

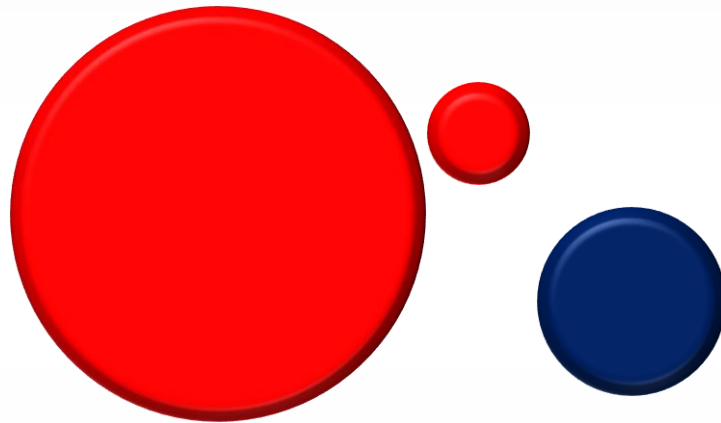


**La Asociación**

Ex Alumnos del Profesorado en Lenguas Vivas

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Teachers' Centre

***AEXALEVI Forum***

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# Emopron Stories:

## The missing link in the EFL pronunciation class

Prof.& Lic. Stella Palavecino, M.A.



'Th Th Thumkie. A world of phonics for the EFL learner'  
by Stella Palavecino

Stella is a graduate teacher, a teacher trainer and a materials designer based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. A validated specialist in Phonetics and Phonology, she holds postgraduate degrees in Higher Education, ICT and Pedagogy. She has published extensively and has delivered presentations in the fields of phonology and pronunciation, ICT tools applied to pronunciation teaching, language laboratories and phonetics pedagogy at various ESL/EFL symposia. She is also a Pronsig scholarship winner for the IATEFL 2020 annual conference.

**P**honics is a popular method of teaching how to read and write, especially designed for native speakers of English. It is a creative approach that quickly helps learners decode the English alphabet, by relating letters to sounds. Interestingly, it has

also been welcome and widely used in EFL classrooms. Yet, some adjustments have proved vital.

Created for young native speakers of English, this approach implies a prior mastery of English sounds. Conversely, EFL students should learn new words

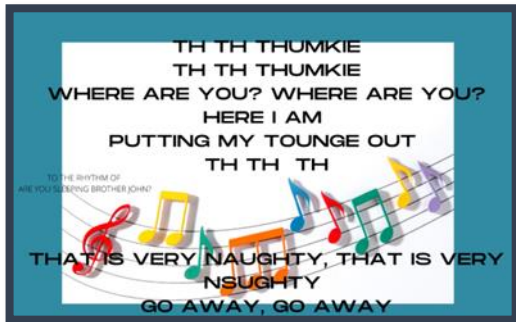
and sounds before getting into actual phonics. Therefore, there are extra steps that EFL teachers should take such as the teaching of new words containing new sounds. A further problem is posed by the fact that the existing phonics material does not cover non-native speakers' needs. EFL teachers need to think about effective teaching strategies, especially in young learner classes, that allow EFL learners to acquire new sounds in a natural way. We cannot use meta-language to teach children. That will bring enormous benefits in reading and writing.

Even if non-native English-speaking children are taught to read and write in their mother tongue through phonics, their strategies are untransferable to English. For example, when an EFL learner is taught the word 'three', they may end up producing >free< or >tree< if the needed consonant sound is not part of their mother tongue. In Spanish-speaking Latin America, this articulation has to be acquired, as the voiceless dental fricative >TH< is non-existent. It is very difficult to avoid a habitual articulation in the mother tongue. On the other hand, >TH< may be simple in Peninsular (Spain) Spanish variant. This sound is found in some words, such as 'Cecilia' or 'zanahoria.' Therefore, teachers should make this sound noticeable (Schmidt, 1993) and relate it to other spellings.

How can we teach against the interference of the mother tongue all the time, and still use an approach like phonics, which makes learning enjoyable? In Vygostkian terms, the mother tongue is the starting point where new articulatory habits begin, and the new sounds will emerge through the activation of the "zone of proximal development". The starting point will be different according to the different Spanish variants.

In River-Plate (Argentine) Spanish, >TH< is not found. It may be articulated when people put their tongue out. Still, speakers need to push some air out. This combination of movement and air is the articulation that triggers the "zone of proximal development." If teachers were to describe all the procedure to young learners, this procedure would simply be forgotten, as meta-language cannot be used with children. A memorable story—whose conflict includes the new sound— may be the scaffold needed.

Stories are really important because they create an emotional bond with children. A sound like >TH< should be "noticed" (Schmidt, 1993) before it is acquired and stories provide the perfect scaffolding to make this learning memorable. Teachers need to create a magical learning environment, with perfect scaffolds to introduce the L2 sounds if they aim at changing articulatory habits (Palavecino, 2021).



'Th Th Thumkie' (Palavecino, 2022) is an illustrative story that provides the right scaffolding, and the song suggested in the story offers an opportunity for practice, going well beyond the time-honoured listen-and-repeat procedure. Children will remember that Thumkie puts his tongue out, and that it is naughty. That makes the children so angry that they even invent a song to keep him away.



When the conflict is solved, children sympathise with the character. They discover that Thumkie needs to put his tongue out to say his name and call out to his friends (words containing this sound). This is not naughty and makes Thumkie and the children happy. A new song is then sung by the children which helps them change articulatory habits naturally and in an effective way.

In literature, conflicts are settled differently. EFL phonics story conflicts

are solved through a fantasy manoeuvre which fosters the acquisition of the new articulation starting from a familiar sound or movement in the mother tongue.

In short, in EFL phonics children enter the imaginative world that the story creates. When new sounds are presented in familiar narrative forms, the memory structure facilitates the brain's retention of that information. Once memory is activated, training to hear the sounds in words follows. These stories have the potential to hook children to the solution of the problem. The solution often comes when they discover the character in words. As an author, I have created a collection of phonics stories, songs and games for what I have dared call **Emopron Stories** <https://emopronstories.com.ar/>

Every teacher can create their own Emopron stories of phonics for the non-native speaker of English.

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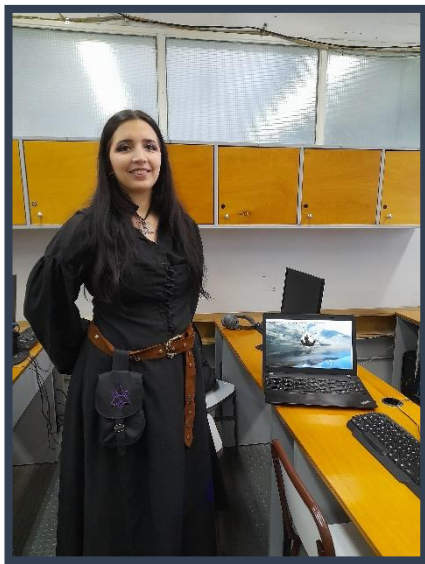
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# An Interview with



# Brenda Niesz

**S**tudent teachers in “Multimedios Aplicados a la Enseñanza” at Profesorado Técnico UTN, under the supervision of Mgter. Marina Falasca, designed a kit of multimedia stories, including hyperfiction and transmedia narratives, about various topics such as “ESI”, Irish Myths, videogames and mystery. They used different platforms, websites and Artificial Intelligence resources to design authentic stories that integrate the four macroskills in English lessons at secondary school. The material can be accessed through Padlet <https://padlet.com/marinafalasca1/stories-across-multiple-media-yya942rq8z44qj0a>

In this issue, we interview Brenda Niesz, who dressed in medieval clothing on the day of the presentation of her project.



Student teachers: Rocío Alvarez, Sofía Framarini, Ana Fernández, Brenda Niesz, Melina Kosciolek, Cecilia Napolitano, Lucía Abrey and Giuliano Fravilli

**AEXALEVI Forum**

**What is transmedia storytelling?**

**Brenda Niesz**

Transmedia storytelling refers to the practice of telling a story across multiple media formats, such as books, films, television shows, video games, comics, websites, and more. It involves creating an interconnected experience for the audience by utilizing different mediums to expand the story world.

A transmedia story might begin with a film or book as its core narrative, but then extend to other platforms like websites, social media accounts, mobile apps, or video games that provide additional details, backstories of characters, side plots, or alternative viewpoints. The audience can engage with the story through different points of access (the core narrative or any of its expansions), each offering a unique perspective and enhancing their understanding of the overall narrative.

Transmedia storytelling encourages audience participation and engagement, as it often involves interactive elements that allow the audience to contribute to or shape the story. It also creates opportunities for fans to explore and delve deeper into the story world, fostering a sense of immersion and connection. The different mediums

chosen are opportunities to explore distinct mental and sensory experiences. One thing is to know about the workout routine of our favourite fictional fighter, but a completely different one is to have their workout playlist, so that you can listen to it while at the gym!

Overall, transmedia storytelling is a multi-platform approach to storytelling that aims to create a more expansive and interconnected narrative experience for the audience, blurring the boundaries between media and inviting active engagement.

**AEXALEVI Forum**

**What are the advantages of incorporating transmedia narratives into the EFL secondary school classroom?**

**Brenda Niesz**

There are several advantages to incorporating transmedia storytelling into EFL classes.

Language acquisition. Transmedia narratives provide students with a variety of language input across different media platforms. Exposure to authentic and diverse language can improve their language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, listening and reading

comprehension. It also exposes students to different registers and styles of language, expanding their linguistic competence.

Critical thinking skills. These types of narratives often present complex and interconnected storylines, requiring students to analyze, synthesize, and make connections between different media elements. They can learn to differentiate between fact and fiction, identify biases or stereotypes in media representations, and understand the persuasive techniques used in different media formats. This cultivates critical thinking skills as students engage with the story, interpret information from various sources, and build meaning.

Collaborative and interactive learning. Transmedia narratives often encourage collaboration, as students can work together to solve puzzles, analyze clues, or engage in discussions. This collaborative learning environment fosters communication skills, teamwork, and cooperation among students, creating a more interactive and dynamic classroom atmosphere. These narratives also create communities of fans and enthusiasts who engage in discussions, share interpretations, and collaborate on creative projects. Students can even participate in collaborative online spaces, work together on group projects, and engage

in meaningful interactions with peers from different backgrounds. This fosters digital collaboration skills, including online teamwork, communication, and negotiation, preparing students for collaborative work in the digital age.

Intercultural understanding. Transmedia narratives often explore different cultural contexts, perspectives, and experiences. By incorporating these narratives into the classroom, students gain exposure to diverse cultures and develop a broader understanding of the world. This promotes intercultural competence, empathy, and tolerance, fostering a more inclusive classroom environment.

Increased engagement and motivation. These types of stories are inherently immersive and engaging. By incorporating multimedia elements such as videos, interactive websites, or games, students become active participants in the learning process. The use of multiple media platforms taps into students' interests and preferences, making the learning experience more enjoyable and motivating.

Digital citizenship. Engaging with transmedia narratives involves using different digital platforms, interacting with diverse online content, and navigating across digital spaces. By incorporating these narratives into the



classroom, students can learn about responsible and ethical digital behaviour, including online safety, information literacy, digital rights, and respectful online communication. They can be encouraged to evaluate the credibility of online sources and become aware of their digital footprint. Transmedia narratives can also serve as a context to engage, discuss and reflect on important digital citizenship concepts. Being a literate digital citizen is paramount in today's society, especially with the developing job market.

Self-Expression. Transmedia narratives offer students opportunities to express themselves creatively and construct their own narratives. They can create fan fiction, fan art, or digital projects inspired by the transmedia story. Students can use various media tools to share their interpretations, opinions, or personal responses to the story. This encourages self-expression and creativity, and allows them to find their voice in the digital realm. Not only can they develop digital storytelling skills, but they can also experiment with different modes of expression, and share their work with a wider audience.

## AEXALEVI Forum

How did you plan your story and how do you intend to apply it?

### **Brenda Niesz**

The main objective was to take a well-known, established story and ditch the industrial perspective of thoughtless replication. I took ownership of the plot events, deconstructed them, and carefully examined their essential components and put them back together using my imagination and creativity while still keeping the spirit of the story alive. Throughout the process of creating transmedia content, I acquired valuable skills in camera angles and video editing, and gained insights into how businesses utilize social media mockup generators for product and service development, among other things.

I intended for my project to serve as an inspirational model for my prospective class. Developing their own transmedia story would be a final task for them to hand in. During the classes leading up to the final task we would work on researching, planning and doing language activities that would enable the students to create the story and bring it to life.

## AEXALEVI Forum

What advice would you give to other teachers who may want to incorporate transmedia storytelling into their classes?

### **Brenda Niesz**

Encouraging students to take charge of their own learning is a valuable approach. Often, we hear that students are only present in the classroom because they have to, which can lead to a lack of engagement and a sense of being trapped. By granting them some agency in shaping their knowledge and understanding, we can ignite their active participation and willingness to create meaning.

Whether you choose to fully embrace this approach and design an entire course around it or simply incorporate it as a side project, nurturing the students' curiosity and giving them the freedom to explore their creativity can yield unexpected results. Embrace the potential chaos that may arise, as it often leads to breakthrough moments. Prepare to be pleasantly surprised by the outcomes.



Brenda Niesz and Mgter. Marina Falasca

# Why is the verb *suggest* a tricky one?



## Mgter. José Manuel Durán

José holds an MA in Linguistics from Universidad de Belgrano, a Teacher's degree from ISP Dr. JVG and a degree in Civil Engineering from Universidad de Buenos Aires. He is lecturer in English Grammar at Universidad de Belgrano, IES LV *Juan Ramón Fernández*, ISP Dr *Joaquín V González*, and ENS LV *Soffa Broquen de Spangenberg*. He has presented his research work in over 50 International Conferences in four continents. He is the author of *An Introduction to English Grammar* (2017) and editor and coauthor of *Exorcising Grammar* (2016). He is currently the secretary of the Sociedad Argentina de Estudios Lingüísticos (SAEL). His areas of interest are grammar and linguistics, the grammar-phonology interface and political and academic discourse.

**T**he verb *suggest* is listed within the top ten most frequently lexical items used in academic English compiled in recent corpus studies (Simpson-Vlach and Ellis 2010, Gardner and Davies 2014, Lei and Liu 2018, Biber et al 2021). Additionally, it appears within the most common 3000 words in English (Longman 2003). However, it very frequently poses a problem to most students of English at an advanced

level, especially in academic registers. This stems from the different pattern of usage in many other western languages, such as Spanish, Italian and German. In these languages, the equivalent of the verb *suggest* follows the pattern for most other communication verbs such as *tell*, as can be seen in examples (1) to (3) below.

- 1) Susana me dijo / sugirió que ordenara el escritorio.
- 2) Susana mi ha detto / suggerito di riordinare la scrivania.
- 3) Susana sagte mir / hat mir vorgeschlagen, ich solle den Schreibtisch aufräumen.

In these languages, most communication verbs are ditransitive verbs which require an indirect object in the dative case and a direct object which normally takes the form of a clause in the subjunctive mood. In English, by contrast, while this pattern applies to most verbs of communication such as *advise*, *ask*, *tell* and so on, it does not hold for the verbs *suggest*, *recommend* and *demand* in their formal uses. This is because of the fact that as English does not have a subjunctive mood, this construction is realised in different patterns. The most frequent configuration is through a full infinitival clause as that shown in examples (4) to (6).

- 4) My teacher advised me to make a summary of the topic.
- 5) The client asked him to show her the new arrivals.
- 6) Nobody told us to turn off the light.
- 7) \*They suggested him to record the class. [CLAE16.37]<sup>1</sup>
- 8) \*The defendant demanded us to pay for our mistake. [BUBF20.54]
- 9) \*The consultant recommended them to double check the conditions.  
[SPGT19.24]

Whereas examples (4) to (6) are grammatical, this is not the case for examples (7) to (9). Thus, the verb *suggest* does not behave the same way as typical verbs of communication do. Let us turn to explore the right pattern of this verb in English.

The verb *suggest* and some other formal verbs such as *recommend* and *demand* are transitive verbs that select only one complement with the function of direct object. This complement realises through a modalised clause introduced by the Complementiser<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Codes in brackets make reference to my corpus of grammar mistakes made by students at tertiary level education.

<sup>2</sup> In Generative Grammar, Complementisers are words such as *that* and *if*, which introduce complement clauses, as the ones italicised in examples (a) and (b) below. The category Complementiser has been considered a subordinating conjunction in Traditional analyses.

- a) The journalist reported *that there had been a serious accident in the M5*.
- b) The interpreter wondered *if he should stick to the original version*.

*that*. So, in their full version, the grammatical counterparts of the ungrammatical examples (7) to (9) are given below in examples (10) to (12).

- 10) They suggested that he should record the class.
- 11) The defendant demanded that we should pay for our mistake.
- 12) The consultant recommended that they should double check the conditions.

What is more, both the Complementiser *that* and the modal auxiliary *should* can be elided in the examples above, which renders, in all, four different versions for example (10), here repeated as (13) together with its alternative versions (14) to (16).

- 13) They suggested that he should record the class.
- 14) They suggested he should record the class.
- 15) They suggested that he record the class.
- 16) They suggested he record the class.

It is worth noticing the grammaticality of examples (15) and (16) above. However odd they may seem, they represent more sophisticated and fully grammatical versions. The reason for the absence of the third person singular affix *-s* in the verb *record* is that this is a modalised clause with the modal auxiliary *should*<sup>3</sup>, which requires a verbal expression with its verb in its bare infinitive form as its complement. The problem lies in the fact that the modal auxiliary has been elided. Yet, the verb *record* remains in its base form.

The other point worthy of attention is that the pronoun in the subject position of the subordinate clause must appear in its nominative case, precisely due to the fact that it works as the subject of the subordinate clause. It thus realises as *he*, *we* and *they* in examples (16), (17) and (18), rather than its accusative counterparts *him*, *us* and *them* in the corresponding ungrammatical examples (7) to (9) above.

By the same token, the grammatical counterparts of examples (8) and (9) above are given in (17) and (18), respectively.

- 17) The defendant demanded we pay for our mistake.
- 18) The consultant recommended they double check the conditions.

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<sup>3</sup> This is one of the uses of the so called putative *should* in present subjunctive clauses (Quirk et al 1985, p.1015).

To summarise, figure (1) below exhibits the correct pattern of the verbs *suggest*, *recommend* and *demand*.



Figure 1: Pattern of *suggest*

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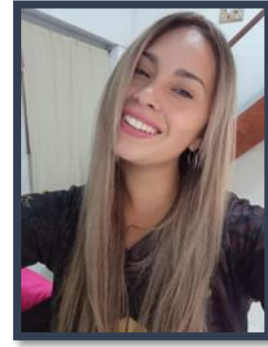
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# It Worked for Me

**Deborah García**

**AEXALEVI Member Teacher.**



I would like to share my experience introducing “Oliver Twist” and “Dracula” to my fifteen-year-old students.

Before starting to read the book, we got to know something about Charles Dickens and his works. After that, I provided my students with an extensive description of the main character, "Oliver", and I asked them to do the following task:

“Imagine you are going to make your own film version of Oliver Twist. Which famous person would you choose for the main character in the story? Google an image of this person.”

After creating a blog for them to post the photos they had found, I asked them to create their own 'Oliver Twist' book cover, complete with a blurb on the back page by using Canva or any other app

they wanted. In the text they wrote there were some mistakes, which we corrected in the feedback I provided them.

When we were reading the first chapters, I asked them to search for pictures of famous people to represent the other characters, and they had to explain why they had chosen those pictures. Then we voted for the best option for each character.

We had a lot of fun with this task. They learned the characters and their descriptions without making a long list in their copybooks.

To introduce “Dracula”, I gave each student a bag containing Dracula's plastic teeth and some sweets.

In order to help the students retell the story, I used the Five Finger Retell, which is a way to summarize and remember the key elements of a story using your hand as a visual aid. Each finger represents a different element of the story:

Thumb: The thumb represents the main character or characters in the story.

Index finger: The index finger represents the setting or where the story takes place.

Middle finger: The middle finger represents the problem or conflict in the story.

Ring finger: The ring finger represents the events or plot of the story.

Pinky finger: The pinky finger represents the resolution or how the problem is solved.

By using this technique, readers can quickly recall and retell the essential components of a story. It helps in understanding and remembering key details while also promoting comprehension and retelling skills.

These ideas have worked for me and my students. I hope you will find them useful.





# Brainstorming “Brainstorming”

Mgter. Myrian Casamassima



**B**rainstorming is a favourite technique in most classrooms. We brainstorm at the start of units, before we read texts, while doing pre-writing, etc. Yet, sometimes brainstorming means that only few students participate whereas others monopolize the interaction. It may be the case that brainstorming is partly done in Spanish, or even that the class remains silent because they cannot think of anything to brainstorm.

In this article, we are going to discuss some fresh ideas to do brainstorming by means of different techniques that can help us sort out the difficulties that we have referred to and introduce variety in our lessons. Let us get started!

## Suggestions for Brainstorming

Have you ever thought that brainstorming can be done in writing? It is generally an oral technique, but we can also introduce a topic and ask our students to write down all the ideas that come to their minds about it. We can allot a few minutes for our learners to work on their own, with the advantages that everyone will have time to think and to focus a little on accuracy as we

monitor their work. Then, the class can report on what they have produced. This procedure is often called “brain writing”. To allow for extra time for the ones that find it harder to write down their ideas, we can ask the fast finishers to share with their partners.

Sometimes it is interesting to discuss a topic from different perspectives. In “Circle of viewpoints”, we draw a circle on the board and divide it into as many perspectives as we wish to discuss. For

example, on the topic “The environment”, we could have some students talk about it from the point of view of the policy makers, the environmentalists and the citizens. The students may write down their main ideas on sticky notes that can be stuck on the board, within the circle, as preparation for the class discussion. Another technique that runs along similar lines as “Circle of Viewpoints” is “Rolestorming”, in which the students are assigned a role and they have to discuss the topic adopting that role.

Brainstorming may go on for some time instead of being restricted to a single class or a moment in particular in a lesson. “Brain-netting” is the technique that addresses collaborative brainstorming online. By means of different virtual tools such as Padlet, the students brainstorm ideas about a topic as they post them. We have plenty of chances here to work with our learners on accuracy as the brainstorming is going on. Needless to say, many of them will feel more confident at the time of discussion in class. This sort of work seems to be particularly interesting for short stories and novels, or for topics that emerge from them.

“SWOT” is a well-known technique among business people. It is also used in education for assessment and self-assessment. S stands for strengths, W

stands for weaknesses, O stands for opportunities and T stands for threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal variables while opportunities and threats are external. When we think about a situation, generally a problem to be solved, we may wish to consider what our strengths and weaknesses are (internal, they have to do with ourselves) and also the opportunities and threats in the situation itself (external to us). For example, when we ask our students to introduce themselves in relation to language learning at the start of a course, they may like to refer to SWOT to ponder on positive and negative aspects about their own personalities, and about resources available to them and factors that they consider are external to them and negative such as having to work long hours and, therefore, not being able to study hard enough for exams.

SWOT can be used in relation to any problem-solving situation. For instance, the students have to organize a holiday and they should consider positive and negative sides. What features of your personality make you a good candidate for a holiday with friends? What negative features would make people hesitate if they have to choose you to share a holiday? Which factors help and which ones hinder your plan? (consider the following: your budget, a car, a house on the beach, family support, etc).

## Differentiating Moments in our Procedure

It can be useful to think not only about the different ways in which brainstorming can be done, but also about the fact that there are two differentiated moments when we use brainstorming in class. First, we need to generate the ideas and, then, we must engage our learners in discussion. In general, we tend to do both things simultaneously, which is not wrong, but here we are attempting to come up with variations to our usual routines in class.

Therefore, we will consider a first moment, “The Idea Generator”, in which we will work on ideas to be discussed later and for which language (particularly vocabulary) must emerge now. Our task during the “Idea Generator” is to organize the necessary vocabulary so that our students can use it in the next step, when they will be discussing the topic. The second part of the procedure is the “Discussion”. Here we give our students a task to perform in which they will be expanding on the work that was started while ideas were being generated.

Writing down vocabulary and ideas helps to keep track of the progress that

the class is making. If possible, we can use a graphic organizer such as mind-maps and spiderwebs (there are lots available on the web) to present an appealing way for language to be recorded. It is particularly important to address the sort of language that is always relevant in discussion in order to express opinions, agreement and disagreement, to present an argument, etc. for it to be available during the course. This means having posters in the classroom or digital posters, where language is written, expanded and available every time the students engage in discussion and that can be used for reference. Encountering vocabulary, functional expressions, linkers, etc. once and again will definitely consolidate our students’ knowledge and enhance their skills.

As we have seen, Brainstorming is more than talking about the ideas that come to our minds in Teacher-whole-class interaction. Reflecting on possible variations and ways of organizing classwork will improve our handling of our learners’ opportunities for thinking, participating and interacting in the English class.

# Crossing the cultural divide on the bridge of English

Trad. Gustavo Sevilla



**A**s a teacher, more than once I have been asked to explain common expressions such as *I wanna* or *I'm gonna*. As we explain them, we hurry to clarify that they are examples of nonstandard English, which is undeniably true and should be stressed at all times. However, would dealing with slang not be an effective tool for teachers and students to share some good moments understanding a lyric or listening to a movie dialogue? Would it not be useful to explain the rules of slang to our students so that they are able to recognize them as they come across any such expressions?

There is a very complete book by Orin Hargraves published by Merriam-Webster in 2008, *Slang Rules! A Practical Guide for English Learners*, which provides what teachers and students may need to approach this topic: definitions, illustrations, examples, and exercises. By the way, I have taken

the title of this article from the author's dedication at the beginning of the book. Among others, a useful exercise is proposed which consists of converting slang phrases or sentences into equivalent ones in standard English.

In an introductory section, the author of the book explains that any native English speaker uses slang at some time, and this shows us the importance of learning it. Although that may have been its origin in some cases, slang is not just some cryptic jargon used by illiterates or criminals—it is used by everyone, mainly when speaking with family and friends. Some might wonder whether there is any difference between idioms and slang. We can say that both form part of what we call colloquial language, though some idioms can also be used in normal and even formal registers, which is not the case with slang.

What characterizes slang is that it creates new words, sometimes by

clipping (for example, “carbs” for “carbohydrates”, or “cause” for “because”) and by blending (for example, “annivorcery”—the anniversary of a divorce), or uses acronyms instead of phrases (“DTR” meaning “define the relationship”, e.g. Are we just friends or something else? We need to do a little of DRT’ing, or “BOBFOC” meaning “body off Baywatch, face off Crimewatch”, to refer to a person with an attractive body and an ugly face), or changes the pronunciation and spelling of some words and phrases, or alters or simplifies some grammar rules.

As I said in the first paragraph, an area where students can feel at ease when dealing with this subject is lyric analysis. If you search for “Popular songs with slang” on the Internet, you will get hundreds of songs which you and your students can listen to and then analyze in detail. You can spot new terms as well as words that are spelt differently or omitted (e.g. some auxiliaries). You can then imagine the background or the story behind the song, and recreate dialogues using the slang from the lyrics. On the Internet, there are many resources to learn slang. Whenever we look up a slang term or phrase, one of the first hits will be the Urban Dictionary, a collaborative work started by Aaron Peckman—at the time a freshman in college—as a parody of

dictionary.com. This creation offered an original twist: everyone was welcome to write new definitions. Soon Urban Dictionary garnered hits—and new definitions—from all over the world. It is not the typical academic dictionary, in which definitions are provided by serious editorial staff members—some definitions are a lot of fun, depending on the wit of the authors, who are just ordinary people, while Peckman is merely a compiler. There are other online dictionaries like dictionary.com slang archives

<https://www.dictionary.com/e/slang/>

and

<https://www.oxfordinternationalenglish.com/dictionary-of-british-slang/>

as well as others available in printed form, such as *McGraw-Hill's Dictionary of American Slang and Colloquial Expressions* and *Knickers in a Twist: A Dictionary of British Slang*.

As I suggested in the title, teaching and learning slang can help us feel closer to our students, crossing any existing generation gap as well as the distance that sometimes separates our conventional training as teachers from the everyday use of the language we teach.