano  
 C I padroni di Toti mangiavano le galline anche se non gli piacevano  
 D I padroni di Toti mangiavano le galline perché gli piacevano
- 7A I padroni di Toti mangiavano spesso galline bollite o arrostite  
 B I padroni di Toti qualche volta mangiavano galline bollite o arrostite  
 C I padroni di Toti mangiavano solo galline bollite  
 D I padroni di Toti mangiavano solo galline arrostite
- 8A I padroni non mangiavano le teste e le zampe  
 B I padroni mangiavano anche le teste e le zampe  
 C I padroni mangiavano le zampe ma non le teste  
 D I padroni mangiavano le teste ma non le zampe
- 9A I padroni non davano le teste e le zampe a Toti perché volevano mangiarle  
 B I padroni non davano le teste e le zampe a Toti anche se non le mangiavano  
 C I padroni hanno dato le teste e le zampe a Toti e lui le ha mangiate  
 D I padroni hanno dato le teste e le zampe a Toti ma lui non le ha mangiate

- 10A Toti non era contento del regalo dei padroni e non lo mangio'  
 B Toti era contento del regalo dei padroni ma non lo mangio'  
 C Toti era contento del regalo dei padroni e lo mangio'  
 D Toti non era contento del regalo dei padroni ma lo mangio'

- 11A Toti rimase alcuni giorni sdraiato sull'erba perche' si sentiva male  
 B Toti rimase alcune ore sdraiato sul prato a pensare  
 C Toti rimase alcune ore sdraiato sull'erba perche' si sentiva male  
 D Toti rimase alcuni giorni sdraiato sul prato a pensare

- 12A Toti ha capito che era lecito mangiare le teste ma non le galline  
 B Toti ha capito che era proibito mangiare le teste e le zampe  
 C Toti ha capito che era lecito mangiare le zampe ma non le teste  
 D Toti ha capito che era lecito mangiare le galline

## Final test 2

C'era una zebra che si vergognava moltissimo delle sue righe nere e avrebbe preferito essere un cavallo. La zebra stava dentro una gabbia dello zoo e, quando c'era il sole, alle righe della pelliccia si sovrapponeva l'ombra delle sbarre di ferro e qualche volta le righe delle sbarre formavano con le sue tanti piccoli quadrati. Se apparire con la pelle a righe la faceva vergognare, la pelle a quadretti la faceva irritare terribilmente. E allora spaventava i visitatori dello zoo. Un giorno la zebra vide passare un cavallo con la sua pelle bellissima e pianse per un giorno e una notte. La zebra si sentiva molto triste e così cominciò a chiacchierare con i vicini. Scopri che la giraffa si vergognava per il collo troppo lungo, che l'ippopotamo non era contento del suo muso quadrato, che la gru non avrebbe voluto avere delle gambe così sottili perciò appena poteva ne nascondeva una sotto l'ala, che le foche non avrebbero voluto avere i baffi, che l'aquila invidiava la voce dell'usignolo, che il leopardo passava le giornate a leccarsi le macchie della pelliccia sperando di cancellarle, che i serpenti erano pieni di complessi perché non avevano le gambe, che l'elefante si vergognava di avere la coda al posto del naso. Insomma nessun animale dello zoo era contento di se stesso. La zebra si prese la testa fra le zampe e si concentrò sulle sue righe nere. Pensò a lungo e alla fine decise che lei non era un animale bianco con le righe nere, ma un animale nero con le righe bianche e che è molto meglio essere un animale a righe invece di un animale nero, e da quel momento portò le sue righe bianche con grande dignità. (Malerba 204:202)

- 1 A Ad una zebra piacevano le righe sue nere e non avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo  
 B Ad una zebra non piacevano le sue righe nere e avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo  
 C Ad una zebra piacevano le sue righe nere e avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo  
 D Ad una zebra non piacevano le sue righe nere ma non avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo
- 2 A Qualche volta l'ombra delle sbarre della gabbia formava dei quadrati sulla pelle della zebra  
 B Qualche volta il sole formava dei quadrati sulle sbarre di ferro della gabbia  
 C L'ombra delle sbarre di ferro formava sempre dei piccoli quadrati sovrapponendosi alle righe della zebra  
 D Qualche volta, quando c'era il sole, le righe della zebra si sovrapponevano alle sbarre di ferro formando dei quadrati
- 3 A La zebra si vergognava delle righe, ma le piacevano i quadrati che il sole formava sulla pelle  
 B Alla zebra piacevano le sue righe ma si vergognava dei quadrati che il sole formava sulla pelle  
 C Alla zebra non piacevano le sue righe e i quadrati che il sole formava sulla sua pelle  
 D Alla zebra piacevano le sue righe e i quadrati che il sole formava sulla sua pelle
- 4 A Qualche volta quando c'era il sole, la zebra spaventava i visitatori  
 B Quando non c'era il sole la zebra era irritata e spaventava i visitatori  
 C Qualche volta la zebra si spaventava per la presenza dei visitatori



- D Quando c'era il sole la zebra era contenta  
 5 A Un giorno un cavallo vide la zebra e si mise a piangere  
 B Un giorno un cavallo e la zebra piansero  
 C Un giorno la zebra pianse perché non vide il suo amico cavallo  
 D Un giorno la zebra pianse quando vide un cavallo
- 6 A La zebra parlò con i vicini perché era triste  
 B La zebra era triste e non parlò con i vicini  
 C Dopo aver parlato con i vicini la zebra era triste  
 D I vicini della zebra erano tristi perché la zebra non voleva parlare
- 7 A La giraffa si vergognava del collo lungo e del muso quadrato  
 B La giraffa si vergognava del collo lungo ma era contenta del muso quadrato  
 C La giraffa avrebbe voluto avere il muso quadrato  
 D La giraffa non avrebbe voluto avere il collo così lungo
- 8 A La gru nascondeva le gambe sotto le ali  
 B La gru amava mostrare le sue gambe sottili  
 C Alla gru piacevano le sue gambe  
 D La gru metteva una gamba sotto l'ala
- 9 A Il leopardo si vergognava della sua coda  
 B Il leopardo si leccava la pelliccia perché si vergognava  
 C Il leopardo si leccava le macchie per farle più belle  
 D Il leopardo non voleva avere i baffi
- 10 A Nello zoo non c'erano animali soddisfatti di se stessi  
 B Pochi animali dello zoo erano contenti di se stessi  
 C Nessun animale dello zoo era insoddisfatto  
 D Pochi animali dello zoo erano insoddisfatti
- 11 A Senza pensare a lungo la zebra ha capito che doveva accettarsi come era  
 B Dopo aver pensato a lungo la zebra ha capito che non poteva accettarsi come era  
 C La zebra ha pensato tanto e alla fine si è accettata come era  
 D Se la zebra avesse pensato più a lungo si sarebbe accettata come era
- 12 A Alla fine la zebra pensò che era meglio essere nera  
 B Alla fine la zebra pensò che era meglio non avere righe  
 C Alla fine la zebra pensò che aveva le righe bianche  
 D Alla fine la zebra pensò che aveva le righe nere

## Italian 2

### Entry test 1

Sandrone aveva un bel maiale grasso che gli andava sempre dietro nei campi e nei boschi. Quando Sandrone lavorava, il maiale gli girava intorno, mangiava l'erba e poi gli andava a leccare le scarpe in segno di affetto. Quando venne il momento Sandrone non ebbe il coraggio di ammazzare il suo maiale come aveva fatto gli altri anni con gli altri maiali. Gli dispiaceva troppo, si era affezionato e non voleva rinunciare alla sua compagnia. Sandrone ci pensò sopra per

molti giorni e poi decise che avrebbe fatto a meno dei salami e delle salsicce, ma si sarebbe accontentato di un prosciutto. E infatti tagliò una gamba di dietro del maiale e ci mise sopra il sale. Poi gli fece fare una gamba di legno dal falegname. Il maiale continuò a seguire il suo padrone nei campi zoppicando con la sua gamba di legno. Un giorno che Sandrone gli diede una rapa, il maiale insieme alla rapa staccò con un morso un dito della mano di Sandrone e se lo mangiò. Poi andò di corsa nella legnaia, prese con i denti un bastoncino corto e sottile e lo portò a Sandrone perché lo mettesse al posto del dito che gli aveva mangiato. (Malerba 2004:62)

1A Al maiale non piaceva stare insieme a Sandrone

B Al maiale piaceva stare insieme a Sandrone

C Al maiale piaceva solo andare nei boschi con Sandrone

D Al maiale piaceva solo andare nei campi con Sandrone

2A Sandrone girava intorno al maiale che mangiava l'erba

B Il maiale mangiava e Sandrone lavorava

C Il maiale lavorava e Sandrone gli girava intorno

D Sandrone lavorava e girava intorno al maiale

3A Il maiale mangiava l'erba in segno di affetto

B Il maiale leccava le scarpe e poi le mangiava

C Il maiale leccava le scarpe in segno di amicizia

D Il maiale leccava l'erba e poi la mangiava

4A Sandrone uccise altri maiali invece del suo

B Invece di uccidere il suo maiale Sandrone comprò altri maiali

C A Sandrone non dispiaceva uccidere il suo maiale

D Sandrone non voleva uccidere il suo maiale

5A Sandrone aveva ucciso maiali in passato

B Sandrone non aveva mai ucciso maiali

C Sandrone non aveva il coraggio di uccidere il suo maiale e non sapeva farlo

D Sandrone voleva uccidere il maiale in modo diverso dal passato

6A A Sandrone non interessava la compagnia del maiale

B A Sandrone dispiaceva la compagnia del maiale

C Al maiale dispiaceva la compagnia di Sandrone

D Sandrone non voleva perdere la compagnia del maiale

7A Sandrone era così dispiaciuto della morte del maiale che non riusciva a pensare

B Sandrone pensò per molto tempo al suo maiale morto

C Sandrone pensò a lungo a che cosa fare del suo maiale

D Sandrone pensò per molto tempo ai salami che aveva fatto con il suo maiale

8A Sandrone pensò che avrebbe comprato un prosciutto

B Sandrone pensò che non poteva rinunciare a salami e salsicce

C Sandrone pensò che avrebbe fatto solo un prosciutto

D Sandrone pensò che poteva fare a meno dei salami ma non delle salsicce

9A Sandrone tagliò la gamba di legno del maiale

B Sandrone fece un prosciutto con una gamba davanti

C Sandrone fece un prosciutto con una gamba di dietro

D Sandrone fece tagliare una gamba di dietro dal falegname

10A Dopo il taglio il maiale andò ancora col suo padrone

- B Dopo il taglio il maiale si rifiutò di seguire il padrone
- C Dopo il taglio il padrone zoppicando seguiva il maiale
- D Dopo il taglio il maiale camminava bene con la gamba di legno

- 11A Un giorno il padrone diede una rapa al maiale e questo gli mangiò un dito
- B Un giorno il padrone diede una rapa al maiale e questo gli mangiò una mano
- C Un giorno il padrone diede una rapa al maiale nella sua mano e questo mangiò la rapa senza far male alla mano
- D Un giorno il padrone diede una rapa al maiale ma questo la rifiutò

- 12A Sandrone si fece fare un dito di legno dal falegname
- B Sandrone chiese al maiale di portargli un pezzetto di legno per fare un dito
- C Il maiale diede un pezzetto di legno al padrone per fare un dito
- D Il maiale portò un pezzo di legno a Sandrone per metterlo al posto della mano

## Entry test 2

Un fringuello andò a posarsi su un ramo, si guardò intorno e si mise a cinguettare con tutta la voce che aveva. «Questo posto è mio! Questo posto è mio e se qualcuno si avvicina gli cavo un occhio!» Gli altri uccelli capirono subito che il fringuello non scherzava e si tennero alla larga. Una donna, una certa Margheritona, sentì il canto del fringuello e si affacciò alla finestra. «Senti questo usignolo che melodia, come canta bene! Che dolcezza questo uccelletto! Gli uomini dovrebbero imparare a vivere dagli uccelletti invece di stare lì a scannarsi tutti i giorni, dovrebbero imparare a vivere a contatto con la natura, dovrebbero ascoltare il canto degli usignoli e forse diventerebbero migliori.» Il fringuello che aveva ascoltato il discorso della donna riprese a cantare con tutta la voce che aveva. «Questo posto è mio! Questo posto è mio e se qualcuno si avvicina non gli cavo un occhio ma glieli cavo tutti e due! E io non sono un usignolo ma un fringuello, cretina!» (Malerba 2004: 26)

- 1A un fringuello si posò su un ramo e cominciò a cantare
- B un fringuello si posò su un ramo e rimase zitto
- C un fringuello cinguettò e poi si posò su un ramo
- D un fringuello voleva cantare ma non aveva voce

- 2A un fringuello voleva dividere il ramo con un altro fringuello
- B un fringuello vide un altro fringuello sul ramo
- C un fringuello non voleva altri fringuelli sul suo ramo
- D un altro uccello voleva cavare un occhio ad un fringuello

- 3A gli altri uccelli non capivano cosa diceva e non andavano sul ramo
- B gli altri uccelli non capivano cosa diceva e andavano sul ramo
- C gli altri uccelli pensavano che scherzava e andavano sul ramo
- D gli altri uccelli capivano cosa diceva e non andavano sul ramo

- 4A Margheritona era affacciata alla finestra e sentì il fringuello
- B Margheritona sentì il fringuello e si affacciò alla finestra
- C Margheritona sentì il fringuello perché questo era sulla finestra
- D La finestra era chiusa ma Margheritona sentì ugualmente la melodia del canto del fringuello

- 5A A Margheritona piaceva il canto del fringuello perché era melodioso
- B A Margheritona non piaceva il canto del fringuello perché non era melodioso
- C A Margheritona piaceva il canto del fringuello anche se non era melodioso
- D A Margheritona non piaceva il canto del fringuello anche se era melodioso

- 6A Margheritona pensava che gli uomini non devono essere così aggressivi come gli uccelli

- B Margheritona pensava che gli uccelli dovevano seguire l'esempio degli uomini  
 C Margheritona pensava che gli uomini devono uccidere gli uccelli quando questi cantano con tanta dolcezza  
 D Margheritona pensava che gli uomini dovrebbero seguire l'esempio degli uccelli
- 7A Margheritona pensava che gli uomini dovrebbero vivere a contatto gli uni con gli altri  
 B Margheritona pensava che gli animali dovrebbero vivere a contatto con la natura  
 C Margheritona pensava che gli animali dovrebbero vivere a contatto gli uni con gli altri  
 D Margheritona pensava che la vita dovrebbe essere a contatto con la natura
- 8A Ascoltando il canto degli uccelli gli uomini potrebbero diventare migliori  
 B L'ascolto del canto degli usignoli può dare tanto piacere agli uomini  
 C Il canto degli usignoli migliora la natura  
 D Il canto dei fringuelli può dare tanto piacere agli uomini
- 9A Margheritona non capì cosa cantava l'usignolo  
 B Margheritona capì cosa cantava l'usignolo  
 C Margheritona non capì cosa cantava il fringuello  
 D Margheritona capì cosa cantava il fringuello
- 10A Il fringuello sentì la donna e smise di cantare  
 B Il fringuello non sentì la donna e continuò a cantare  
 C Il fringuello sentì la donna e continuò a cantare  
 D Il fringuello non sentì la donna e smise di cantare
- 11A Dopo aver sentito Margheritona il fringuello aveva capito che doveva essere più buono  
 B Dopo aver sentito Margheritona il fringuello decise di accettare come amici gli usignoli  
 C Dopo aver sentito Margheritona il fringuello decise di accettare come amici gli altri fringuelli ma non gli usignoli  
 D Dopo aver sentito Margheritona il fringuello aveva intenzioni ancora più aggressive
- 12A L'uccello insulta Margheritona perché lei non ha capito cosa lui ha detto  
 B L'uccello insulta Margheritona perché lei ha capito cosa lui ha detto  
 C Margheritona insulta l'uccello perché lei non ha capito cosa lui ha detto  
 D L'uccello insulta Margheritona perché lei non ha capito cosa lui è

### Final test 1

Toti era un cane molto educato e obbediente. Faceva la guardia alla casa, si comportava bene con i bambini, dava la zampa ai padroni, era amico del gatto, sapeva distinguere i ladri dagli uomini che venivano nella fattoria per lavorare. "Gli manca soltanto la parola", dicevano i padroni. Ma Toti aveva un difetto: era molto goloso di galline. Un giorno che giocava sull'aia con delle galline gli era successo per caso di assaggiarne una e gli era piaciuta moltissimo. Da quel giorno ogni tanto Toti mangiava una gallina. I padroni lo rimproveravano molto e finalmente riuscirono a convincerlo che doveva lasciare in pace le galline. Toti era un cane educato e obbediente e quando vedeva una gallina si voltava da un'altra parte facendo finta di niente. Anche i padroni di Toti erano golosi di galline. Ogni tanto ne uccidevano una e la mangiavano bollita o arrostita. Le uniche parti che non mangiavano erano le teste e le zampe e un giorno invece di buttarle via le diedero a Toti come cena. Toti ne fu felice e le mangiò, poi incominciò a fare i suoi ragionamenti. Per alcuni giorni rimase lunghe ore sdraiato sul prato nel tentativo di risolvere i suoi dubbi su ciò che era lecito e su ciò che era proibito a proposito di galline. Alla fine decise che le galline non si dovevano mangiare, ma che si potevano mangiare le zampe e le teste. Toti non perse tempo Andò nel pollaio e mangiò le teste

e le zampe a tutte le galline senza mangiare il resto perché era un cane educato e obbediente. (Malerba 2004: 204)

- 1A. Toti era educato ed obbediente ma non gli piaceva il gatto  
 B. Toti era amico del gatto ma non era obbediente  
 C. Toti era educato ed era amico del gatto  
 D. Toti era obbediente ma colpiva il gatto con la zampa
- 2A. Toti pensava che gli uomini che venivano a lavorare erano ladri  
 B. Toti sapeva che gli uomini che venivano a lavorare non erano ladri  
 C. Toti non sapeva distinguere gli uomini che venivano a lavorare  
 D. Toti si comportava bene con i ladri
- 3A Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando i suoi padroni gliene hanno data una  
 B Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando i ladri ne hanno ucciso una  
 C Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando gli uomini che venivano a lavorare ne hanno ucciso una  
 D Toti ha capito che gli piacevano le galline quando per gioco ne ha ucciso una
- 4A Dopo avere ucciso una gallina Toti non lo fece più  
 B Dopo avere ucciso una gallina Toti qualche volta lo faceva ancora  
 C Toti era educato  
 D Toti mangiava spesso le galline
- 5A I padroni riuscirono a convincere Toti a non uccidere più le galline  
 B I padroni non riuscirono a convincere Toti a lasciare in pace le galline  
 C I padroni non provarono a convincere Toti a lasciare in pace le galline  
 D I padroni lasciarono in pace Toti
- 6A Ai padroni di Toti piacevano le galline e non le mangiavano  
 B I padroni di Toti non mangiavano le galline perché non gli piacevano  
 C I padroni di Toti mangiavano le galline anche se non gli piacevano  
 D I padroni di Toti mangiavano le galline perché gli piacevano
- 7A I padroni di Toti mangiavano spesso galline bollite o arrostiti  
 B I padroni di Toti qualche volta mangiavano galline bollite o arrostiti  
 C I padroni di Toti mangiavano solo galline bollite  
 D I padroni di Toti mangiavano solo galline arrostiti
- 8A I padroni non mangiavano le teste e le zampe  
 B I padroni mangiavano anche le teste e le zampe  
 C I padroni mangiavano le zampe ma non le teste  
 D I padroni mangiavano le teste ma non le zampe
- 9A I padroni non davano le teste e le zampe a Toti perché volevano mangiarle  
 B I padroni non davano le teste e le zampe a Toti anche se non le mangiavano  
 C I padroni hanno dato le teste e le zampe a Toti e lui le ha mangiate  
 D I padroni hanno dato le teste e le zampe a Toti ma lui non le ha mangiate
- 10A Toti non era contento del regalo dei padroni e non lo mangiò  
 B Toti era contento del regalo dei padroni ma non lo mangiò  
 C Toti era contento del regalo dei padroni e lo mangiò  
 D Toti non era contento del regalo dei padroni ma lo mangiò
- 11A Toti rimase alcuni giorni sdraiato sull'erba perché si sentiva male  
 B Toti rimase alcune ore sdraiato sul prato a pensare

- C Toti rimase alcune ore sdraiato sull'erba perché si sentiva male  
 D Toti rimase alcuni giorni sdraiato sul prato a pensare  
 12A Toti ha capito che era lecito mangiare le teste ma non le galline  
 B Toti ha capito che era proibito mangiare le teste e le zampe  
 C Toti ha capito che era lecito mangiare le zampe ma non le teste  
 D Toti ha capito che era lecito mangiare le galline

## Final test 2

C'era una zebra che si vergognava moltissimo delle sue righe nere e avrebbe preferito essere un cavallo. La zebra stava dentro una gabbia dello zoo e, quando c'era il sole, alle righe della pelliccia si sovrapponeva l'ombra delle sbarre di ferro e qualche volta le righe delle sbarre formavano con le sue tanti piccoli quadrati. Se apparire con la pelle a righe la faceva vergognare, la pelle a quadretti la faceva irritare terribilmente. E allora spaventava i visitatori dello zoo. Un giorno la zebra vide passare un cavallo con la sua pelle bellissima e pianse per un giorno e una notte. La zebra si sentiva molto triste e così cominciò a chiacchierare con i vicini. Scopri che la giraffa si vergognava per il collo troppo lungo, che l'ippopotamo non era contento del suo muso quadrato, che la gru non avrebbe voluto avere delle gambe così sottili perciò appena poteva ne nascondeva una sotto l'ala, che le foche non avrebbero voluto avere i baffi, che l'aquila invidiava la voce dell'usignolo, che il leopardo passava le giornate a leccarsi le macchie della pelliccia sperando di cancellarle, che i serpenti erano pieni di complessi perché non avevano le gambe, che l'elefante si vergognava di avere la coda al posto del naso. Insomma nessun animale dello zoo era contento di se stesso. La zebra si prese la testa fra le zampe e si concentrò sulle sue righe nere. Pensò a lungo e alla fine decise che lei non era un animale bianco con le righe nere, ma un animale nero con le righe bianche e che è molto meglio essere un animale a righe invece di un animale nero, e da quel momento portò le sue righe bianche con grande dignità. (Malerba 2004: 202)

- 1 A Ad una zebra piacevano le righe sue nere e non avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo  
 B Ad una zebra non piacevano le sue righe nere e avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo  
 C Ad una zebra piacevano le sue righe nere e avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo  
 D Ad una zebra non piacevano le sue righe nere ma non avrebbe voluto essere un cavallo
- 2 A Qualche volta l'ombra delle sbarre della gabbia formava dei quadrati sulla pelle della zebra  
 B Qualche volta il sole formava dei quadrati sulle sbarre di ferro della gabbia  
 C L'ombra delle sbarre di ferro formava sempre dei piccoli quadrati sovrapponendosi alle righe della zebra  
 D Qualche volta, quando c'era il sole, le righe della zebra si sovrapponevano alle sbarre di ferro formando dei quadrati
- 3 A La zebra si vergognava delle righe, ma le piacevano i quadrati che il sole formava sulla pelle  
 B Alla zebra piacevano le sue righe ma si vergognava dei quadrati che il sole formava sulla pelle  
 C Alla zebra non piacevano le sue righe e i quadrati che il sole formava sulla sua pelle  
 D Alla zebra piacevano le sue righe e i quadrati che il sole formava sulla sua pelle
- 4 A Qualche volta quando c'era il sole, la zebra spaventava i visitatori  
 B Quando non c'era il sole la zebra era irritata e spaventava i visitatori  
 C Qualche volta la zebra si spaventava per la presenza dei visitatori  
 D Quando c'era il sole la zebra era contenta
- 5 A Un giorno un cavallo vide la zebra e si mise a piangere  
 B Un giorno un cavallo e la zebra piansero  
 C Un giorno la zebra pianse perché non vide il suo amico cavallo  
 D Un giorno la zebra pianse quando vide un cavallo
- 6 A La zebra parlò con i vicini perché era triste  
 B La zebra era triste e non parlò con i vicini

- C Dopo aver parlato con i vicini la zebra era triste  
D I vicini della zebra erano tristi perché la zebra non voleva parlare
- 7 A La giraffa si vergognava del collo lungo e del muso quadrato  
B La giraffa si vergognava del collo lungo ma era contenta del muso quadrato  
C La giraffa avrebbe voluto avere il muso quadrato  
D La giraffa non avrebbe voluto avere il collo così lungo
- 8 A La gru nascondeva le gambe sotto le ali  
B La gru amava mostrare le sue gambe sottili  
C Alla gru piacevano le sue gambe  
D La gru metteva una gamba sotto l'ala
- 9 A Il leopardo si vergognava della sua coda  
B Il leopardo si leccava la pelliccia perché si vergognava  
C Il leopardo si leccava le macchie per farle più belle  
D Il leopardo non voleva avere i baffi
- 10 A Nello zoo non c'erano animali soddisfatti di se stessi  
B Pochi animali dello zoo erano contenti di se stessi  
C Nessun animale dello zoo era insoddisfatto  
D Pochi animali dello zoo erano insoddisfatti
- 11 A Senza pensare a lungo la zebra ha capito che doveva accettarsi come era  
B Dopo aver pensato a lungo la zebra ha capito che non poteva accettarsi come era  
C La zebra ha pensato tanto e alla fine si è accettata come era  
D Se la zebra avesse pensato più a lungo si sarebbe accettata come era
- 12 A Alla fine la zebra pensò che era meglio essere nera  
B Alla fine la zebra pensò che era meglio non avere righe  
C Alla fine la zebra pensò che aveva le righe bianche  
D Alla fine la zebra pensò che aveva le righe nere



## Norwegian 1 and 2

### Entry test

#### Norske folkeeventyr: Presten og klokkeren.

Det var engang en prest som var så hovmodig at han skrek langt unna, når han så noen kom kjørende i møte med seg i hovedveien: "Av veien av veien, her kommer selve presten!" En gang han fór slik møtte han kongen. "Av veien, av veien!" skrek han på lang vei. Men kongen kjørte som han kjørte, og reiste fram, han, så den gangen måtte presten vike hesten sin; og da kongen sa: "I morgen skal du møte på slottet, og kan du ikke løse tre spørsmål jeg vil gi deg, skal du miste jobben din for ditt hovmods skyld." Det var annet slag enn presten var vant til: spørsmål og svar var ikke hans fag. Så reiste han til klokkeren, som hadde ord for å være en vis mann. Til ham sa han han ikke hadde hug til å reise, "for en gap kan spørre mer enn ti vise kan svare," sa han, og så fikk han klokkeren til å fare istedenfor seg. Ja, klokkeren reiste, og kom til slottet med prestens klær på. "Nå, er du der?" sa kongen. Ja, han var da det, det var sikkert nok. "Si meg nå først," sa kongen, "hvor langt er det fra øst til vest?" "Det er en dagsreise det," sa klokkeren. "Hvordan det?" sa kongen. "Jo-o, sola går opp i øst og ned i vest, og det gjør hun på en dag," sa klokkeren. "Ja ja," sa kongen. "Men si meg nå," sa han, "hva mener du vel jeg er verd, slik som du ser meg her?" "Å, Kristus ble solgt til tretti sølvpenge, så jeg tør vel ikke sette deg høyere enn til - tjue-ni," sa klokkeren. "Nå nå!" sa kongen. "Siden du er så klok på, så si meg hva det er jeg tenker nå?" "Å, du tenker vel det er presten som står før deg, men tar du feil fordi det er klokkeren," sa han. "Nå, så gå - hjem, og vær du prest og la ham bli klokker," sa kongen, og så ble det (Asbjørnsen & Moe 2012).

- 1a. Presten trodde ikke at han var viktigere enn de andre menneskene.  
 b. Presten var snill når han kjørte på hovedveien.  
 c. Presten trodde han var meget viktig og derfor han alltid ble på siden av veien.  
 d. Presten ville gjerne at alle gikk på siden av veien når han kjørte.
- 2a. En mann ropte høyt da han så presten ved siden av hovedveien.  
 b. Presten ropte høyt til en mann som var ved siden av hovedveien.  
 c. En mann ropte til presten for å få ham til å gå til hovedveien.  
 d. Presten ropte til menneskene når han var på hovedveien.
- 3a. En dag kongen måtte av veien etter at han møtte presten.  
 b. En dag kongen møtte presten som måtte av veien.  
 c. En dag presten skrek til kongen som gikk av veien.  
 d. En dag kongen og presten skrek til menneskene som var på hovedveien.
- 4a. Presten ville møte kongen neste dagen på hovedveien.  
 b. Kongen ville møte presten neste dagen i slottet.  
 c. Presten ville gjerne møte kongen neste dagen i slottet.  
 d. Kongen ville møte presten neste dage på hovedveien.
- 5a. Presten ville gjerne svare tre spørsmål.  
 b. Kongen ville spørre noen spørsmål.  
 c. Kongen ville ikke svare prestens spørsmål.  
 d. Presten ville spørre kongen tre spørsmål.
- 6a. klokkeren var visere enn kongen.  
 b. Presten var visere enn klokkeren.

c. Klokkeren var visere enn presten.

d. Presten var visere enn kongen.

7a. Presten sa klokkeren at han ville ikke gå til kongen og klokkeren gikk istedet.

b. Kongen visste at presten kunne ikke svare spørsmålene og ville helst at klokkeren gikk istedet.

c. Presten var så ivrig til å gå til slottet i stedet av klokkeren for å svare kongens spørsmål ene.

d. Klokkeren gikk ikke til slottet i stedet av presten.

8a. Klokkeren sa at det er umulig å vite hvor langt er det fra øst til vest.

b. Klokkeren sa at avstanden mellom øst og vest er en dag.

c. Klokkeren sa at avstanden mellom øst og vest er noen dager.

d. Kongen sa at avstanden mellom øst og vest er en dags reise.

9a. Klokkeren sa at kongens verdi var høyere enn tretti sølvpenge.

b. Klokkeren sa at kongens verdi var tretti sølvpenge.

c. Klokkeren sa at kongens verdi var lavere enn tretti sølvpenge.

d. Kongen sa at klokkerens verdi var lavere enn tretti sølvpenge.

10a. Kongen spurte hva mannen foran ham tenkte.

b. Kongen kunne ikke gjette hva mannen foran ham tenkte.

c. Kongen tenkte at det var klokkeren foran ham.

d. Kongen tenkte at det var presten som hadde svart de første to spørsmål.

## Final test

### Norske folkeeventyr: Nøkkelen i rokkehodet

Det var engang en gutt som skulle gifte seg. Han kjente en pike som var både vakker og gjev til å stelle og til å koke. Dit gikk han, for det var hun som han ville ha. Folket på gården skjønte hvorfor han kom; så de ba ham sette seg inn på benken og pratet med ham, og de bød ham noe å drikke, mens maten ble laget. De gikk fra og til, så gutten fikk tid til å se seg om i rommet; han så det var en rokk, og rokkehodet var fullt av lin. "Hvem er det som spinner på den rokken?" spurte gutten. "Å, det er datteren vår" sa kvinnen. Og gutten sa: "det er meget lin i rokkehodet, hvor lenge bruker hun til å spinne det?". Kvinnen sa, "Hun gjør det godt på en dag, og kanskje på mindre enn det." Han hadde aldri hørt at noen kunne spinne det antallet der på så kort tid. Men da de skulle bære fram maten, gikk de ut alle sammen, og han ble igjen i rommet alene; så fikk han se det lå en stor gammel nøkkel i vinduskarmen, den tok han og stakk inn i rokkehodet inn i linet. Så spiste de og drakk, og da han syntes han hadde vært der lenge nok, sa han takk og gikk sin vei. De ba ham komme igjen, og det lovet han også. Etter noen uker kom han igjen til gårds; da mottok de ham enda bedre enn første gangen. Men som de hadde kommet i prat, så sa kvinnen: "Siste gang du var her, så hendte det riktig noe rar: en gammel nøkkel forsvant og vi kunne ikke finne den igjen." Gutten gikk til rokken, som sto der med så mye lin på som det var siste gang, og tok nøkkelen fra rokkehodet. "Der er nøkkelen," sa han; "vinningen er ikke stor på spinningen, når spinnedagen varer så lenge" Så sa han takk, og gikk sin vei (Asbjørnsen & Moe 2012).

1.a. En gutt giftet seg med en pike som var gjev til å stelle og koke men ikke så vakker.

b. En gutt giftet seg med en pike som var gjev til å stelle og koke og også vakker.

c. En gutt giftet seg med en pike som var vakker men ikke så gjev til å stelle og koke.

d. En gutt ville gifte seg med en pike som var gjev til å stelle og koke og også vakker.

2. a. Han bestemte å gå til huset hennes men ingen var hjemme.

b. Han bestemte ikke å gå til huset hennes før at han var viss om forholdet med piken.

- c. Han gikk til huset hennes for å bestemme om et forslag om ekteskapet.  
d. Han gikk til huset hennes etter innbydelsen fra familien hennes.
3. a. Før at han drakk så han seg om i rommet.  
b. Før at han spiste så han seg om i rommet .  
c. Etter at han spiste så han seg om i rommet .  
d. Han ville se seg om i rommet, men det var ingen tid.
4. a. Mens moren snakket satte han lin på rokkehodet.  
b. Mens datteren spann snakket hun med ham.  
c. Mens datteren spann snakket moren med ham.  
d. Moren sa at det var datteren som brukte rokken.
5. a. Moren sa at datteren greide å spinne linet som var på rokken i mindre enn en dag.  
b. Datteren sa at moren greide å spinne linet som var på rokken i mindre enn en dag.  
c. Moren sa at datteren var fort men hun kunne ikke greie å spinne linet som var på rokkehodet i mindre enn en dag  
d. Datteren sa at moren var fort men hun kunne ikke greie å spinne linet som var på rokkehodet i mindre enn en dag.
- 6.a. Da han var alene så han en gammel nøkkel og stjal den.  
b. Da han var alene så han en gammel nøkkel og skjulte den.  
c. Da han var alene åpnet han vinduet med en gammel nøkkel.  
d. Da han var i rommet nær rokken mistet han en gammel nøkkel.
7. a. De innbød ham igjen og han sa at han ville gå.  
b. Han gikk igjen til å besøke, selv om de hadde ikke innbudt ham.  
c. De innbød ham igjen men han ville ikke gå.  
d. Hun ba hvis det var mulig å gå igjen til å besøke.
- 8.a. Kvinnen sa at de fant en gammel nøkkel.  
b. Kvinnen sa at de mistet en gammel nøkkel.  
c. Gutten sa at han fant en gammel nøkkel.  
d. Gutten sa at han mistet en gammel nøkkel.
9. a. Gutten forsto at moren og ikke datteren brukte rokken.  
b. Gutten forsto at spinningen varte altfor lenge.  
c. Gutten forsto at ingen brukte rokken lenge.  
d. Gutten forsto at datteren og ikke moren brukte rokken.
- 10.a. Gutten tok nøkkelen fra lommen sin.  
b. Kvinnen tok nøkkelen fra rokkehodet.  
c. Gutten tok nøkkelen fra rokkehodet.  
d. Kvinnen tok nøkkelen fra lommen sin.

## Norwegian 2

### Entry test

#### Norske folkeeventyr: Presten og klokkeren.

Det var engang en prest som var så hovmodig at han skrek langt unna, når han så noen kom kjørende i møte med seg i hovedveien: "Av veien av veien, her kommer selve presten!" En gang han fór slik møtte han kongen. "Av veien, av veien!" skrek han på lang vei. Men kongen kjørte som han kjørte, og reiste fram, han, så den gangen måtte presten vike hesten sin; og da kongen sa: "I morgen skal du møte på slottet, og kan du ikke løse tre spørsmål jeg vil gi deg, skal du miste jobben din for ditt hovmods skyld." Det var annet slag enn presten var vant til: spørsmål og svar var ikke hans fag. Så reiste han til klokkeren, som hadde ord for å være en vis mann. Til ham sa han han ikke hadde hug til å reise, "for en gap kan spørre mer enn ti vise kan svare," sa han, og så fikk han klokkeren til å fare istedenfor seg. Ja, klokkeren reiste, og kom til slottet med prestens klær på. "Nå, er du der?" sa kongen. Ja, han var da det, det var sikkert nok. "Si meg nå først," sa kongen, "hvor langt er det fra øst til vest?" "Det er en dagsreise det," sa klokkeren. "Hvordan det?" sa kongen. "Jo-o, sola går opp i øst og ned i vest, og det gjør hun på en dag," sa klokkeren. "Ja ja," sa kongen. "Men si meg nå," sa han, "hva mener du vel jeg er verd, slik som du ser meg her?" "Å, Kristus ble solgt til tretti sølvpenge, så jeg tør vel ikke sette deg høyere enn til - tjue-ni," sa klokkeren. "Nå nå!" sa kongen. "Siden du er så klok på, så si meg hva det er jeg tenker nå?" "Å, du tenker vel det er presten som står før deg, men tar du feil fordi det er klokkeren," sa han. "Nå, så gå - hjem, og vær du prest og la ham bli klokker," sa kongen, og så ble det (Asbjørnsen & Moe 2012).

- 1a. Presten trodde ikke at han var viktigere enn de andre menneskene.
  - b. Presten var snill når han kjørte på hovedveien.
  - c. Presten trodde han var meget viktig og derfor han alltid ble på siden av veien.
  - d. Presten ville gjerne at alle gikk på siden av veien når han kjørte.
- 2a. En mann ropte høyt da han så presten ved siden av hovedveien.
  - b. Presten ropte høyt til en mann som var ved siden av hovedveien.
  - c. En mann ropte til presten for å få ham til å gå til hovedveien.
  - d. Presten ropte til menneskene når han var på hovedveien.
- 3a. En dag kongen måtte av veien etter at han møtte presten.
  - b. En dag kongen møtte presten som måtte av veien.
  - c. En dag presten skrek til kongen som gikk av veien.
  - d. En dag kongen og presten skrek til menneskene som var på hovedveien.
- 4a. Presten ville møte kongen neste dagen på hovedveien.
  - b. Kongen ville møte presten neste dagen i slottet.
  - c. Presten ville gjerne møte kongen neste dagen i slottet.
  - d. Kongen ville møte presten neste dage på hovedveien.
- 5a. Presten ville gjerne svare tre spørsmål.
  - b. Kongen ville spørre noen spørsmål.
  - c. Kongen ville ikke svare prestens spørsmål.
  - d. Presten ville spørre kongen tre spørsmål.
- 6a. klokkeren var visere enn kongen.
  - b. Presten var visere enn klokkeren.

- c. Klokkeren var visere enn presten.
- d. Presten var visere enn kongen.
- 7a. Presten sa klokkeren at han ville ikke gå til kongen og klokkeren gikk istedet.
- b. Kongen visste at presten kunne ikke svare spørsmålene og ville helst at klokkeren gikk istedet.
- c. Presten var så ivrig til å gå til slottet i stedet av klokkeren for å svare kongens spørsmål ene.
- d. Klokkeren gikk ikke til slottet i stedet av presten.
  
- 8a. Klokkeren sa at det er umulig å vite hvor langt er det fra øst til vest.
- b. Klokkeren sa at avstanden mellom øst og vest er en dag.
- c. Klokkeren sa at avstanden mellom øst og vest er noen dager.
- d. Kongen sa at avstanden mellom øst og vest er en dags reise.
  
- 9a. Klokkeren sa at kongens verdi var høyere enn tretti sølvpenger.
- b. Klokkeren sa at kongens verdi var tretti sølvpenger.
- c. Klokkeren sa at kongens verdi var lavere enn tretti sølvpenger.
- d. Kongen sa at klokkerens verdi var lavere enn tretti sølvpenger.
  
- 10a. Kongen spurte hva mannen foran ham tenkte.
- b. Kongen kunne ikke gjette hva mannen foran ham tenkte.
- c. Kongen tenkte at det var klokkeren foran ham.
- d. Kongen tenkte at det var presten som hadde svart de første to spørsmål.

## Midterm test

### Norske folkeeventyr: Nøkkelen i rokkehodet

Det var engang en gutt som skulle gifte seg. Han kjente en pike som var både vakker og gjev til å stelle og til å koke. Dit gikk han, for det var hun som han ville ha. Folket på gården skjønnte hvorfor han kom; så de ba ham sette seg inn på benken og pratet med ham, og de bød ham noe å drikke, mens maten ble laget. De gikk fra og til, så gutten fikk tid til å se seg om i rommet; han så det var en rokk, og rokkehodet var fullt av lin. "Hvem er det som spinner på den rokken?" spurte gutten. "Å, det er datteren vår" sa kvinnen. Og gutten sa: "det er meget lin i rokkehodet, hvor lenge bruker hun til å spinne det?". Kvinnen sa, "Hun gjør det godt på en dag, og kanskje på mindre enn det." Han hadde aldri hørt at noen kunne spinne det antallet der på så kort tid. Men da de skulle bære fram maten, gikk de ut alle sammen, og han ble igjen i rommet alene; så fikk han se det lå en stor gammel nøkkel i vinduskarmen, den tok han og stakk inn i rokkehodet inn i linet. Så spiste de og drakk, og da han syntes han hadde vært der lenge nok, sa han takk og gikk sin vei. De ba ham komme igjen, og det lovet han også. Etter noen uker kom han igjen til gårds; da mottok de ham enda bedre enn første gangen. Men som de hadde kommet i prat, så sa kvinnen: "Siste gang du var her, så hendte det riktig noe rart: en gammel nøkkel forsvant og vi kunne ikke finne den igjen." Gutten gikk til rokken, som sto der med så mye lin på som det var siste gang, og tok nøkkelen fra rokkehodet. "Der er nøkkelen," sa han; "vinningen er ikke stor på spinningen, når spinnedagen varer så lenge" Så sa han takk, og gikk sin vei (Asbjørnsen & Moe 2012).

- 1.a. En gutt giftet seg med en pike som var gjev til å stelle og koke men ikke så vakker.
- b. En gutt giftet seg med en pike som var gjev til å stelle og koke og også vakker.
- c. En gutt giftet seg med en pike som var vakker men ikke så gjev til å stelle og koke.
- d. En gutt ville gifte seg med en pike som var gjev til å stelle og koke og også vakker.
  
- 2. a. Han bestemte å gå til huset hennes men ingen var hjemme.
- b. Han bestemte ikke å gå til huset hennes før at han var viss om forholdet med piken.

- c. Han gikk til huset hennes for å bestemme om et forslag om ekteskapet.  
d. Han gikk til huset hennes etter innbydelsen fra familien hennes.
3. a. Før at han drakk så han seg om i rommet.  
b. Før at han spiste så han seg om i rommet .  
c. Etter at han spiste så han seg om i rommet .  
d. Han ville se seg om i rommet, men det var ingen tid.
4. a. Mens moren snakket satte han lin på rokkehodet.  
b. Mens datteren spann snakket hun med ham.  
c. Mens datteren spann snakket moren med ham.  
d. Moren sa at det var datteren som brukte rokken.
5. a. Moren sa at datteren greide å spinne linet som var på rokken i mindre enn en dag.  
b. Datteren sa at moren greide å spinne linet som var på rokken i mindre enn en dag.  
c. Moren sa at datteren var fort men hun kunne ikke greie å spinne linet som var på rokkehodet i mindre enn en dag.  
d. Datteren sa at moren var fort men hun kunne ikke greie å spinne linet som var på rokkehodet i mindre enn en dag.
6. a. Da han var alene så han en gammel nøkkel og stjal den.  
b. Da han var alene så han en gammel nøkkel og skjulte den.  
c. Da han var alene åpnet han vinduet med en gammel nøkkel.  
d. Da han var i rommet nær rokken mistet han en gammel nøkkel.
7. a. De innbød ham igjen og han sa at han ville gå.  
b. Han gikk igjen til å besøke, selv om de hadde ikke innbudt ham.  
c. De innbød ham igjen men han ville ikke gå.  
d. Hun ba hvis det var mulig å gå igjen til å besøke.
8. a. Kvinnen sa at de fant en gammel nøkkel.  
b. Kvinnen sa at de mistet en gammel nøkkel.  
c. Gutten sa at han fant en gammel nøkkel.  
d. Gutten sa at han mistet en gammel nøkkel.
9. a. Gutten forsto at moren og ikke datteren brukte rokken.  
b. Gutten forsto at spinningen varte altfor lenge.  
c. Gutten forsto at ingen brukte rokken lenge.  
d. Gutten forsto at datteren og ikke moren brukte rokken.
10. a. Gutten tok nøkkelen fra lommen sin.  
b. Kvinnen tok nøkkelen fra rokkehodet.  
c. Gutten tok nøkkelen fra rokkehodet.  
d. Kvinnen tok nøkkelen fra lommen sin.

## APPENDIX 2 - INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE STUDENTS ON THEIR BACKGROUND

The students have been given false names.

### Italian 1

**Berta** (Originally written in Italian ) I studied Italian at the University of Jyväskylä for one year. I attended the two elementary courses and the intensive course. I have not been to Italy yet but I would like to go next summer. (In English) I love languages, my first love at the age of 11 was Latin and after it I studied many different languages. Last autumn I wanted to start a new hobby and I thought learning a new language would be nice. Of the languages that can be studied here at the University Italian seemed the most interesting. Perhaps one reason is that I already know French and Latin.

**Eeva** (Written in English) I started studying Italian at the University this autumn. I have no previous knowledge of the language. I have not been to Italy but I would like to go as an exchange student some day, when I have the basics of the language, perhaps after a few years.

**Fiona** (Originally written in Italian) 1.I studied Italian at the high school. 2. I studied Italian for three years. 3. I was in Italy. 4.For two weeks in 2004. I study Italian because I would like to go to Italy to study there. Also I study Italian because the language is very beautiful, it is like singing. The language is spoken as it is written, the same as with Finnish, and grammar is clear, if I could remember it ....

**Greta** (Originally written in Italian). 1. I studied Italian at the University of Jyväskylä and also at the University Lumiere of Lyone (France). 2. I studied it for two years. 3. I was once in Italy. 4. I went to Rome and Florence. 5. I made a 10 day journey to Italy. (In English) My major subject is French so I had to take a few courses of Italian or Spanish. I chose Italian and after the elementary courses I decided to continue studying this language. And I also wanted to study some other language than English that everyone can speak. Maybe one of the reasons why I study Italian is also that I like Italy as a country.

**Jenni** (Originally written in Italian) I studied Italian at high school for three years. I went to Italy several times. I was three times in Milan, once in Rome, Venice and Mantua. I also went to lake Garda. All my journeys lasted just a few days.

**Kati** I wanted to start studying Italian because I have always loved different languages and because I already had been studying French. French and Italian are very similar and I thought it was quite easy for me to start studying Italian. Also, Italian is not that common in Finland, for example compared to Spanish, and I wanted to learn a language that not so many people know. Italian sounds also beautiful.

**Laura** (Written in English) I studied Italian at the University, I started last year. I attended the two basic courses, the intensive course and the course on translation. I have not been to Italy yet, but I planned to apply for a student exchange post next year.

**Noora** (Originally written in Italian) I studied Italian at the University of Jyväskylä and also at the University of Bordeaux, France, last year. I studied it for two years. I made a 10 day journey to Italy last year (Rome and Florence). (In English) I study Italian because my major is French and I had to study Spanish or Italian. I chose Italian because I am interested in Italian culture and language. I have also started to study Spanish now. I enjoy studying Italian and I try to find information about Italy all the time. I like Italian films. I want to learn Italian so well



that I could teach it some day. It is more interesting to study a language that is not spoken by everybody.

## Italian 2

**Camilla.** I study Italian because it is very interesting. I am very interested also in Italian culture and I would like very much to visit Italy one day. I also study other languages and I have always been interested in learning languages. I chose to learn Italian because it is not so common as some other languages such as French or German, which are studied more in Finland. I started to study Italian in the University attending the courses of the language centre about two years ago.

**Danielle.** Why not? It is a romance language and I studied also Spanish and French. I like languages. I started many years ago.

**Flora.** I study Italian because it is an interesting and nice language. It is kin to other European languages, and by studying Italian one can know the other European languages and cultures better. I am Russian and in Russian there are many words with Italian origin. I like to find the relationships among things. I want to read the original version because it is the only chance to understand the beauty of the language. This is my second year. Last year I attended the elementary course here in this University.

**Gloria.** I study Italian because I want to. Basically it is the only reason. I started my studies in sixth form, in 2003. I took all the 8 courses my school offered and in 2006 I took my matriculation exam in Italian (getting an M).

**Kukka.** I study Italian because I want to do my Erasmus in Italy next year. I started studying Italian last year. But two years ago I was in Italy nine months.

## Norwegian 1

**Brita.** I wanted to attend this course because I am interested in Norway and its culture and Norwegian language. I tried to learn some Norwegian at home some years ago. I would like to work in Norway during the summer and the course hopefully gives basic skills in the language.

**Cecilia.** I chose this course because I want to learn the basis of Norwegian language. I started the study of Swedish when I was at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I was 13 years old. Last time I studied Swedish two years ago, when I was 19 years old. Now I want to learn the basis of Norwegian.

**Dorotea.** Why am I here in this course? I am Hungarian and in Hungary there isn't any possibility to learn Norwegian. This course was my only chance to learn Norwegian. Why Norwegian? I am a hardcore Scandinavian metal fan and I want to understand the lyrics in Norwegian. Norwegian is very similar to Swedish, it's quite easy for me. My background. In Hungary I studied Swedish for three years and I really like it. I'm in love with the Scandinavian culture. I read many books on this theme.

**Giselle.** (Written in Norwegian, with errors) I lived in Norway half year in 2008. I was there as exchange student, I don't want to forget Norwegian I have learnt. I studied Swedish 6 years at school, as everybody in Finland.

**Hilma.** (Written in Norwegian) My mother was Norwegian. I have many relatives in Norway, an aunt and two uncles cannot speak or write English. My nephews and nieces speak and write English, with them I communicate via e-mail. My family and I will go to Norway for a visit. If I can speak more Norwegian it is better.

**Irja.** I came here to learn some basics of the language. I haven't studied Norwegian before, but I have studied Swedish a lot. I think it's quite difficult to separate these two languages in my head and that's why I feel I haven't learnt Norwegian as well as I would have wanted. I just tend to use Swedish even though I would like to use Norwegian.

**Jutta.** I chose to study Norwegian because my roommate was thinking of participating and I got interested. And I like to learn new languages and Norwegian was the only one that fitted in my schedule. I studied Swedish from 7<sup>th</sup> grade and took an academic course at the university.

**Karolina.** (Written in Norwegian) I took part in this course because I was half year in Norway and would like to learn more and keep the language knowledge I have. I studied Swedish for six years and now I have been in Norway. I also think that my knowledge of both Swedish and Norwegian is good.

## Norwegian 2

**Aino.** (Written in Swedish). I have Swedish as mother tongue and study Swedish as main subject. I am interested in Norwegian specially because I have some Norwegian friends.

**Barbara.** (Written in Swedish) I want to study Norwegian since I am on my way to Norway and study half a year there. I would like to know the differences between Norwegian and Swedish. My mother tongue is Swedish. I am a Finnish Swede.

**Cora.** (Written in Dano-Norwegian) I have chosen to study Norwegian because I am interested in the Scandinavian languages (Swedish, Danish, Norwegian). I studied Swedish for 5

years and Danish for two years at the university. I hope that one can learn more Norwegian at the university of Jyväskylä in the future.

**Dagmar.** (Written in Norwegian) I have chosen to study Norwegian in Jyväskylä because I study Scandinavistics in Germany. I have been studying Norwegian for two years now. Furthermore I thought it would be good to speak Norwegian in Finland also, so I will not forget all. I have family in Norway and often visit them. I also was in Norway as an au-pair for one year. Here in Jyväskylä I also studied Swedish, but I did not need it much in the course.

**Eero.** (Written in Norwegian) I chose this course because I wanted to improve my knowledge of Norwegian language (I attended a short course of Norwegian last spring but I would like to learn more). Swedish is my main subject and we had a course in which we got acquainted also with the other Scandinavian languages.

**Florence.** (Written in Norwegian) I studied half year at the University of Tromsø as an international student and learnt Norwegian there. I think it is an amusing language and easy to learn. I learnt Swedish at school (Finns must). Norwegian I studied in Norway. I have also been many times in Stockholm and there I spoke with Swedes (in the last three years three/four months)

## APPENDIX 3 - STUDENTS' FEEDBACK

### Italian 1

**Feedback 1.** (Originally written in Italian) The course has been very useful and funny. I have learnt a lot. Speaking is a bit difficult for me though. It seems to me that I am not quick enough in constructing sentences. Exercises have been varied. I found listening comprehension with films very good!

**Feedback 2.** I have noticed that my skills have improved a lot and I see the development also in this course. I can't say that this course is the reason for my development because I have had basic study program going on, many courses and I've also interacted regularly with an Italian exchange student. But here on this course I have seen the development, e. g. the listening comprehensions, telling stories, etc. I am much more confident and fluent now. The interactions where we've had to talk in Italian are very important, because they give us courage to interact in real life. The tasks could have been something more concrete from real life, e. g. talk about food. The detective stories were fun and cheerful tasks. The teacher could have told us about what bands there are that sing in Italian because we could have listened to music also in our free time; I don't know many Italian singers. All in all the course was ok, and it was good to have many types of tasks.

**Feedback 3.** The activities have been useful and the wealth of information suitable. I have learned a lot through the oral exercises especially. It has been useful to do some kind of exercises too, for example the detective stories, and notice progress in my language skills. The part of the film we watched was a good way to learn – I could sit through even more films. That was particularly nice. The atmosphere has been great and it has never been a burden to come here. Thanks.

**Feedback 4.** This course has been very useful and has helped to develop my Italian language even more. The exercises that we have done have been interesting and varied. Maybe we could have done more exercises with oral communication because speaking is usually the most difficult part in a foreign language.

**Feedback 5.** The exercise with a movie was fun. We could do more interactive exercises. It's quite boring to work long with one text, but of course it's also useful for learning the vocabulary.

**Feedback 6.** I have really liked the exercises in which we had to solve a crime. Sometimes we work a bit too much on stories (first we hear them maybe three times, then we read them at least twice and then we have to tell the story to a friend). I would like to speak about something else than the stories (we don't talk about zebras or elephants in our every day life) so I would like to talk about things that have something to do with us.

**Feedback 7.** (Originally written in Italian) the exercises are varied and funny. This course improves the knowledge of Italian language.

**Feedback 8.** (Originally written in Italian - with mistakes) It has been funny to study the language in a way which is different from the way we have normally studied. The exercises have been useful and I have had to think a lot and also I had to concentrate more.

**Feedback 9.** The course has been nicer than other Italian courses this year. I think I have become a bit better if compared to the level I was in the beginning, but I find listening exercises very difficult sometimes because I still don't know that much Italian words. And it's hard to tell

the story in pairs without reading the text at the same time because the words aren't familiar. But however it has been fun, thank you!

**Feedback 10.** I have been very pleased about the fact that (at least in my opinion) we have had more time to translate and do exercises. I've also noticed some improvement in my own language skills – it is easier now to write own texts. It helps when the exercises are similar and connected to each other as they have been during the lessons. Directions are given with care and patience which is GREAT! During these sessions it hasn't been so difficult to be in a group that has students in many different levels when it comes to their skills. I have fitted in well.

**Feedback 11.** (Originally written in Italian) I liked this course. The activities have been different and varied. I like best the films, the songs and the police stories. I think now I have more self confidence and it is not so difficult any longer to start speaking Italian. Of course I always need practice but this course has been useful to me.

**Feedback 12.** (Originally written in Italian – with mistakes) I liked the course a lot. The activities have been very varied and often interesting and funny. I think I have learnt a lot. The atmosphere has always been good and none of us had any reason to be nervous or be scared of the activities. The activities have not been either too easy or too difficult.

## Italian 2

### First semester

**Feedback 1.** (Italian, last sentence in English) reading and then telling and writing the stories has been useful and pleasant. Also the songs and comics have been interesting to work with. Anyway for me it would be better to work faster.

**Feedback 2.** (Italian, some mistakes) The variety of exercises was good. One often worked with others, which was very pleasant. It would be interesting to know the results of the written tests (and also the ones of the oral comprehensions which we had at the beginning), but after the course, maybe via e-mail (it is not obligatory), if the course continues maybe it is better not to know them. I liked the interaction exercises which were very useful. It is good that most of the lessons was in Italian, I understand it better (than before)

**Feedback 3.** (All English this time) I have liked this course very much and it feels that my Italian has gotten much better. I liked the reading comprehensions with the little detective stories the best: they were fun to read and to solve! The language used in the exercises was sometimes too difficult for me (I always get confused with the many tempuses of the verbs) but most of the time I understood everything fairly well. The writing tasks were a bit too difficult for me because I am absolutely terrible at remembering new words. It would have helped if some of the key words would have been on the blackboard/whiteboard but I guess it wasn't that bad even without them.

**Feedback 4.** (All English this time) I found the cartoons fun and also useful because there were new words, although it takes time to look up words in the dictionary. For this reason I felt that there wasn't always enough time to finish the exercises. It was difficult but also probably useful to explain and write the stories with your own words. All in all I think this is a nice course. It's useful to also practice talking in Italian because you don't get to talk that much otherwise. The music and also the movie clip were nice although especially the movie I found difficult to understand because they talked too fast.

**Feedback 5.** ( Italian, some errors) I like a lot the exercises of this type. Exercises are simple. I learnt more than I expected.

**Feedback 6.** (Ungrammatical Italian) The tasks when we work on texts, stories, are useful because then we have to listen, answer the questions, speak and write. It would be better if we spoke more during the lessons, we spoke freely on some item. I think we all understand all you say, but our own speaking is still very bad.

## Final feedback

**Feedback 1.** (Written in Italian) The course has been funny, specially the little stories which we read, but sometimes a little boring because we worked too slowly.

**Feedback 2.** (Written in Italian, some mistakes) This course was pleasant. The exercises were good: not too difficult and not too easy either. It is a pity it was so late because I was very tired.

**Feedback 3.** The course was very pleasant, interesting and also very useful. It widened my vocabulary.

**Feedback 4.** (Written in Italian, some mistakes) My wish is that all the “writing and speaking practice” courses are like this.

**Feedback 5.** (Italian, some mistakes) The best thing with the course is that there was no homework, therefore I did not have any stress when coming to the lesson. Work was easy and very funny.

## Norwegian 1

**Feedback 1.** I think the course was very different than many of the language courses I’ve been to earlier. I think more exercises would have been in order and maybe also giving us so kind of glossary or a list of words every time we had difficult texts or oral assignments. On the other hand, introducing us literature and music already at a beginners’ course was nice.

**Feedback 2.** It was a great course, I’m really glad to take part on this course. I think I have learnt a lot of things especially on grammar and my comprehension got better than before. What I was missing on the course is the speaking. I think if I was in Norway I would understand a lot, but couldn’t speak (or speak with a strong Swedish accent). Many thanks for the course!

**Feedback 3.** More exercises about grammar . more talking and using everyday life phrases. I liked your relaxed style to teach. It was good that you used texts.

**Feedback 4.** The course was relaxing and in the end it gave us useful basic grammar knowledge. Singing was nice, it helped remember words. Even though we didn’t have homework it could have been useful to have some. Some everyday phrases would have been good, like how we act when shopping or how to buy tickets.

**Feedback 5.** The course was nice and relax. Singing was nice and funny. Some text was too hard and that’s why take so long time. I miss more basic vocabulary. Tack.

**Feedback 6.** (in Norwegian, very few mistakes). The course was very nice and we had various tasks which were good. Since there are many who already speak Swedish, it could be useful to concentrate on differences between Norwegian and Swedish. Thanks for the course.

**Feedback 7.** I'm very glad for the course. I think it wasn't too easy nor too demanding. Describing and "story telling" exercises were amusing and useful. I missed a bit listening and speaking, oral, exercises. Especially at first it was hard to recognize the words which are similar to those of Swedish but differently spelled. It was good we write every week, but the time given to writing was quite short. I think we could have written something at home in order to learn grammar better. Thank you very much for the course.

**Feedback 8.** (In Norwegian, some errors) The course was important for me. Now I understand better Norwegian speech. I dare speak Norwegian. I had to study much Norwegian at home. I understand grammar better now. I also dared to speak Norwegian during the course.

## Norwegian 2

**Feedback 1** I thought that the course would have been more about literature, so I was a bit disappointed about that. I thought we would get to know with some authors and read more their texts. Sometimes I got the feeling that the lessons could have been organized better. We had to wait for the next exercise. At the beginning of the course there was enough time to do the exercises, but after that I got sometimes busy if I wanted to do the exercise and also check all the new words from the dictionary. I didn't feel that the singing was a good way to learn. I wasn't familiar with most of the songs, so it was hard to sing. They were also too high for my register. Maybe reading loud together would have been better. I think it would have been useful to listen more to the natives speaking. It was easy to listen the teacher, but I've noticed that it takes time to understand the natives who doesn't try to be clear in their speak. It was a good thing that we had our dictionaries with us all the time. I learned lots of words during the course. Every time I discovered a new word I searched for it and wrote it down. Then afterwards I read these new words and tried to remember them. Some students felt that it was hard to remember these texts that we had, but I think it was a good exercise. It forced me to remember words. I liked the writing exercises. I had to think about the forms that the words are written in. It was also good that we got our texts back with the corrections, so we could learn from our own mistakes. I think the problem solving exercises were also nice. Then the language was a tool to get to the right answers. Especially the police cases were very challenging. In general I liked the course. I feel that my skills in Norwegian have improved.

**Feedback 2** The course has been really interesting. The name of the course, introduction to Norwegian language and literature was misleading, because we didn't read Norwegian literature as I suspected. I would have liked to read more during the course. The literature was a part of reading comprehension tasks, but still I would have wanted to read some fairytales or something else which is easy to read. The abstracts of Kristine Lavransdatter were interesting and I want to read that book or see the film as soon as possible. Assignments in which we had to match sentences were nice but after a while you got used to the system. With that I mean that the last sentence was always x says/asks: .... Many times we had to read a riddle or some other text and then try to remember it and tell it to another person. Those assignments were nice, and I understand the purpose of that. But I would have liked to do different kind of assignments, not only repeating the same kind of assignments. At some point you start doing the assignments with a routine and that is not a good thing. I didn't like the "detective assignments". I guess their task was to put as "on the mood" for learning, but I didn't feel like that. I just thought that I was stupid because I didn't discover the answer on my own. The riddles were funny, but usually at least a bit difficult. I guess that they were Norwegian riddles, so it was difficult



to get the answer or the joke. The grammar was gone through in a superficial way: we had the conjugation of nouns and other basics of Norwegian. However there were only a few tasks and many of them were in a form of fill in the missing word on a correct form. It was also a bit misleading what you said about using the indefinite and definite forms. It seemed that there was no difference at all and I don't believe it is like that. At least in Swedish the same rules are quite strict. Playing Guess who/Gjett hvem was fun and now I can say that I have played it also in Norwegian. The songs during the course were fun and I realize that you were trying to teach us the pronunciation with them. However it would have been useful to go through more about the pronunciation.

**Feedback 3** I liked this course very much it was nice that we didn't have any homework or examination (if we were present often enough). The exercises that we did or the lectures were lots of fun and they were a nice exception if you compare them to what we do on other courses. The main reason I chose this course was that I thought we would discuss the Norwegian literature more because it was mentioned in the name of the course. However, we only used one text as a material of the exercises. I would have hoped that there would have been either more literature or the lectures or more versatile texts. The jokes that we worked on were funny but when we were supposed to match sentences it was sometimes a bit difficult because we couldn't see the ending of the joke. I didn't mind the little spelling mistakes in the exercises and texts because we all are human and make mistakes. Nobody's perfect! The exercises in which we had to read a text, try to remember it and then tell the story to someone else were also difficult sometimes especially when the texts we had to memorize were long so we had to condense them. I had to check my dictionary many times in order to be able to tell a shorter version of the text. It was nice that children songs were used as a material for exercises but I would have liked if we had had a bit more "adult" songs every once in a while. That is mainly because the children songs are most likely to keep going on and on in my head so they can be frustrating. The detective exercises that we usually began the lectures with were sometimes OK but quite often the solutions were a bit far-fetched. The exercises that we did after grammar discussions were sometimes too one-sided and I wouldn't have minded if there had been more of them. The fact that we played Guess who? on one lecture was nice. However, the handout in which we saw the people was a bit blurred so it was difficult to distinguish for example if the person had green or blue eyes. However, it was fun to try to guess whom the other person had chosen and use the language in that way. All in all, the course was lots of fun and I will surely recommend it to other students if the course is organized also in the future!

## APPENDIX 4 - FEEDBACK FROM MY OLD LYCEE STUDENTS

Real names are given since the Facebook group was open and public.

### Giuseppe Caruso Fan Club

#### Gruppo aperto

Al big Caruso e ai suoi democratici metodi di insegnamento (Facebook groups 37430681145).

### Susanna Paletti

la cosa più fantastica, e chi era in classe con me potrà confermare, era quando arrivavamo puntualmente in ritardo io e la mia compagna di banco: si imbestialiva ma se la prendeva sempre e solo con me (anche se entravamo insieme in due) gridando: "PALETTIIIIII" ahahahahahah e tutti che ridevano..

29 aprile 2010 alle ore 16.15

### Maria Luisa Mazzoni

that's amore!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!ancora la ricordo a memoria!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!grandeeeeee!!!!

· 26 agosto 2009 alle ore 19.02

### Roberto Lulli

...o cazzo!...italiano in Finlandia??...non lo vedo da quando insegnava inglese in lia ....ehhh...l'ammore dove ci porta!!!

· 8 luglio 2009 alle ore 10.34

### Giulio Di Michele

insegna sempre italiano in Finlandia

· 2 giugno 2009 alle ore 16.00

### Roberto Lulli

Naaaaa!!!...grande Giuseppe!...sono un suo vecchissimo studente!...quante ne abbiamo passate!...chi mi da notizie fresche?...che fine ha fatto, dove insegna, come sta?

· 8 maggio 2009 alle ore 16.45

### Susanna Paletti

ma perchè le barzellette che nn facevano ridere???ahahahahah

· 30 dicembre 2008 alle ore 17.42

### Andrea Zack Zuccarelli

L'uomo che nei 5 anni di liceo mi ha insegnato davvero qualcosa di concreto...massima ammirazione e rispetto! Grande prof!

· 30 dicembre 2008 alle ore 11.57

### Andrea Ciasco

che incubo la famosa domanda pari o dispari?...sceglievo sempre male!!

· 29 dicembre 2008 alle ore 22.54

### Carmen Busenello

"The listening of today is about..." GRANDE PROF!!!!!!

· 29 dicembre 2008 alle ore 22.43

Marco Abundo

Grande Caruso!!!!

Ci ha educato a una pronuncia very british!!!!

· 29 dicembre 2008 alle ore 22.33Sara Capitano Coraline

"one day a man entered into a pub and orderd a beer!!!" ... "and now before give you the conclusion i'll repeat everything" ahahaah grande carusooooooooooooooooooooo

· 16 dicembre 2008 alle ore 22.54Stefano Schiaroli

Me ricordo ancora l'estrazione dei numeri dalla sacchetta..sempre gli stessi uscivano!!!Che grande uomo..

· 13 dicembre 2008 alle ore 22.12Silvia Tofani

this old man, he play one, he play nick nack on my thumb, he play nik nak paddy wack, give a dog a bone, this old man came rolling home.....la canto ancora...sarò malata?????

· 12 dicembre 2008 alle ore 23.12Andrea Iacopini

la maiiii!!!

· 25 novembre 2008 alle ore 13.51Andrea Iacopini

si può la mail del colui onorato professore?

· 18 novembre 2008 alle ore 12.01Cristian Di Vincenzo

Colui che ci ha disvelato i segreti della Trombonave!

· 17 novembre 2008 alle ore 14.55Cris Tina

ragazzi dentro la busta il foglio dentro la bustaa!!!!

· 14 novembre 2008 alle ore 14.59Raffaella Pachetta Ricci

qualche capello bianco ma e' sempre uguale:)

· 14 novembre 2008 alle ore 12.35Daniele Anzuini

Per chi mi conosce credo di essere uno di quelli che aveva un legame particolare col caruso...Grande caruso! e le sue barzellette che non facevamo mai ridere!

· 12 novembre 2008 alle ore 22.34Simona Mattioli

Il grande prof del "diamoci dei tempi!"

· 9 novembre 2008 alle ore 22.07Alessia Ferrari

Ohhhhh...il mio prof del cuore!!!!

· 9 novembre 2008 alle ore 15.55Fulvio Maurice Donato

Beppe uno di Noi.....

· 7 novembre 2008 alle ore 17.52

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Ramona Spagnolello

il miglior prof che posso ricordare!!! grandissimo caruso!!!!

· 7 novembre 2008 alle ore 11.43

Simone Cicero

today i'll speak about romatcism

· 7 novembre 2008 alle ore 10.51

Ilana Velardita

piter piper pick a peck of picle pepper,if piter piper pick a peck of picle pepper,where is the cicle pepper piter piper picked?.... grande peppe!!!!!!unico e solo!!!!!!le sue lezioni sono quelle che ricordo con piu' piacere anche se ammetteto di non aver appreso molto!!!!!!!

· 6 novembre 2008 alle ore 23.43

Vanessa Pascali

nooooo.....mo pure il fan club!!'uomo con il cronometro in mano!!

· 6 novembre 2008 alle ore 20.54

Marco Cappella

Un genio..Quant'è bello!!!

· 6 novembre 2008 alle ore 19.57

Simona Pi'

Si bellissime le lezioni, 12 minuti di listening, 2 minuti di pausa, 10 minuti di canzone...

...ma soprattutto, noi in sauna e lui a rotolarsi nella neve...un mito!!!!!!

· 6 novembre 2008 alle ore 18.26

Giulio Di Michele

Ragazzi per chi vuole ritrovarlo ora Peppe è in Finlandia a insegnare italiano per chi vuole ho contatto mail e numero di telefono finlandese.

Che dire delle barzellette e delle storie di Esopo.

· 6 novembre 2008 alle ore 15.49

Cristian Di Vincenzo

Mitico!!! Grazie per l'esperienza in Finlandia! Un abbraccio

· 6 novembre 2008 alle ore 0.40

Annalisa Basciani

Mitiche le sue lezioni di inglese, tra listening e canzoni...un grande!

· 5 novembre 2008 alle ore 23.44

Valentina Santamaria

oh my godddddddddddd

il caruso...

ancora sto cantando hei jude

grande proffftfffff

· 5 novembre 2008 alle ore 23.30

Fran Cesco

Per fortuna che Caruso insegna Inglese, perchè se insegnasse Italiano tirerebbe le orecchie a chi ha scritto questa descrizione (Al big Caruso e hai suoi democratici metodi di insegnamento).....hahahahahahaha

· 5 novembre 2008 alle ore 17.07

Chiara Giovannetti

Grande Prof!!!!

· 5 novembre 2008 alle ore 11.55Fabrizio Bertini

un uomo un mitttooo!!

hahahahahahaha

· 5 novembre 2008 alle ore 11.11Luciano Vietri

Molto piu che un semplice professore....

· 5 novembre 2008 alle ore 0.31Chiara Puck Mela

...emigravo nelle sue lezioni in altre sezioni, dico solo questo.

Per salvarmi dalla Serra

· 4 novembre 2008 alle ore 23.34Manuela Anzini

Grande Professore!!!!

· 4 novembre 2008 alle ore 20.52Francesco Stellato

Mitico Caruso!!!

· 4 novembre 2008 alle ore 20.43Maija Hirvimies

oh my goodness, he has his own fan club???? classic!!!

· 4 novembre 2008 alle ore 13.29Andrea Iacopini

ma io sono stato in finlandia non più di 3 settimane fa!

Ma non era a Tallin? Ha un mail?

· 4 novembre 2008 alle ore 9.53Gerard Isoldi

grande prof...estrattore di numeri,instancabile fautore dell'equa giustizia che non teme gli spostamenti ancestrali del viaggio,le migrazioni.

· 4 novembre 2008 alle ore 5.52Anna Caruso

e in Finlandia è un pezzo grosso dell'università ormai! insegna anche cultura e tradizioni italiane...

· 3 novembre 2008 alle ore 21.29Fran Cesco

Il professore sta insegnando in Finlandia.....io lo vedo spesso e ci sentiamo per telefono! Ha 3 meravigliosi bambini: una femminuccia e 2 maschietti!!!!Sono bellissimi....

· 3 novembre 2008 alle ore 20.33Andrea Iacopini

dobbiamo ritrovarlo!

· 3 novembre 2008 alle ore 20.08

## APPENDIX 5 - ATTENDANCE

The tables show the number of lessons attended; the students have been given false names.

<b>ITALIAN 1 - minimum number of lessons to attend: 9</b>	
2 <sup>nd</sup> semester	
Anna	10
Berta	9
Eeva	10
Fiona	11
Greta	10
Helmi	10
Jenni	9
Kati	10
Laura	9
Noora	9
Outi	9

<b>ITALIAN 2- minimum number of lessons to attend: 9 each semester</b>		
	1 <sup>st</sup> sem	2 <sup>nd</sup> sem
Camilla	12	11
Danielle	13	13
Flora	9	10
Gloria	10	9
Irma	11	10
Kukka	10	10

<b>NORWEGIAN 1- minimum number of lessons to attend: 15</b>	
Aili	12
Brita	18
Cecilia	16
Dorotea	17
Elina	15
Giselle	15
Hilma	20
Irja	16
Jutta	19
Karolina	15

<b>NORWEGIAN 2- minimum number of lessons to attend: 15</b>	
Aino	15
Barbara	12
Cora	14
Dagmar	13
Eero	20
Florence	17

## APPENDIX 6 - THE ACTIVITIES USED DURING THE LESSONS

## Puzzles

## Work on everyday life expressions



A. Hei! eller God dag!    B. Hei! eller God dag!    C. Ha det bra eller ha det godt/ha det/på gjensyn/vi sees

D. Vær så god, her er ...    E. Vær så god, ....    F. Vær så god    G. Takk

H. Takk    I. ingen årsak eller Vær så god    J. Fint!    K. Vil du være så snill å .....

L. Hvordan står det til? eller Hvordan har du det?/Hvordan lever du?

M. Om forlatelse eller tilgi meg/Unnskyld meg/Jeg beklager/Jeg er lei meg

N. Skål (for ....)    O. Takk, bra! Hvordan har du det?    P. Ikke bekymr deg! eller Det gjør ingenting!





## Work on short texts

### Comprehension questions

#### Norske folkeeventyr: Mannen som skulle stelle hjemme

Det var engang en mann som var så sint fordi han syntes at kjerringa ikke gjorde nok i huset. "vær ikke så sint," sa en kveld kjerringa; "i morgen skal vi bytte arbeid; jeg skal gå til enga, så kan du stelle hjemme." Ja, det var mannen vel nøyd med. Tidlig om morgenen tok kjerringa ljaen og gikk i enga, og mannen skulle da til å stelle huset. Først ville han til å kjerne smør; men da han hadde kjernet en stund, ble han tørst og gikk ned i kjelleren for å drikke øl. Mens han var i kjelleren, hørte han at grisen var i stua. Han la i vei med tappen i handen, opp igjennom kjellertrappen fort og skulle se etter grisen, så den ikke veltet kjernen; men da han fikk se at grisen alt hadde veltet kjernen og sto og slikket smøret, som rant utover gulvet, ble han så sint at han glemte øltønnen. Etter at grisen var ute igjen kom han i hug at han gikk med tappen i hånden; men da han kom ned i kjelleren, var øltønnen tom. Han gikk da til å kjerne smør igjen for det ville han ha til middags. Da han hadde kjernet en stund, kom han i hug, at heimkua sto inne ennå og hadde fått ikke maten og vannet. Han syntes det var for langt å gå til hagen med den, han fikk slippe den opp på taket, tenkte han: det var torvtak på bygningen, og der sto stort, fint gress. Huset lå i en bratt bakke, og når han la en planke bort på taket, så trodde han kua kunne gå opp. Men kjernen torde han ikke slippe heller, for den vesle ungen hans krabbet på gulvet; han kunne slå den over ende. Så tok han kjernen på ryggen; men så skulle han gi kua vann først, før han slapp den på taket. Han tok en bømme for å ta vann i brønnen med, men da han bøyde seg over brønnkanten, rant fløten ut av kjernen og ned på ham. Det var nesten middag, og smør hadde han ikke fått ennå; så tenkte han han fikk koke graut, og hengde en gryte med vann på peisen. Da han det hadde gjort, husket han at kua var på taket og hun kunne falle derfra; han gikk så opp og skulle binde den. Den ene enden av repet bandt han om halsen på kua, slapp det ned igjennom pipa, og bandt den andre enden om benet sitt, for vannet for grauten kokte alt i gryten. Mens han hadde det travelt med det, falt kua utover taket og dro mannen opp gjennom pipa; der satt han fast, og kua hang utenfor veggen og kunne hverken komme opp eller ned. Konen hadde ventet på at mannen skulle komme og rope hjem til middag; men da han kom ikke til sist gikk hun hjem. Da hun fikk se at kua hang så stygt til, skar hun repet med ljaen; i det samme falt mannen ned igjennom peisepipa, og da kjerringa kom inn, sto han på hodet i grautgryten (Asbjørnson & Moe 2012).

Hvorfor byttet mannen og konen arbeidet?  
 hvorfor gikk han til kjelleren?  
 hvorfor rant smøret på gulvet?  
 hvorfor fikk han kua gå på taket?  
 hvorfor rant fløten på ham?  
 hvorfor band ham kua?  
 hvor band han endene av repet?  
 hvorfor gikk konen hjem uten at mannen sin kalte henne?  
 hvorfor falt mannen gjennom pipen?

### Gap filling (with words provided)

#### De tre skandinaviske språk

Skandinaviske språk: svensk, dansk og norsk, er temmelig (1). Ja, det er så liten (2) på dem at en kan nesten kalle dem (3). Det er i alminnelighet ikke (4) for en nordmann å gjøre seg (5) f. eks. i Stockholm. Han finner naturligvis at svenskene (6) de samme ordene litt annerledes i mange tilfelle og også (7) litt forskjellige ord og uttrykk men

han blir snart vant til det. Han har dessuten lest en del svensk i skolen. (8) han tar en tur til København, vil han kanskje til å begynne med ha noen (9) med å forstå sine danske brødre. Ordene og (10) er nok stort de samme, men danskene uttaler ofte vokaler og konsonanter på en ganske annen måte. Men etter at (11) er blitt gjentatt et par ganger, går det nok et lys opp for nordmannen. Hvis han har oppholdt seg i byen noen dager (12) det som regel meget fint. [Marm, I., & Sommerfelt, A. (1967). *Teach yourself Norwegian: A book of self-instruction in the Norwegian Riksmål*. London: English Universities P. Page 189]

**bruker vanskelig forskjell setningergår uttrykkene hvis vanskelighet forstått dialekter like uttaler**

### Pair work: asking questions to find information to fill the gaps

#### Norske folkeeventyr: Mannen som skulle stelle hjemme

Det var engang en mann som var så sint fordi han syntes at kjerringa ikke gjorde nok i huset. "vær ikke så sint," sa en kveld kjerringa; "i morgen skal vi bytte arbeid; jeg skal gå til enga, så kan du stelle hjemme." Ja, det var mannen vel nøyd med. Tidlig om morgenen tok kjerringa låen og gikk i enga, og mannen skulle da til å stelle huset. Først ville han til å kjerne smør; men da han hadde kjernet en stund, ble han tørst og gikk ned i kjelleren for å drikke øl. Mens han var i kjelleren, hørte han at grisen var i stua. Han la i vei med tappen i handen, opp igjennom kjellertrappen fort og skulle se etter grisen, så den ikke veltet kjernen; men da han fikk se at grisen alt hadde veltet kjernen og sto og slikket smøret, som rant utover gulvet, ble han så sint at han glemte øltønnen. Etter at grisen var ute igjen kom han i hug at han gikk med tappen i hånden; men da han kom ned i kjelleren, var øltønnen tom. Han gikk da til å kjerne smør igjen for det ville han ha til middags. Da han hadde kjernet en stund, kom han i hug, at heimkua sto inne ennå og hadde fått ikke maten og vannet. Han syntes det var for langt å gå til hagen med den, han fikk slippe den opp på taket, tenkte han: det var torvtak på bygningen, og der sto stort, fint gress. Huset lå i en bratt bakke, og når han la en planke bort på taket, så trodde han kua kunne gå opp. Men kjernen torde han ikke slippe heller, for den vesle ungen hans krabbet på gulvet; han kunne slå den over ende. Så tok han kjernen på ryggen; men så skulle han gi kua vann først, før han slapp den på taket. Han tok en bøtte for å ta vann i brønnen med, men da han bøyde seg over brønnkanten, rant fløten ut av kjernen og ned på ham. Det var nesten middag, og smør hadde han ikke fått ennå; så tenkte han han fikk koke graut, og hengde en gryte med vann på peisen. Da han det hadde gjort, husket han at kua var på taket og hun kunne falle derfra; han gikk så opp og skulle binde den. Den ene enden av repet bandt han om halsen på kua, slapp det ned igjennom pipa, og bandt den andre enden om benet sitt, for vannet for grauten kokte alt i gryten. Mens han hadde det travelt med det, falt kua utover taket og dro mannen opp gjennom pipa; der satt han fast, og kua hang utenfor veggen og kunne hverken komme opp eller ned. Konen hadde ventet på at mannen skulle komme og rope hjem til middag; men da han kom ikke til sist gikk hun hjem. Da hun fikk se at kua hang så stygt til, skar hun repet med låen; i det samme falt mannen ned igjennom peisepipa, og da kjerringa kom inn, sto han på hodet i grautgryten (Asbjørnson & Moe 2012).

Det var engang en mann som var så sint fordi ..... "vær ikke så sint," sa en kveld kjerringa; "i morgen skal vi bytte arbeid; jeg skal ....., så kan du ....." Ja, det var mannen vel ..... med. Tidlig om morgenen tok kjerringa låen og gikk ....., og mannen skulle da til å ..... Først ville han til å .....; men da han hadde kjernet en stund, ble han ..... og gikk ned ..... for å ..... Mens han var i kjelleren, hørte han at ..... var i stua. Han la i vei med tappen i handen, opp igjennom kjellertrappen fort og skulle se etter ....., så den ikke .....; men da han fikk se at grisen alt hadde veltet kjernen og sto og ....., som rant utover gulvet, ble han så sint at han glemte ..... Etter at grisen var ute igjen kom han i hug at han gikk med ..... i hånden; men da han kom ned i kjelleren, var ..... tom. Han gikk da til å kjerne smør igjen

for det ville han ha til middags. Da han hadde kjernet en stund, kom han i hug, at .....og hadde fått ikke maten og vannet. Han syntes det var for langt å gå til ..... med den, han fikk slippe den ....., tenkte han: det var torvtak på bygningen, og der sto ..... Huset lå i en bratt bakke, og når han la en ..... bort på taket, så trodde han kua kunne gå opp. Men ..... torde han ikke slippe heller, for den ..... krabbet på gulvet; han kunne slå den over ende. Så tok han kjernen på ryggen; men så skulle han gi kua ..... først, før han ..... Han tok en ..... for å ta vann i brønnen med, men da han bøyde seg over brønnkanten, .....ned på ham. Det var nesten middag, og smør hadde han ikke fått ennå; så tenkte han han ....., og hengde en gryte med vann på ..... Da han det hadde gjort, husket han at .....og den kunne .....; han gikk så opp og skulle ..... Den ene enden av repet bandt han om ....., slapp det ned igjennom pipa, og bandt den andre enden om ....., for vannet for grauten kokte alt i gryten. Mens han hadde det travelt med det, ..... og dro mannen opp gjennom pipa; der satt han fast, og kua hang ..... og kunne hverken komme opp eller ned. Konen hadde .....; men da han kom ikke til sist ..... Da hun fikk se at kua hang så stygt til, .....; i det samme falt mannen ned igjennom peispipa, og da kjerringa kom inn, sto han .....

### Jumbled parts to be ordered

#### From *Kristin Lavransdatter*

Hun la hånden på hans skulder og sa: «Minnes du, Arne, at du spurte meg en gang om jeg syntes du var like flink som Simon Andresson? Nu vil jeg si deg, før vi skilles, at du er bedre enn ham i fagerhet selv om han blir regnet fremfor deg i fødsel og rikdom.» «Hvorfor sier du meg dette?» spurte Arne åndeløst. «Fordi vi skal takke Gud for hans gode gaver, så du ikke sørger deg over at han ikke har gitt deg like meget av rikdom som av fagerhet.» «Jeg undret på om du mente du ville heller være gift med meg enn med den andre.» «Det ville jeg vel nok,» sier hun sakte. «Med deg er jeg bedre kjent.» Arne løftet henne fra marken og kysset hennes ansikt mange ganger, men så satte han henne ned igjen. Han sa «Du skjønner ikke hvor sår jeg er i hjertet mitt: for jeg skal miste deg. Kristin, vi er da vokst opp sammen som to epler på en gren, jeg ble forelsket før jeg skjønte en dag skulle en annen komme og bryte deg fra meg.» Kristin gråt bitterlig og løftet sitt ansikt så han kunne kysse henne. Arne fortsatte: «Din far er så god en mann, han ville ikke tvinge deg mot din vilje – kunne du be ham om å få vente noen år, ingen vet hvordan livken kan vendes for meg, vi er så unge begge to -» «Jeg vil gjøre som de vil hjemme,» gråt hun. «Jeg kunne nok aldri få noen mann så kjær at jeg ville gjøre foreldrene mine imot for hans skyld.» Hun lette med hendene etter hans ansikt. «Gråt ikke slik, Arne, min kjæreste venn.» (Undset 2007:88-90)

- A. «Hvorfor sier du meg dette?» spurte Arne åndeløst. «Fordi vi skal takke Gud for hans gode gaver, så du ikke sørger deg over at han ikke har gitt deg like meget av rikdom som av fagerhet.» «Jeg undret på om du mente du ville heller være gift med meg enn med den andre.» «Det ville jeg vel nok,» sier hun sakte. «Med deg er jeg bedre kjent.»
- B. «Jeg vil gjøre som de vil hjemme,» gråt hun. «Jeg kunne nok aldri få noen mann så kjær at jeg ville gjøre foreldrene mine imot for hans skyld.» Hun lette med hendene etter hans ansikt. «Gråt ikke slik, Arne, min kjæreste venn -»
- C. Arne løftet henne fra marken og kysset hennes ansikt mange ganger, men så satte han henne ned igjen. Han sa «Du skjønner ikke hvor sår jeg er i hjertet mitt: for jeg skal miste deg. Kristin, vi er da vokst opp sammen som to epler på en gren, jeg ble forelsket før jeg skjønte en dag skulle en annen komme og bryte deg fra meg.»

- D. Hun la hånden på hans skulder og sa: «Minnes du, Arne, at du spurte meg en gang om jeg syntes du var like flink som Simon Andresson? Nu vil jeg si deg, før vi skilles, at du er bedre enn ham i fagerhet selv om han blir regnet fremfor deg i fødsel og rikdom»
- E. Kristin gråt bitterlig og løftet sitt ansikt så han kunne kysse henne. Arne fortsatte: «Din far er så god en mann, han ville ikke tvinge deg mot din vilje – kunne du be ham om å få vente noen år, ingen vet hvordan livet kan vendes for meg, vi er så unge begge to -»

### Multiple choice

#### Norske folkeeventyr: Mannen som skulle stelle hjemme

Det var engang en mann som var så sint fordi han syntes at kjerringa ikke gjorde nok i huset. "vær ikke så sint," sa en kveld kjerringa; "i morgen skal vi bytte arbeid; jeg skal gå til enga, så kan du stelle hjemme." Ja, det var mannen vel nøyd med. Tidlig om morgenen tok kjerringa ljaen og gikk i enga, og mannen skulle da til å stelle huset. Først ville han til å kjerne smør; men da han hadde kjernet en stund, ble han tørst og gikk ned i kjelleren for å drikke øl. Mens han var i kjelleren, hørte han at grisen var i stua. Han la i vei med tappen i handen, opp igjennom kjellertrappen fort og skulle se etter grisen, så den ikke veltet kjernen; men da han fikk se at grisen alt hadde veltet kjernen og sto og slikket smøret, som rant utover gulvet, ble han så sint at han glemte øltønnen. Etter at grisen var ute igjen kom han i hug at han gikk med tappen i hånden; men da han kom ned i kjelleren, var øltønnen tom. Han gikk da til å kjerne smør igjen for det ville han ha til middags. Da han hadde kjernet en stund, kom han i hug, at heimkua sto inne ennå og hadde fått ikke maten og vannet. Han syntes det var for langt å gå til hagen med den, han fikk slippe den opp på taket, tenkte han: det var torvtak på bygningen, og der sto stort, fint gress. Huset lå i en bratt bakke, og når han la en planke bort på taket, så trodde han kua kunne gå opp. Men kjernen torde han ikke slippe heller, for den vesle ungen hans krabbet på gulvet; han kunne slå den over ende. Så tok han kjernen på ryggen; men så skulle han gi kua vann først, før han slapp den på taket. Han tok en bøtte for å ta vann i brønnen med, men da han bøyde seg over brønnkanten, rant fløten ut av kjernen og ned på ham. Det var nesten middag, og smør hadde han ikke fått ennå; så tenkte han han fikk koke graut, og hengde en gryte med vann på peisen. Da han det hadde gjort, husket han at kua var på taket og hun kunne falle derfra; han gikk så opp og skulle binde den. Den ene enden av repet bandt han om halsen på kua, slapp det ned igjennom pipa, og bandt den andre enden om benet sitt, for vannet for grauten kokte alt i gryten. Mens han hadde det travelt med det, falt kua utover taket og dro mannen opp gjennom pipa; der satt han fast, og kua hang utenfor veggen og kunne hverken komme opp eller ned. Konen hadde ventet på at mannen skulle komme og rope hjem til middag; men da han kom ikke til sist gikk hun hjem. Da hun fikk se at kua hang så stygt til, skar hun repet med ljaen; i det samme falt mannen ned igjennom peisepipa, og da kjerringa kom inn, sto han på hodet i grautgryten (Asbjørnson & Moe 2012).

- 1.a.En mann og konen sin byttet arbeidet deres fordi mannen syntes at han arbeidet mindre enn konen sin.  
 b.En mann og konen sin byttet arbeidet deres fordi mannen syntes at han arbeidet mer enn konen sin.  
 c.En mann og konen sin byttet arbeidet deres fordi konen var ikke fornøyd med arbeidet hennes.  
 d.En mann og konen sin byttet arbeidet deres fordi han likte ikke arbeidet hans på engen.

- 2.a.Mannen ville drikke øl før at han begynte å kjerne smør.  
 b.Mannen ville drikke øl da han var ferdig med å kjerne smør.  
 c.Mannen ville drikke øl fordi han var tørst mens han hadde det travelt med å kjerne smør  
 d.Mannen gikk ned til kjelleren etter at han drakk øl.

- 3.a.Mens mannen kjernet smør kom grisen inn i stuen.  
 b.Mens mannen gikk ned til kjelleren kom grisen inn i stuen.  
 c.Mens mannen var i kjelleren kom grisen inn i stuen.  
 d.Mens mannen var i stuen gikk grisen til kjelleren.
- 4.a.Grisen tømte øltønnen i kjelleren  
 b.Grisen veltet øltønnen som ble tom  
 c.Mannen veltet øltønnen som ble tom  
 d.Øltønnen ble tom fordi mannen glemte tappen.
- 5.a.Mannen tenkte at kuen kunne spise gresset på taket  
 b.Mannen ville ikke at kuen gikk på taket  
 c.Kuen gikk på taket mens mannen kjernet smør  
 d.Mannen tok kuen til hagen fordi hun måtte spise gresset
- 6.a.Mannen tok kjernet på ryggen fordi barnet var på gulvet  
 b.Mannen tok kjernet på ryggen fordi grisen var i stuen  
 c.Mannen hadde kjernet på ryggen mens han tok vannet fra brønnen for grisen  
 d.Mannen hadde kjernet på ryggen mens han tok vannet fra brønnen for barnet
- 7.a.Vannet rant ut av bøtten ned på ham  
 b.Smør rant ned på ham  
 c.Smør rant ut av bøtten ned i brønnen  
 d.Vannet rant ut av bøtten ned i brønnen
- 8.a.Han gikk på taket med vannet for kuen  
 b.Han gikk på taket med kjernen på rygget  
 c.Han gikk på taket med repet for kuen  
 d.Han gikk på taket med graut for kuen
- 9.a.Mannen bandt kuen om benet hennes  
 b.Mannen bandt kuen om pipa  
 c.Mannen bandt kuen om halsen hennes og etterpå slapp han gjennom pipa  
 d.Mannen bandt kuen om benet hans med det samme repet
- 10.a.Da mannen skar repet falt kuen med hodet i gryten  
 b.Da mannen skar repet falt kuen ned gjennom pipa  
 c.Da konen kom hjem skar hun repet og mannen falt ned gjennom pipa  
 d.Da konen kom hjem skar hun repet og mannen falt fra taket med hodet i gryten

## Riddles

De har store hatter, men ingen hod, de har føtter men ingen skoer. *Sopper*

Hvilket hjul dreier seg mindst på en bil i en kurve? *Reservehjul*

Den har ingen armer eller ben, men den løper og hopper som en geit. *Ball*

Den er en rar fyr: når været er fint står den hjemme, når det regner går den ut. *Paraply*

Jo mer vasker du den, desto mindre blir den. *Såpe*

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Med åpne øyne finner dere ikke den, men når dere stenger øynene deres finner dere den. *Søvn*

Dere finner meg på et øde sted, men når dere snakker er jeg vekk. *Taushet*

Hvis hu snakker ikke først sier den ingenting. *Ekko*



## Interaction games

### “Guess who” game

Pair work: a partner chooses one of the characters and the other has to guess who this is by asking questions about their physical characteristics.

MANN KVINNE

HÅR (et): blond, hvit, brun,

rød, skillet

HUD (en): mørk, lys

ØYER: brun, blå

HATT (en) LUE (en) BRILLER

SKJEGG (et) MUSTASJE (en)

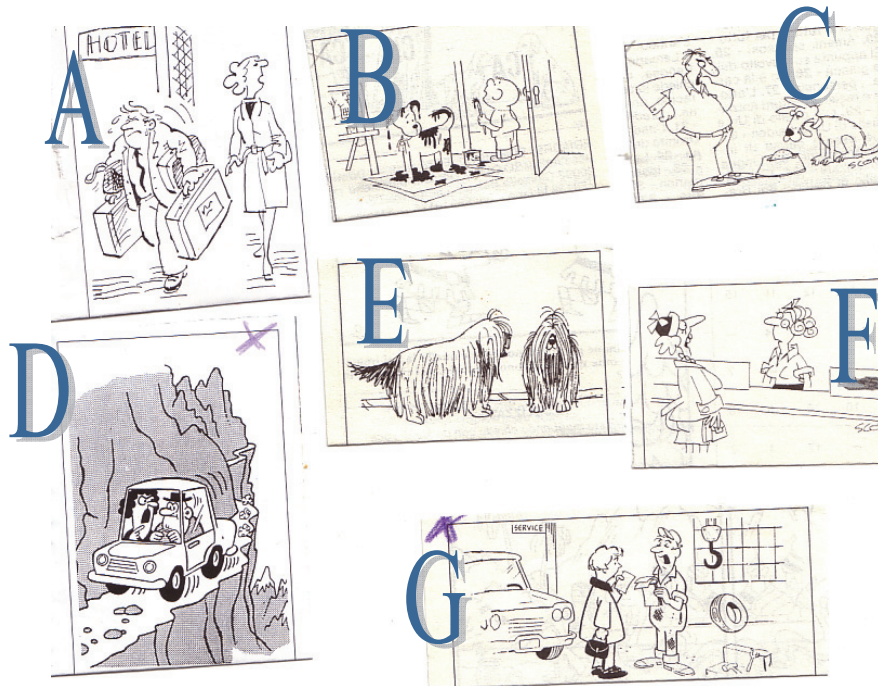


Pair work: giving instructions to the partner to make a drawing (questions allowed)



## Humour

### Matching cartoons and captions



1. Spis! På reklamen liker alle hundene det så mye!
2. Ikke si hvem du er! Jeg aldri glemmer et ansikt.
3. Det er regningen: 1800 kroner for motoren, 600 for malingen og 3000 for ikke å si noe til mannen Deres.
4. Se på ansiktet mitt når jeg snakker til deg!
5. Fra kontoen jeg har sammen med mannen min ville jeg gjerne fradra delen hans.
6. Kom til å se! jeg har forandret hundens rasen!
7. Nei, takk! Jeg trenger ingen hjelp!

### Matching jokes and punch lines

Det er natt, en bonde våknes av larmen fra hønsegården, han tenker det er tyvene og skriker: hvem er det? En stemme svarer: ikke bekymre deg, det er hønene!

En gamle bonde vil ikke ha influensa vaksineringsen, legen spør hvorfor og han svarer: Det er absolutt unyttig. Siste uke en venn fikk den men da han falt brakk han et ben!

En dronker kommer hjem sent, han går inn i soverommet og lener seg på veggen. Kona sin spør: Hvor for kommer du ikke til sengs? Han svarer: Jeg venter at sengen kommer igjen foran meg!

En skotsk familie, far mor og sønn, krysser sjøen mellom England og Frankrike. Sønnen spør: Far, er Frankrike enda langt? Svaret var: Bare fotsett med å svømme!

En forbauset gutt ser på den lille broren hans: Mor, han har ingen tenner! Moren svarer: Det er normalt! Han har intet hår! Det er normalt også. Mor, er du sikker at de ikke har gitt deg et gammelt barn?

Den første ektefellen din var så snill, det er synd at han var så ung da han døde! Det er akkurat hva den andre ektefellen min alltid sier!

En lege noterer problemene som en gammel dame har: Søvnløshet, sukkersyke, nærsynthet, ... Unnskyld meg, hvor gammel er du? Tretti to! Han fortsetter med å skrive: og nesten hele fortapelse av mine.

1. Det er natt, en bonde våknes av larmen fra høsegården, han tenker det er tyvene og skriker: hvem er det?
  2. En gamle bonde vil ikke ha influensa vaksineringsen, legen spør hvorfor og han svarer: Det er absolutt unyttig.
  3. En dronker kommer hjem sent, han går inn i soverommet og lener seg på veggen. Kona sin spør: Hvor for kommer du ikke til sengs?
  4. En skotsk familie, far mor og sønn, krysser sjøen mellom England og Frankrike. Sønnen spør: Far, er Frankrike enda langt?
  5. En forbauset gutt ser på den lille broren hans: Mor, han har ingen tenner! Moren svarer: Det er normalt! Han har intet hår! Det er normalt også.
  6. Den første ektefellen din var så snill, det er synd at han var så ung da han døde!
  7. En lege noterer problemene som en gammel dame har: Søvnløshet, sukkersyke, nærsynthet, ... Unnskyld meg, hvor gammel er du? Tretti to!
- A. Han svarer: Jeg venter at sengen kommer igjen foran meg!
  - B. Siste uke en venn fikk den men da han falt brakk han et ben!
  - C. Han fortsetter med å skrive: og nesten hele fortapelse av mine.
  - D. Mor, er du sikker at de ikke har gitt deg et gammelt barn?
  - E. En stemme svarer: ikke bekymre deg, det er hønene!
  - F. Svaret var: Bare fortsett med å svømme!
  - G. Det er akkurat hva den andre ektefellen min alltid sier!

<b>Songs</b>
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**Reading comprehension****Grevling i taket** (Norwegian song for children)

Så mye rart kan hende når man bor i en tunnel, og det vi synger om er ikke tull. Vi trodde før at over oss var bare jord og fjell, men plutselig en dag så vi et hull. Og ned fra hullet tittet det en grå og snodig fyr, et overrasket blikk med hår omkring. Men fyren hadde hale, så vi så det var et dyr, og vi skjønnte snart det var en grevling. Vi har en grevling i taket - greveling, grevelang, vi har en grevling i taket - grevelang. Vi har ikke ellediller eller krokofanter, men vi har en grevling i taket.

Hvorfor trodde de at de hadde bare fjell over dem?  
 Hvordan forsto de at det var et dyr som tittet ned?  
 Hva så de grevlingen gjennom?  
 Hvordan var grevlingens følelse?

**Gap filling** (Words provided)**Sancta Lucia**

Svart/Snart senker natten seg  
 i stall og stuer.  
 Solen har gått sin vei,  
 skyggene truer.  
 Der/Se, på vår terskel står  
 hvitkledd med lys i hår  
 Sanc-ta Lu-ci-a, Sancta Lu-cia.

Snart senker (1) seg  
 i stall og stuer.  
 (2) har gått sin vei,  
 (3) truer.  
 Se, på vår terskel står  
 hvitkledd med (4) i hår  
 Sanc-ta Lu-ci-a, Sancta Lu-cia.

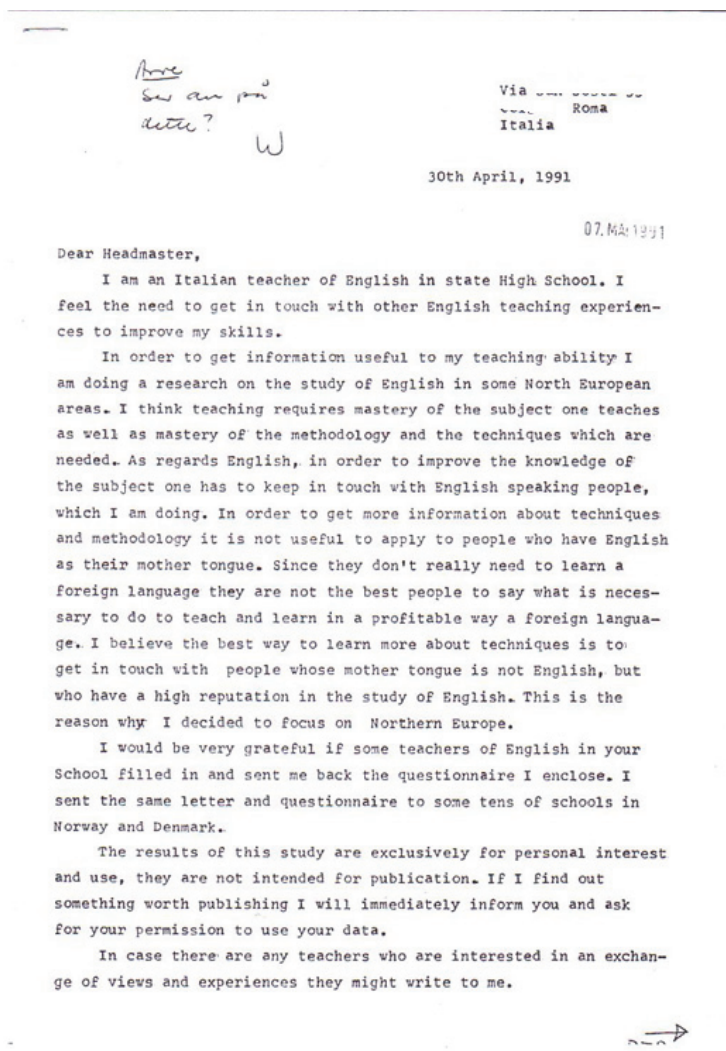
"Mørket skal flykte snart  
 fra jordens daler."  
 Slik hun et underbart  
 ord til oss taler.  
 Dagen skal atter ny  
 stige av røde sky -  
 Sanc-ta Lu-ci-a, Sancta Lu-cia.

"Mørket skal (5) snart  
 fra jordens daler."  
 Slik hun et underbart  
 (6) til oss taler.  
 (7) skal atter ny  
 stige av (8) sky -  
 Sanc-ta Lu-ci-a, Sancta Lu-cia.

lys røde solen flykte ord skyggene natten dagen

## APPENDIX 7 - THE SURVEY OF THE EARLY 1990S

## The letter presenting the survey and asking for data



If you want I can send you a report on the research after processing the responses to the questionnaire (provided I get any)

I thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,  
Giuseppe Caruso

## The questionnaire

A

- 1 How many students are there in your school?
- 2 Is the study of a foreign language obligatory?
- 3 How many students study English in your school?
- 4 Do they choose it or is it obligatory?
- 5 If English is optional, which are the alternatives?
- 6 Do the students study more than one foreign language?
- 7 Which?
- 8 Are most of the students motivated in studying English?
- 9 Do they have the chance to use English out of the school?
- 10 What is the importance of English in your society?
- 11/12 Is it increasing? Is it decreasing?
- 13 why?
- 14 which methodological approach do teachers follow? (Mark it and indicate the number of teachers)
  1. Grammar-translation
  2. Situational
  3. Functional
  4. ....
  5. Mixture of approaches
- 15 How many hours of lesson does a single teacher of English have every week?
- 16 How many different classes does a single teacher have?
- 17 What is the average number of students per class?
- 18 What do teachers use in the classroom? (underline)  
blackboard      cassette-player      films      pictures      text-book
- 19 Are there assistants who have English as their mother tongue along with the teachers of English?
- 20 Is there a language laboratory in the school?
- 21 Do teachers use it?
- 22 Are there any teachers who don't use it?
- 23 Why?
- 24 Is the mother tongue used during the English lessons? (underline)  
No      only in emergency situations      little      half the time  
more than half of the time



B

- 4 What is the level of the students of English when they start High School?  
Beginner pre-intermediate intermediate pre-advanced advanced
- 5 What is their level when they finish the school?
- 7 How is their level of English assessed, at the end of their studies?
- 8 How long do they study English? (years)
- 9 How long do they study English every week? (no. of hours)
- 0 How many hours of English do they have in one school year?
- 1 Are History, Philosophy, Literature of English speaking countries part of the syllabus?
- 2 In which year?
- 3 Are all the four abilities of language communication (hearing, speaking, reading, writing) dealt with?
- 4 Are they all dealt with in the same way or are any given a special position?
- 5 List them in the order of preference. (If possible indicate the approximate percentage of time for each)
- 5 How often are students tested? (Consider only tests aimed at giving them a mark)
- 7 Is oral testing objective? (multiple choice, true/false, fill in are used for grammar and culture -underline-)  
Say more about this:
- 8 Is oral testing subjective? (oral interview is used for grammar, functions, culture)  
Say more about this:
- 9 Is written testing objective? (dictation is used)  
Say more about this:
- 0 Is written testing subjective? (essay, written interview are used)  
Say more about this:
- 1 Are listening comprehension or reading comprehension used during testing?



## The result of the survey

25th May, 1992

Dear Mr

I am very grateful to you for the information you sent me. It took me so long to process the data I had collected because this year I have had very little spare time since I was appointed deputy headmaster in my school (in fact I do the work of the headmaster, for several reasons). In the first half of the school year I did not even get a reduction in teaching hours, which luckily I was granted in the second half. This year proved very tough, the stress and fatigue slowed down all my plans and delayed my work on the research I was carrying on about the teaching of English. This explains why I did not reply before, to send you thanks for your help.

In the last year I collected lots of material, I also went abroad (Iceland and Denmark) to meet colleagues with whom I had exchanges of experience. This enabled me to check my own methods against the ones used by other teachers, and to get inspiration for the improvement of my work. Now I look forward to the moment when I will be able to apply all this knowledge by working as a full time teacher, without the burden of the responsibility coming from the task of (deputy) headmaster, which heavily interferes with my teaching depriving me of energy and time.

In spite of the impossibility to work properly as a teacher due to my position I realized that my survey, though unfinished, has already had positive effects: I feel more self confident in my work because I got aware of some important things which I did not know.

As regards your country I received replies from 7 schools and I got the following information:

- English is studied by all or most of the students;
- a mixture of teaching approaches is used everywhere, no approach is used exclusively;
- the language laboratory is absent in 4 schools and rarely used

- in 1 out of 7. This shows that it is not an indispensable instrument for language teaching;
- a wide range of aids is used everywhere (blackboard, textbook, video recorder, cassette player, in 1 school overhead projector);
  - the mother tongue is used over half the time in 2 schools, in the rest it is used little (3) or only for emergency, which means that there is the awareness that the mother tongue may be useful in the foreign language class. This is significant because there used to be in the past an irrational ban of mother tongue in some language teaching approaches;
  - there seems to be a growth in the mastery of the language during the course: when students start they are pre-intermediate/intermediate, when they finish their course they are pre-advanced/advanced. The final level is remarkable;
  - the number of hours per year scheduled for English is quite high: it ranges from 76 to 200;
  - tests are frequent: at least once a month;
  - techniques for objective testing are not widely used; testing seems to depend on the subjective evaluation by the teacher, this is evident when one allows for the activities which are common in language teaching: essay, translation, listening and reading comprehension.

It seems to me that the teaching of foreign languages (especially English) is very seriously carried on, <sup>IN YOUR COUNTRY</sup> though from the information I got I inferred that the good results which you reach do not depend on special methods used, but on the role English has in your society. School is just a support to other powerful pressures which in my country only occur in a limited way (e.g. TV programmes in the original language; this is absolutely unknown to us). Many Italian teachers do not understand this and look frantically for more and more original (and useless) ways, and this makes them lose grasp with reality.

## APPENDIX 8 - THE ARTICLES IN THE JOURNAL *ENGLISHES*



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GRAMMAR AND TRANSLATION REVISITED Giuseppe Caruso

### Grammar and Translation Revisited

If we want our work as foreign language teachers to be successful we have to reject fashions and ideologies. What we need is a pragmatic approach. In this PRAGMATIC APPROACH the study of GRAMMAR and the use of TRANSLATION may play an important role.

We know fully well that the old GRAMMAR-TRANSLATION APPROACH was not very effective in covering the four skills of communication, but GRAMMAR AND TRANSLATION CAN be part of an effective way of teaching.

In the past it was thought that the foreign language was learnt only through the use of translation and the study of grammar (and we know the results). A completely different story is to consider translation and grammar as useful tools to be put in a teaching/learning context in which the purpose is communication. They were THE WAY and THE PURPOSE, now the purpose is COMMUNICATION and they might be useful ways to it.

WHY MIGHT THEY BE USEFUL?

Because they favour awareness, which is essential in the context of school, where we cannot follow the direct approach for

obvious reasons: 2/3 hours a week, classes of 20/30 students and no real motivation on the part of the students.

We need to look at the study of grammar and the use of translation in a new light if we want them to be tools of a communicative approach. I would like to give some ideas.

As far as the study of grammar is concerned, if our target is communication, it is wise to reduce the number of rules to teach. Teaching grammar in depth is part of the GRAMMAR/TRANSLATION approach and it collides with language as communication: if we stuff our students' minds with rules, which we can't remember well ourselves, they will think the language is just rules (and not communication) and they will probably be blocked by the FEAR they may make mistakes all the time. FLUENCY IS BETTER THAN ACCURACY. I am not saying accuracy does not matter, I am just saying it is not essential to communication; extreme preoccupation with accuracy might even cripple communication, while fluency and the knowledge of words will make communication possible. Energy would be better

Giuseppe Caruso GRAMMAR AND TRANSLATION REVISITED

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spent on extending vocabulary. Few grammatical errors will not prevent communication, poor vocabulary will.

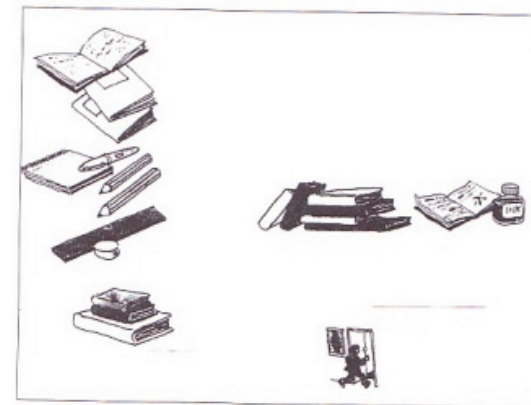
As far as translation is concerned, how can we use it profitably in teaching a foreign language? A very good way would be to ask learners to translate sentences targeting specific grammar items from the mother tongue. Of course to prepare suitable sentences will require an incredible amount of work, but it will be rewarding in terms of results.

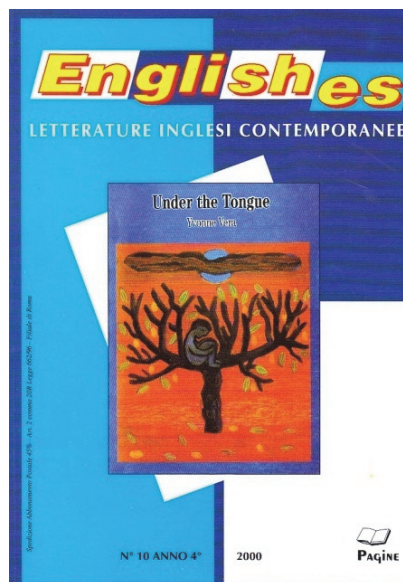
If our target is communication,

grammar and translation are useful, I would say necessary, but not enough. So, what else might and should we do?

The assumption is that THE LANGUAGE IS TO BE USED, this is the real secret for success therefore we need activities in which this happens. It seems to me that the most effective activity is the oral report of a passage which has been listened to. Anyway there is plenty of space for teachers' creativity in this field.

Giuseppe Caruso





## The study of literature in ELT: is it time for a change?

Foreign language teaching in Italian schools does not seem to be very effective. As a matter of fact the whole system proves extremely irrational. As a teacher of English in Liceo Scientifico I would like to point out some of the absurdities we teachers have to deal with in our daily work. Is it not absurd to expect our students to study Shakespeare in the original language in the third year? And what about all this insistence on such technicalities as narrator, view point, and the like? Do our students have to become literary critics or philologists?

When I started my career I made a very hard choice; I had the option: Liceo Scientifico at 41 km away from my place and ITI at 9 km. What did I choose? Of course Liceo Scientifico.

We teachers of English have done lots of literary studies at University and Liceo Scientifico is a sort of mythical place most of us want to go to.

I wanted to teach literature because I thought it was more interesting and more rewarding than teaching technical English. Now I do not think I would make the same choice again. My purpose is the teaching of English language in an effective and succes-

ful way. I question the idea that we have to torture our students with literary technicalities as if we ought to train them to become literary critics. Let us focus instead on their poor standards of knowledge of English. We had better provide them with the instruments to communicate with English speakers: the basic structures, a few hundred words which they can use when they speak and recognize when they listen.

But, first of all, it would be extremely useful to provide them with the motivations and to become independent learners. The ones who want to become literary critics or philologists will go to University, why bother everybody with what seems to be basically our own interest rather than the real need of ELT?

Asking our students, who have a limited vocabulary, to study passages in 16th century English (Shakespeare), or even 19th century English seems to me to be nonsense. It is useless and counterproductive. This must be done at a very advanced level.

Anyway, in this respect, strangely enough, the official syllabus grants us a margin of freedom.

In spite of the rigid structure of the Italian school system there is



space and margin for some freedom for teachers, it is not much, but it is worth availing oneself of it. What might we do? For example, we might concentrate on contemporary authors that provide a linguistic model closer to the language students really need if they want to communicate and we might choose to deal with themes instead of following a chronologi-

cal order. And also it would be useful to reduce the emphasis on structural analysis of the texts the students are expected to study and switch to a content based analysis. I am aware this is not the revolution the school needs, but these suggestions might make our work and our students' more sensible and more effective than it is now.

Giuseppe Caruso