

The second aim was to have them share their opinions on the tasks on the web-page, to feel free to improve or change whatever they felt was necessary, making me part of their team and being extremely honest in their suggestions. Thus, I could not only check their level of English when dealing with a certain type of text, but also the strengths and the weaknesses of the ICT tool in making the pedagogical content both attractive and motivating.

Description of the course

The **aim** of the topic was to make the students become familiar with different types of reading texts, with the specialized terminology when analysing a particular text, to brush up their command of English, but, above all, to become creative when producing a text of their own.

The teaching methods used

First of all, the students were invited to take a diagnostic test in order to assess their level of English.

Secondly, I invited the students to access the web-page and read and solve the tasks on it, pointing out the importance of the interactive lead-in questions at the beginning of the page.

Thirdly, I gave them further tasks to solve, in order to double-check my findings and to assess the degree of creativity and originality of their personal essays.

Teaching materials used:

The web-page, dia-place tests, summative tests and collateral reading texts.

The technologies used

- **Hardware:** Ordinary desk-top computers with Internet access.
- **(educational) software:** No educational software. Search engines (google etc.),
- **special workspaces:** Computer lab
- e-mail

● **What was successful**

At the time (2001 - 2002) many of the students were not yet at ease using the web-page and felt uncomfortable admitting this in front of their more sophisticated colleagues. What they liked best was the original, real setting of learning English versus the traditional approach. They were enthusiastic about trying something new, their enthusiasm was enhanced by the fact that I was expecting suggestions, alterations and reliable comments from them in order to improve the tool. They felt at ease and considered themselves part of the new experiment. They also enjoyed the puzzles that accompanied the tasks and the glossary of specialised terms, making the work enjoyable and attractive. What they liked most was the summative task inviting them to pick-up one paragraph and continue it using the same literary style.

● What was less successful

At the beginning they were cautious and a little hesitant, but, gradually, after exchanging e-mails among themselves they became more confident and the originality of their writing products prove this.

● Feedback

In spite of being an extra-curriculum task, all the students involved solved the tasks in due time, expressing their enthusiasm not only to me, but also among themselves by the e-mails commenting the assignments. Having a PC at home facilitated their task, and, to my surprise, most of the work was done during weekends.

There were two different types of feedback:

Student-oriented: coming from the comments made by the students in their e-mails among themselves and among them and myself.

Learner-oriented: coming from my fellow-teachers who were asked to start the experiment as well and send their personal opinions.

● What I would change next time

Since this type of project has is *transferable*, I would like to use it for students of different levels and for different types of tasks. The approach will be the same, but, obviously, the contents of the web-page will differ depending on the case.

● What I would recommend to other professionals in the field

Students love using the Internet. For the purposes of learning and practising “real” English, it’s ideal. However, the teacher’s role is paramount: in order to assess their initial level, to register and prevent difficulties, to give further tasks to those who have advanced and are willing to pursue their work ,and to let students feel free to intervene and contribute actively to the approach.

The address of our web-page is the following:

<http://geocities.com/mmgraz/index.html>

Personal data

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2. Professional background

Profession: English teacher, lecturer Drd.
My current occupation is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Head of Modern Languages Department○ Coordinator of Applied Modern Languages Department○ Teaching specialised English terminology, semantics & pragmatics, Business English○ Distance teaching○ Consultancy Educational Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Erasmus project on Teaching English and French for the domains of Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry▪ CALIST project on Quality Assistance▪ CERES project on The Introduction of ICT in teaching modern languages for the domain of environmental studies
Further remarks This case study is only concerned with teaching graduate students