Theory and Practice from a Cognitive Perspective

Renia Lopez-Ozieblo

Theory and Practice from a Cognitive Perspective

Teaching English in Greater China

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To my family.
And to Jacqueline for her friendship.

Foreword

During the academic years 2020 and 2021, I taught *Second Language Teaching* to two groups of master students at a university in Hong Kong. Most of them were experienced teachers in primary to tertiary level Chinese institutions. In this period, we discussed many of the ideas you will find in these pages. At the end of the semester, in groups of 3 or 4, they developed lesson plans for their own students. These plans reflect the reality of Chinese institutions, both in mainland China and in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The Chinese context is an exam-led one although it supports a communicative approach in its classrooms. These teachers need to ensure that their students are prepared for grammar-based exams and for real-life interactions.

I was struck by how constrained many teachers are when trying to develop authentic communicative tasks. Many, teaching in rural contexts in mainland China, have little access to English speakers or sources of input; their students were not interested in reading or watching English television programs and often had no access to either. In the cities, including Hong Kong, the situation is very different. Students have access to real input, and they are usually much more motivated and confident than their rural counterparts as many jobs value proficiency in English. In both contexts, students learn English mostly to pass an exam. Exams are mostly written and focus on grammar. How does one design an authentic written communicative task that will focus on grammar and that will engage and ensure learning?

As I reviewed my students' lesson plans, I formed the idea of sharing them through a volume such as this, to present their ideas to other teachers. I wanted to give my students credit for their work and help them academically by publishing it; there was just one caveat: A compendium of lesson plans would make for fairly uninteresting reading. One option was to comment on the plans. However, my objective was not to critique their work, especially because in some of the groups they totalled over four decades of teaching experience! Another option was to add the background knowledge that had led to the creation of the lesson plans and to enhance them by suggesting how contemporary ideas on embodied cognition in linguistics could be integrated with approaches currently in use in Chinese classrooms. This is the result of that work.

When teaching languages, traditional approaches have separated the language system into different components: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Aside from these, there are other elements of the communicative process which are often ignored, such as gaze, head, or hand gestures. Cognitive linguistic teaching approaches argue that all of these elements are an integral part of language and together they make meaning. Screaming *Yes!* might have very different meanings if both your arms are up in the air or in front of you with your palms up. They *make meaning* because societies agree on those. Language is a social tool that develops with use; language is *usage-based*. Societies are able to agree on meanings because we share cognitive systems that allow us to process information in similar ways; there is a relationship *language-cognition.* Furthermore, the information we process results from our body's interaction with the world, *embodiment*. These are the three principles of embodied cognitive linguistics, *usage-based, cognition*, and *embodiment* that I focus on when reviewing the lesson plans.

On proposing cognitive linguistics-based activities for the lesson plans, it became obvious that I also needed to add a more theoretical section with the ideas that frame a pedagogical approach based on the principles of cognitive linguistics. This approach is a communicative one which many teachers are aware of but are still struggling to implement in the classroom. The aim is not to sweep away old approaches but to integrate new with old and make changes which will be feasible even in the most exam-focused context.

This book presents some practical ideas to assist the integration of cognitive linguistics into existing approaches commonly used in classrooms. It is not just for teachers working in Chinese contexts but for anyone interested in embodied cognition as a teaching approach or in the practical side of advances in cognitive linguistics. It is also for teachers of students coming from a Chinese context and for anyone just looking for new ideas. It is not meant to be an academic book, nor is it a textbook. It is more of a companion for teachers, to help them to reflect upon existing practices. I have provided extensive references in every section as footnotes. There is a practical reason for this: When we are looking for something in a book, we go back to the relevant section. My aim is to make it easier for readers to find additional information. In some cases, I have given a few comments in the notes section and links to relevant websites.

Hong Kong, China Renia Lopez-Ozieblo

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Renia Lopez-Ozieblo is Associate Professor at the Department of English and Communication of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Her main areas of research are gestures in language learners and language teaching from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. She directs a number of projects on these topics. She is Co-founder of the Hong Kong chapter of the International Society for Gestures Studies and Member of the AILA ReN research group: Gestures in second language acquisition. She is also Member of the Research Center for Professional Communication in English (RCPCE) at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Part I
Teaching *World English* as a Second Language

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Abstract

The objective of this book is to integrate the learnings from cognitive linguistics into existing classroom approaches in order to identify and maximize teaching opportunities and resources for new and existing teachers of English as a second language. It will use lesson plans developed by teachers of English from Mainland China and Hong Kong who took a Master's course on Second Language Teaching, to illustrate what is currently being done in second language classrooms and suggest ideas to develop those practices under the umbrella of a cognitive linguistics approach.

Chapter 1
Introduction

It is surprising how little we know about language learning. Language has been with us for over 50,000 years and we are still discussing how best to teach it when it is not the mother tongue. Adults have been learning languages since the beginning of history. Romans learnt Greek as the language of diplomacy; later, Latin was the second language of the educated; Europeans learnt French; and now we learn English as the language of science, technology and artificial intelligence. English is still one of the most popular languages studied (despite the economic and political decline of the two countries that spread its use in the first place) and much of what we know about language teaching is based on approaches originally developed to teach English.

Many of the latest are socio-cognitive approaches (in my view the term *socio-cognitive* is redundant because cognition is by definition social). Here, we have to clarify that when we discuss cognition we are not referring to the mid-twentieth century *brain as a computer* analogy that sought to explain mental processes through the Information Processing Model, but to the extension of this model defined by embodied cognition theories which underpin cognitive linguistics (CL). We are social beings and nothing catches our attention more than the relationships with ourselves, others and the world around us. We develop and communicate those relationships through language. Language allows us to express how we conceptualize those relationships, which are, of course, tightly linked to how others around us express them. When learning another language, we are learning not only its symbols but also how it reflects the world of the second language.

Embodied cognitive approaches view knowledge as the result of the integration of brain, body and environment. The individual learns from experiences and emotions processed in the brain through the learner's sensory and motor systems, located in different parts of the body. These experiences are the results of our constant

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interaction with our surroundings. Therefore, learning benefits from a holistic body-brain-environment approach where students can experience new concepts.[1]

Understanding how second languages are acquired is a multidisciplinary field that involves, at a minimum, neuroscience (the study of the nervous system and the brain), cognitive science (the study of cognition and the mind), linguistics, sociology and psychology. Knowledge about second language teaching has developed over recent decades to include what we know about these fields. Findings are reported in scholarly articles faster than they can be implemented in the classroom, so we tend to use teaching methods similar to those with which we were taught because changing methods requires many trials (and some errors) and a keen interest in learning ourselves. However, some understanding of how students learn might help us to become more effective teachers.

For learning to take place, we need to bring together environment (something to be perceived, a reason to perceive it and react to it), the body (to perceive it) and the brain (to begin the cognitive process of learning). These are the maxims of embodied cognitive approaches. From viruses to plants to humans, all living creatures process information as they interact with the world. A physical perception triggers a number of chemical responses in our bodies. We might not even be conscious of some of those responses as they might not be externalized into movement or other changes, like sweating or feeling happy. However, they still take place, leaving a trace of neuronal activations in our brains which can eventually lead to the creation of memory and learning. As teachers, we need to give our students the context to perceive, the input to be perceived and the tools to facilitate its processing.

I will use the term *learning* to refer to the acquisition of a language as a result of studying it.[2] I will also refer to *students*, as those individuals in our classes who come to study the language and sometimes succeed and learn it, thus becoming *learners*. Often, the language under study, or target language (TL) of our students is a foreign language (FL) not spoken where they live. However, I will refer to the TL also as a *second language* (L2) rather than the FL and to the mother tongue as the L1 or first language.

Cognitive linguistics takes a different approach from traditional second language teaching and learning methods in that it explores how general cognition abilities support language learning and processing.[3] Cognitive abilities range from logic and reasoning skills to our capacity to select events worthy of our attention and able to sustain that attention. Understanding how we categorize information and differentiate between categories has given us an insight into how language is produced and processed. A cognitive linguistics approach holds that language itself reveals how we perceive and understand the world. What is important and what is secondary is reflected in the structure of our sentences; how we categorize experiences is reflected

[1] For easy to read practical guides on how to integrate cognitive linguistics in the language classroom see: Holme [1] and also: Giovanelli [2].

[2] Ellis [3].

[3] Enfield [4].

in linguistic meanings; metaphors and metonymy are thinking strategies to process ideas (often abstract) and relate them to the physical world.

Language teaching from a cognitive linguistics approach seeks to present the language under study in a format that will take advantage of existing general cognitive abilities to process the new information. This approach is usage-based. For the language learner this means there is first a natural emergence of individual language items in specific contexts which will, eventually, be followed by full control of the item in a variety of contexts.[4] Learners are supported by a gradual exposure to input which is scaffolded on existing knowledge and consolidated via conceptualization of new items. Thus, a cognitive approach to second language teaching relies on a bottom-up learning process where individuals learn, thanks to their existing cognitive abilities, through first-hand interaction with the world.[5]

When teaching second languages in the classroom little time is spent thinking of this bottom-up approach. Experiences in the second language classroom are limited and students often learn without really understanding, or conceptualizing, new words, grammar or pragmatic meanings. As teachers, we should facilitate understanding and conceptualization as well as guiding learners to engage with as many language-related experiences as possible.

1.1 Objective and Contents

The objective of this book is to integrate the learnings from cognitive linguistics into existing classroom approaches in order to identify and maximize teaching opportunities and resources for new and existing teachers of English as a second language. It will use lesson plans developed by teachers of English from Mainland China and Hong Kong who took a Master's course on *Second Language Teaching*, to illustrate what is currently being done in second language classrooms and suggest ideas to develop those practices under the umbrella of a CL approach.

Part I includes this Introduction and, in Chap. 2, a brief overview of the English that is taught in second language classrooms and the various approaches developed over time to teach English, and other languages, as a second language. The discussions over how best to teach languages are not new. Looking back allows us to identify how cognition and social issues have always been present in these discussions. Chapter 3 discusses various factors related to learning that teachers need to be familiar with. These include: memory, aptitude, attention, motivation, affect and learning preferences based on personality differences. Chapter 4 introduces two of the most popular methods used in Chinese language classrooms: Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) and PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) and suggests how they might be integrated to be able to follow a communicative approach that also prepares students for grammar-based examinations.

[4] Tyler [5].

[5] Putz and Sicola [6].

Part II begins in Chap. 5, with an introduction to the basic premises of an approach based on cognitive linguistics. Chapter 6 opens with the principle of embodied conceptualization and then describes the role of gestures in cognitive and communicative processes and their role in conceptualizing and learning the language. Chapter 7 focuses on cognition and how language is shaped by that cognition, including metaphoric and metonymic thinking. Chapter 8 describes how language is usage-based and how our perceptions are reflected in the language structures that we use.

Part III opens with an introduction, Chap. 9, about the external factors that affect our teaching: national, institutional and physical constraints; and proposes the *Lesson Plan* as a tool to integrate all of these for a successful lesson. Chapter 10 then presents a selection of lesson plans, first describing their structures. The lesson plans were selected to offer a range of ideas for a range of students, from primary to higher institutional levels. Their authors have agreed to share them and the materials they created. At the end of each lesson plan there is a section with additional ideas for activities to further integrate embodied cognition into these lessons. I recommend that teachers review the lesson plans and adapt them to their own context. Readers are welcome to jump to Part III in search of ideas. However, the preceding sections provide the theoretical foundations that will enhance the interpretation of the justifications provided in the lesson plans.

1.2 Concluding Thoughts

Language teaching is an old profession with approaches and methods so ingrained into the systems and institutions we operate in that radical changes are not always possible or accepted, even by our own colleagues. The way forward is not to start from scratch but to integrate new ideas into existing practices and confirm that learners benefit from them. Although CL has been around for several decades, its learnings are not yet fully integrated into our pedagogical practices. This is not due to a rejection of CL, but to the great baggage that teaching carries, and moving it forward is a slow process.

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Abstract

This chapter begins with a discussion about what English to teach. It also provides a brief history of second language teaching approaches to remind readers that we have been learning languages for millennia but we are still to find an approach that works for all.

Chapter 2
The English We Teach and How We Taught It

2.1 Introduction

In a talk delivered in 2021, David Crystal[1] a well-known and popular English linguist, estimated that in 2019 there were around 2.3 billion speakers of English in the world, about 30% of the global population and a decrease from the early 2000s when this was about 33%. In the late 1990s 1.5 billion people were thought to speak English in a somewhat fluent manner, that was about 25% of the population. This is also reflected in the languages used on the internet. For its first couple of decades, English was the dominant language. By 2020 its prevalence had declined to 26% as Chinese and Spanish users (19% and 8% respectively) had become more active in their mother tongues.

Most of these users of English are, of course, not native speakers. Crystal estimates that there is only one native speaker for every 5 non-native speakers. They have learnt English in order to do their job, to communicate world-wide, to read the novels they like or to pass an exam. The interesting thing is that the *English* they learn is not all the same. Like any language, English changes with use—remember the idea of language being usage-based? And today one of the questions we have is what *English* should we teach?

The other question is how should we teach it. Learning a second language is not a modern concept, neither is teaching it! Although teaching English as a second language is more recent than say, teaching Greek, it still has a long history that reflects key changes in society's values. Learning how teaching languages has changed over time should encourage us to experiment with different approaches and warn us not to become too attached to any one approach.

[1] Plenary talk delivered at The Hong Kong Continuing Professional Development Hub (HKCPD Hub) conference in January 2021. Crystal's talk was based on his book: Crystal [1].

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2.2 Englishes

There is no such thing as *English* in the singular anymore. Today we speak of *World Englishes* or *Global English*, acknowledging that there are many varieties of English. It has been asked whether those varieties will eventually become languages in their own right, like the various Romance languages spoken by neighboring countries in Europe. The term *language* is not a technical linguistic notion but more of a socio-political one. Norwegian, Swedish and Danish, are all considered to be separate languages for political, geographical, historical, sociological, cultural and linguistic reasons, but the three languages are quite similar and most speakers can understand one another.

The same could not be said of all varieties of English. African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) is not always immediately intelligible to other speakers of English:

(1) He finna go to work (He is about to go to work)

but nor is the Newcastle (UK) variety:

(2) Gey it some welly! (Put some effort into it)

nor are the many other varieties of English that are spoken throughout the world. In some, differences in pronunciation render words unintelligible to non-local speakers (the Newcastle variety is one example), in others, it might be the grammar (like AAVE) or the vocabulary. It might be that the local English has assimilated words and expressions from another language, like these Indian origin words used in Hong Kong: *godown* (warehouse), *shroff* (ticket payment office), *nullah* (small river); or meanings that have developed to suit the local culture, like in the Indian English:

My daughter is convent-educated (My daughter studied in an English Medium school).

Which variety of English is the one we should be teaching? Thirty years ago, teachers of English as a foreign language would choose between British or American English, writing:

(3) I would like to enroll in the English Language Center to do the program they organize for communicating while traveling abroad.

or

(4) I would like to enrol in the English Language Centre to do the programme they organise for communicating while travelling abroad.

Can you identify which is the American variety and which the British? Today, even my US English spell checker recognizes as correct the British spelling of most of the words in the sentence above (4)—the second one.

Braj Kachru[2] the Indian linguist who coined the term *World English,* described the use of English in the world by using three concentric circles. The Inner Circle, with about 380[3] million speakers, refers to countries where English is the primary

[2] Kachru [2].

[3] Based on an estimate of 1.5 billion speakers of English at the end of the twentieth century.

language: the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Anglophone Canada, and parts of the Caribbean. The Outer Circle, relates to countries with a British or American colonial past where English is an important second language. The estimated number of speakers in this circle ranges from 150 to 300 million, including speakers in: India, Nigeria, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Tanzania, Kenya, parts of South Africa and Canada. The biggest circle is the Expanding one, countries within this circle recognize the importance of English and include it in their curricula. The estimates for the number of speakers in this circle go from 100 million to a billion in countries like: China, Japan, most of Europe, Russia, Indonesia, Egypt, Israel and Taiwan.

The Inner Circle used to be the source of the norms, how the language was to be used, in particular British and American English. However, English has stopped belonging to the inner circle and is now seen as a truly global language. It is a language that became global thanks to the geo-political power of its original speakers but now it is global because it does not belong to anyone. This has shifted our approach to teaching the language. The British and American varieties are not that relevant anymore, and what is taught in most countries in the expanding circle is either a local variety, like *Singlish* in Singapore or *Tamish* in Indian Tamil or whatever variety teachers grew up with. This also applies to the culture associated with that variety.

One criticism of the rise of English has been that it is killing other languages. As communities adopt English as an everyday language they stop using their native language which eventually dies, and this is especially true of younger generations. Crystal warns that 50% of the world's 6000 languages are likely to die within this century. The loss of a language also means the loss of its cultural heritage. This fear, together with rising nationalism might explain why English is not growing as rapidly as it once did.

Identity and intelligibility are two of the opposing forces that drive the development of language. Communities preserve and shape their language to suit their environments and needs, adopting words like *nullah* or *godown* or specific grammatical forms *He finna go to work*, sometimes consciously to mark differences between themselves and others. This protects languages from dying although their development is likely to include many new English technical terms. Protecting one's language from new terms hinders comprehension so the opposing force, that of intelligibility comes into play to facilitate trade, scientific exchange and communication between people of different communities.

The realization that most English speakers are not native speakers of English means that our likely interlocutor is from the Outer or Extended Circles; that we each need to ensure the other understands us—because we are equals (at least as far as the language goes); and that neither of us is going to mind if norms are not followed. However, this has given a freedom to teachers of English that is not always reflected in national curricula and textbooks.

Without getting into the politics of enforced language learning (a reason for rejecting English) how can you describe your experience if there are no words in English to convey it? This was especially true for many African and Indian writers who found their spiritual world bound by the religious beliefs of English communities

of speakers. In the early 1960s African writers began to reject English arguing that an African writer who thinks and feels in his own language must write in that language. Today many writers and song writers have found a solution by combining languages to express their cultural experiences: listen to Dhanush's *Why This Kolaveri Di?* (The Soup of Love) or read *An Orchestra of Minorities* by Chigozie Obioma.

The many varieties of English have been extensively studied, often comparing the standard variety (*Received Pronunciation*, RP, for British English, what was also known as the Queen's English) with non-standard varieties—a term often hard to justify. Standard varieties are those usually linked to higher socioeconomic strata, and, unsurprisingly, they command the most favorable ratings. This used to be the case for RP but now it seems to be shifting to standard American, partly due to the popularity of American TV programmes and films.

How people speak affects our social judgement[4] and that in turn affects how communication takes place. If you associate an RP accent, with a high level of education, you are more likely to listen to the speaker with respect, rather than skepticism. If your students have problems understanding a new teacher because of their accent, that teacher will have low evaluative scores for their teaching practices, regardless of how good they might be. Research in this area, going back to studies in the 1930s, did not find much of a correlation between how people spoke (the quality of their voice as well as their accent) and how their personality was viewed. However, later studies concluded that judgements were not based on aesthetics or perceived linguistic rankings of languages but on the social traits associated with specific voices. These traits are stereotypical and can be divided into judgement clusters of status (ambition), solidarity (friendship) and dynamism (liveliness). They are heavily dependent on how the self-group views outsiders, making these judgements dynamic, changing as society and personal experience develop. In short, if you associate the RP with education, influence, status and power, you will be swayed in your evaluation of what is being said.

2.3 Teaching English in the Chinese Context

This heading is perhaps misleading, there is no *one* Chinese context. As mentioned in the Introduction, I focus on the context of Mainland China and Hong Kong. It cannot be assumed that there is one overall context as every school, if not every classroom, will be different by reason of the students and teachers, and their values and attitudes towards English. Attitudes to English vary, even within a relatively homogeneous group like a specific Hong Kong university language classroom. Students can be in awe of English and idealize its use considering it essential to further their careers, others see it as a social achievement and think it is 'cool', while some feel it has been imposed on them and so have never really mastered it.

[4] Kristiansen [3].

However, even if each school, even each classroom had its own context we would need to be able to generalize to be able to provide any meaningful insights as to practices in the Chinese context. As a former British colony, Hong Kong is still using English as one of its official languages. In cities like Shanghai, Guangzhou or Beijing the influx of foreign companies has meant that, for many, English is the lingua franca. These parts of China today have access to English-based experiences, but in rural areas it can be difficult to accidentally encounter English in its spoken or written form. Thus, the experience of many students is restricted to the formal context of the classroom. This is not to say that opportunities do not exist, they do, but only those who are truly engaged will seek them out.

The greatest challenge to teachers in China in developing student engagement may well be the range of examples of the English language both teachers and students have access to. If students' main objective for learning the language is to pass an official exam, their focus will be on the content tested in these exams. How can we go beyond that? From a cognitive approach that combines experience, body and brain, the first step will be to understand the limitations of all three. We must understand how brain maturity affects cognition, ensure that perception is taking place and provide experiences that are meaningful enough to engage both systems.

Mainland China was estimated to have 10 million English speakers and 300 million learners in 2006. This is likely to be the largest English-learning community in the world which has led to a variety of English known as *China English* or *Chinglish*. In China, the *Open Door* policy of the late 1970s, saw the introduction of English in schools as a foreign language, eventually developing greater importance than languages from closer countries, such as Korean or Japanese, because of its global status. Today, English is a compulsory subject across all institutional levels, starting from grade 3 (around eight years old). The curriculum is regulated by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China through the national English Language curriculum standard. The latest version of this standard was released in 2011.

In Hong Kong, English is, together with Chinese,[5] one of two official languages. It is estimated that almost 52% of the population over five years old can speak English.[6] As a former British colony, Hong Kong was one of the territories in the Outer Circle. Now, as a Special Administrative Region of China, it is counted, together with Mainland China, as part of the Expanding Circle. Prior to 1974, English was the only official language in the, then, British colony. In 1974 Chinese (Cantonese) was also given official status. Most HK residents are Cantonese speakers with a heightened understanding of the value of English skills. Putonghua (Mandarin) is becoming increasingly common due to an influx of Mainland immigrants and it being a compulsory subject in secondary schools.

The colonial government allowed secondary schools to decide on their medium of instruction (MoI), the majority opting for English. Following the reversion of Hong

[5] Whether this is Cantonese or Mandarin is not officially specified.

[6] According to 2016 Census data, see: Hong Kong Government. Census and Statistics Department [4].

Kong to Chinese rule in 1997, the new government implemented a Chinese mother-tongue MoI policy for primary schools and for the first three years of secondary school. From the fourth year on, schools could choose their MoI according to their resources. A number of secondary schools were allowed to continue to use English as the MoI and Chinese MoI schools could teach some of the curriculum in English. In 2010, the policy was revised offering more flexibility to schools in this regard.[7]

In tertiary institutions English has remained the main MoI (although some universities accept bilingual teaching). However, as many students struggle with the demands of communicating in academic English, many tertiary institutions offer additional English courses, from basic proficiency to academic English. Several studies have confirmed the need to support tertiary students not only in academic writing, but also in speaking, specialized vocabulary, listening, reading and assignments.[8]

2.4 How We Taught English (and Other Languages)

As a learner and a teacher, I have been exposed to a number of approaches and methods[9] starting from Latin lessons that went no further than translating sentence by sentence (the Classic or Grammar Translation method) to task-based learning based on the concept of Flow. I refer here to Brown's definitions,[10] and use *approaches* as the theoretical beliefs about language and how it is learnt. Beliefs have also been referred to as *principles* for learning and teaching.[11] *Methods* are the plans developed to teach, which take into account the role of the teacher and students, the objectives, sequencing and materials. To implement a method, you will use a series of techniques or strategies. For example, if you believe that grammar is key (approach or principle) you will probably use explicit teaching methods (or procedures) such as illustrating the difference between the present and the progressive tenses (go vs. going) with diagrams and this will be a specific technique.

In *A History of English Language Teaching*, Anthony Howatt[12] describes how, up until the Renaissance, the teaching of modern European languages like French or English was carried out using dialogues concerning the lives of the students followed by a series of questions on the text and others that required memorized answers. By the early sixteenth century, dictionaries had become quite popular as had language textbooks based on specific situational backgrounds providing relevant vocabulary.

[7] Lo and Lin [5].

[8] For more information on the Academic English needs of Hong Kong students see: Evans and Green [6]; and Hyland [7].

[9] For a more detailed account of a history of second language approaches see: Celce-Murcia [8]; or Cook [9].

[10] Brown [10].

[11] Kumaravadivelu [11].

[12] Howatt [12].

Teachers followed a bilingual approach, many of the textbooks were bilingual, which led to comparisons between the mother tongue of the learner and the target language, a comparative, somewhat communicative approach. The second half of the sixteenth century saw mass movements of population due to the Reformation and the Wars of Religion in France. This meant that second languages became the domain not only of the educated, male diplomats and merchants but also of literate women and all manner of artisans. Semi-phonetic transcriptions were included in textbooks, so they could be studied individually at home, and they addressed practical dialogues for the homemaker as well as the merchant. In schools, these texts were also translated back and forth and grammar was addressed after the text had been worked on following an inductive or reasoning method.

Meanwhile, Latin continued to be taught in schools as it always had been (and continued to be until it disappeared as a core subject in Western schools), through its grammar. Based on this approach the first grammar for the teaching of English appeared in England in 1540, the first Spanish grammar had been published in 1492 and the first French one in 1530. By the end of the sixteenth century pedagogues followed one of two paths: that of a humanist tradition based on the communicative function of the language or one focusing on the language and imposing a gradual approach to its learning. By the late seventeenth century the most popular language textbooks were also following a rule-based approach, covering vocabulary, phonology and grammar, all explained explicitly.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the French linguist François Gouin[13] wrote about his inability to learn German by memorizing a grammar book and compared his efforts to those of his three-year-old nephew who was beginning to speak. Based on his observations of the infant, Gouin developed a method based on a naturalistic approach to learning languages: lots of repeated input in the L2 getting progressively more complex and repeated output, no translation between languages, no grammar. This method was refined by Berlitz,[14] resulting in the *Direct Method*. I experienced the Direct Method about twenty years ago in a one-week intensive French Learning course (I still have the book) which starts with "the pen is on the table; the pen is under the table". Although it was a very small group and we had a native teacher who spoke to us only in French, I do not think I learnt much. In many parts of East Asia, this and the Classic method are combined through a double act presented by a non-native teacher, the grammar instructor, and a native speaker providing oral input.

In the early years of the twentieth century, psychologists entered the field of education espousing a behavioral approach, suggesting that learning took place while interacting with one's environment; imitating, practicing; getting reinforcement and forming habits led to learning. Burrhus Skinner[15] went a step further and integrated the brain into this learning process, stating that language learning depended not only on the situation and the social context, but also on the individual's past experience—that is their existing knowledge of the world, memories and beliefs.

[13] Gouin [13].

[14] Berlitz [14].

[15] Skinner [15].

During World War II, in an effort to teach their staff European languages quickly, the US Army developed aural/oral language training that focused on oral mimicry, *audiolingualism*. I started learning Cantonese like this, listening to a sentence from a tape and repeating it. The objective was to create L2 structural habits, not to reflect on them but to internalize them by memorizing set phrases for specific situations. There was a series of drills: fill in the gap, transform a question into a statement, contrast the pronunciation of pairs of words; all of a fairly repetitive nature with a focus on accuracy. Many textbooks today present a number of exercises that are based on these drills. Students like them because they do not require much effort to work out what needs to be done and are fairly easy to complete.

However, it was argued that children learning their mother tongue were capable of producing utterances that they could have not heard before, so they were not just imitating. This led Chomsky[16] to suggest in the 1980s that there was a *Universal Grammar* genetically inherited that allowed all speakers to learn languages. This meant that human communication was thought to develop when neurons followed a pre-set path that was unrelated to external stimuli, so items were learnt in a specific order. This inspired second language teaching linguists to look for patterns in students' learning, such as a sequence in the acquisition of items (Krashen[17]) or common structures in learners' production that could not be explained by transfers from the mother tongue (Selinker[18]). Underlying all this research was the belief that learning was the outcome of mental processes. This was the beginning of the cognitivist approach to language learning.

During the 1970s, as the field of cognitive psychology grew and Chomsky's ideas spread, designer methods were introduced. These followed a humanistic approach, believing that language is creative but led by rules. It tapped into the cognitive and the affective side of the learner. The *Community Language Learning method*[19] was expected to reduce the stress inherent in a traditional teacher-led classroom. Students form a learning group, or community, and then communicate messages to each other first in their shared L1 and then repeat the translation facilitated by the teacher-councilor. A second stress-relieving method was *Suggestopedia*[20] based on what is now known as mindfulness, believing that a relaxed mindset would improve learning. A more cognitive-demanding method was the *Silent Way*[21] the name referring to the role of the teacher, who provided minimal input and allowed/forced students to solve a language problem by themselves with the aid of physical objects (colored rods with each color referring to a sound). Group work was developed as well as "inner-criteria for correctness".[22] I have never seen this in practice but the basic idea is not dissimilar to that behind task-based language teaching (TBLT). *Total Physical*

[16] Chomsky [16].
[17] Krashen [17].
[18] Selinker [18].
[19] La Forge [19].
[20] Lozanov [20].
[21] Gattegno [21].
[22] Larsen-Freeman [22].

Response,[23] another method, believes that allowing for a physical response to an oral input, rather than a verbal/written one, also reduces stress. Students eventually relax and as input becomes more and more comprehensible they try to produce speech. I have tried this as a task in class and it can be great fun, but I would not want to rely on it.

Integrating Universal Grammar (UG) in the classroom was, however, not so simple. Chomsky suggested a *Minimalist Program* that combined syntax and lexicon. He proposed that by analyzing the lexical unit its affordances would become clear. For example, whether a specific verb could take one or two objects: *give* would necessitate something that is given and a someone that receives the offering. This was hardly a realistic proposal for the classroom. As Vivian Cook[24] stated, UG is about language knowledge rather than language use. It might be useful for teachers to be aware of those language principles but learners of the language need to be able to communicate with others, not analyze the structures they use. To be fair to UG, it was not very interested in what teachers thought of it. However, the structure reflects the action and this principle has been developed in various grammar focused branches of CL.

While these Chomskian ideas dominated linguistic studies for a large part of the 1980s, some scholars began to question their validity: Tarone[25] pointed out that information on different languages demonstrated that they were not universal in their structure. Diane Larsen-Freeman[26] warned that learners might have something to say in the learning process, that the learning sequence might not be set in stone. Doubts were also raised by developments in technology that helped clarify that language could not be found in just one specific area in the brain. Meanwhile, sociolinguists like Dell Hymes[27] defended the relationship between learning and the environment and how social interaction shapes learning.

An approach radically opposed to UG appeared in the form of Elizabeth Bates and Brian MacWhinney's *Competition Model*[28] in 1981. It stated that when a speaker communicates, they have to integrate word order, vocabulary, morphology and intonation. These four aspects compete with each other and languages vary in terms of which aspect is more relevant in carrying meaning. In Cantonese intonation and vocabulary are more important than morphology, while in German morphology is essential. The role of brain processing capabilities and specifically memory was then further developed by John Anderson[29] who proposed two types of memory: a declarative one, dealing with facts *what*, and a procedural one dealing with procedures *how*.

[23] Asher [23].

[24] See Cook [9] mentioned in the notes at the beginning of this section.

[25] Tarone [24].

[26] Larsen-Freeman [25].

[27] Hymes [26].

[28] MacWhinney and Bates [27].

[29] Anderson [28].

The role of the brain in the learning process became more central. Initially, cognitivists compared language learning to the processing of a computer. Language was seen as a specialized cognitive process, independent of other cognitive processes, such as attention or memory. However, there was more to language learning than individual brain processes. Language was triggered by contact with the environment and social exchanges. The ideas of pedagogues like Maria Montessori and psychologists like Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky could not be ignored any longer and cognitive theories began to take into account all these points, developing into an embodied cognitive theory of language learning.

As work on cognition developed in the 1980s, Stephen Krashen[30] put forward a series of hypotheses that were based more on content and the communicative intent of the speaker. However, initially his claims were not supported by empirical results and so were treated with extreme skepticism. Subsequently, Krashen and Tracy Terrell developed them into the *Natural Approach*[31] They believe that learners need as much input as possible, but this input has to be within their comprehension (the *comprehensible input hypothesis*). Learners might need time before they can produce, therefore a physical response initial period is encouraged to allow learners to acquire the language (the *acquisition-learning hypothesis*). Learners are not forced to produce if they are not ready. The goal is to develop interpersonal communication skills; meaning is prioritized over form, so errors are not corrected. Krashen is still lecturing about many of these ideas and he is a very entertaining speaker, I encourage you to watch some of his talks.

As Krashen's hypothesis and some of the designer methods of the 70s began to be studied, many turned out to be supported by empirical research. A number of key ideas began to consolidate, forming the foundations of what is now the most popular approach in SL, *Communicative Language Teaching*. The basis of the communicative approach can be traced back to the work of Piaget and Vygotsky in the first decades of the twentieth century later developed by Halliday. These key elements are: a focus on the interactive communicative function of the language; the use of real texts and situations (inside and outside the classroom respectively); and a focus on the affective and cognitive processes grounding the learning.

Communicative approaches were used in Canada to teach various school subjects in French, the aim being to have truly bilingual citizens, both French and English are official languages. This led to the development of *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL) or content-based instruction. CLIL has developed fast in Europe as part of the European Commission language policy to encourage Europeans to speak their mother tongue plus two other European Union languages.[32] It is believed that CLIL motivates the learning of an L2 and encourages its use in a real context. It has been implemented in many schools and higher education institutions to teach content subjects and has the added benefit of opening institutional programmes to international students. Although the term CLIL refers to approaches that focus both

[30] Krashen [27].

[31] Krashen and Terrell [29].

[32] Brown and Bradford [30].

on language and content it is widely used today across the globe to include teaching where English is the medium of instruction, as in Hong Kong.[33]

2.5 Concluding Thoughts

English is sometimes rejected because of its associations with the West and colonialism. There is a sense, mostly in the Outer Circle, that English has been imposed, depriving speakers and writers of the tools they need to express their cultures. Second language teaching in mainland China and Hong Kong is exam-oriented with a secondary focus on integrated and communicative skills. In Hong Kong, the Education Bureau and the Curriculum Development Council, advisors to government on kindergarten to secondary curriculums, recommend an interactive communicative approach. However, textbooks do not always follow this approach nor are all teachers trained to do so. Those who are not might prefer a more traditional approach based on grammar drilling and rote-learning to ensure students do well in written, grammar-focused exams.[34] As teachers, we also need to motivate and engage our students by focusing on the global nature of English and the many doors that it can open.

Although my preferred approach is a communicative one based on embodied cognition, I do not shy away from other approaches, including those based on grammar. We need to remember that each individual is different. I have seen students learn by rote memorization, by studying grammar, by following the communicative approach, with corrective feedback and with no feedback at all, when comprehensible input was maximized and when learners found themselves at the deep end in a foreign language context. Some of my best students had learnt their second language by watching TV. They spoke to no-one and wrote nothing, read nothing, learnt no grammar and received no feedback, and carried out no tasks save for watching TV (and according to the definition of *task* that would not count). A CL approach needs to be integrated within existing teaching practices. Not only for the sake of teachers, who are usually overwhelmed by institutional demands, but also for the sake of students. Students become used to being taught in a specific way and when the approach changes this disrupts their routine. Best then to introduce teaching changes gradually to test their effectiveness and allow students to get used to different ways of thinking and doing things.

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[33] Lo et al. [31].

[34] For more information on the Hong Kong context see: Ng [32].

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Abstract

As teachers, we sometimes blame ourselves for learners' failures, forgetting the many individual factors that affect learning, this chapter presents these. Factors include brain development, affective states, cultural traits, and personality. Increasingly, researchers are linking learners' motivational factors with teachers' behaviors. Successful teachers are those that can create safe mental spaces where students feel comfortable making mistakes, trying new things, being challenged, and interacting with others.

Chapter 3
How We Learn—Learning and Cognition

3.1 Introduction

Would you teach a six-year-old the same way you would teach a sixteen or twenty-six-year-old? The answer is *No*, because the cognitive abilities of a small child, a teenager and a young adult differ. A small child does not understand a sentence like:

> Teachers are like candles.

This is a metaphor and the cognitive capacity to understand metaphors does not develop until the age of seven or so (this varies, some children mature faster than others). A teenager will understand the metaphor but will be baffled by the many exceptions presented by every grammar rule. Teenage brains are trying to classify information into distinct categories and they struggle with ambiguities. The frontal cortex, where many of the central executive functions sit, is not fully formed until early adulthood, which means that young people might have more difficulties than adults with attention keeping, planning, shifting between tasks or employing metacognitive strategies to learn. These cognitive skills affect how information is stored. The brain of a young adult should have reached maturity by around the age of twenty-seven, by which time we can expect the full development of all cognitive skills.[1]

In second language learning, these cognitive skills (memory, attention, aptitude) affect learning. Other factors also play a crucial role, such as motivation, attention, affect and emotion and personality. This section describes the importance of all of these in the learning process.

[1] Kagan [1].

R. Lopez-Ozieblo, *Theory and Practice from a Cognitive Perspective*,
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3.2 Memory

The biggest part of the brain, the cerebrum, is like a walnut. It is divided into two sides or hemispheres and each of these has four parts or lobes, which are separated by various fissures or folds. These lobes are the frontal (at the front) and occipital (at the lower back), the temporal (on the sides, near the temples), and the parietal (top, towards the back). Each lobe has a number of ridges (gyri) and grooves (sulci) that form an outer layer to the cerebrum called the cortex. The cortex has around 15 billion neurons, which are essential to cognitive functions such as attention, awareness, memory and of course, language. Another part of the brain essential for language is the cerebellum, situated at the base of the brain at the back. There are also other structures, buried deep inside the cerebrum, which play a part in language, the hippocampus, the amygdala and the basal ganglia. Neurolinguistic studies confirm that there is no single brain region where language *happens*, instead, language is the result of the interconnectivity of neuronal clusters in different parts of the brain.[2]

Brains are formed in the uterus but take years to develop fully. The hippocampus takes six to eight years and the cortex about 25. The hippocampus and the frontal cortex are both key to creating memories, which is why you might not remember much from before you were six. Interestingly, although we are not yet sure why, our strongest memories will be those formed in our youth.[3] Learning, or making memories, relies on the sensory systems, hearing, vision, touch, taste and smell, which might begin in our retina or fingertips but converge in the brain. But not everything that is sensed gets our attention. Do you remember the first word in this paragraph? You read it, therefore you must have seen it, but it did not catch your attention. When learning, attention is key (we will talk more about this later). If this paragraph had started with the words *Grey matter is formed in the uterus* you might have remembered *grey matter* either because you are not familiar with the term or it does not seem right in this sentence. If you did not know the term *grey matter* and you had looked it up to find it means: "neural tissue especially of the brain and spinal cord that contains nerve-cell bodies as well as nerve fibers and has a brownish-gray color"[4] you would have gone through a comprehension process that should have helped to consolidate the term in your memory and you might then have remembered it.

When we experience a new word, we also experience it with our senses. It might be that we are feeling a particular way (internal environment), that we are in a specific place (external environment) or that we are doing something. We might see it written down as well or become aware of its meaning at the same time. All of these inputs are part of the memory associated with the word, which will help its retrieval in the future. This storage system is incredibly complex and, so far, we just have theories

[2] Wager [2].

[3] Steiner et al. [3].

[4] Definition from Merriam-Webster dictionary online, retrieved from: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gray%20matter.

about how it works . There is a *Long Term Memory* (LTM) where consolidated memories are stored and a *Working Memory* (WM) where inputs are consolidated. The WM used to be called Short Term Memory (STM) but as it seems that most tasks involve it, even if not memory related, calling it working is more suitable.[5]

Working Memory is supervised by a central executive control mechanism that dictates what we should pay attention to, how we should plan tasks, checks how well we are doing, and other processes essential to learning. The central executive will make you pay attention to these words you are reading and will direct you to re-read the paragraph because your attention had wondered. The central executive will select input from the sensory systems and highlight it as worthy of attention. There are at least two distinct sensory systems, one for visuo-spatial input and another one for words (written and heard). These two systems are separate and do not compete with each other. But visual information, the shape and color of an object, and its position in space do compete for attention.

As memories can be retrieved from a number of tags (emotional, context, smell, sound, touch), the more of these that can be integrated into new information the more likely this is to be remembered—as long as there is no information overload. If the input is considered important enough, it will be tagged and a record of it and its various tags made. When teaching the greeting *hello* a teacher could point out that: 'it is used at the beginning of class'; 'it is often used with an open palm gesture moved side to side'; 'it is usually said with a cheerful tone (at least by the teacher) and a smile'; 'it has two syllables'; 'it sounds like \hə-ˈlō\'; 'it is written as h-e-l-l-o'. These records are stored in various locations, including the cortex, the amygdala and the hippocampus. The amygdala processes memories and decision making but most importantly, emotions. Sensory stimuli travel directly to the amygdala where emotional memories are stored. Seeing someone saying *hello* with a nasty smile will trigger a faster heart rate that we might interpret as *fear*. This is the *fast track* of memory storage, which allows for instinctive reactions such as the responses to danger. It also plays an important role in language associated with strong emotions, making it easier to recall swear words, for example.

The hippocampus is related to spatial memory and it helps consolidate newly learnt information, especially while we sleep,[6] by binding different pieces of knowledge.[7] Once memories have been consolidated they form part of the long term memory. During the consolidation process memories are fragile and can be easily disrupted as also happens when they are recalled (even a long time after consolidation) so new input can change them.[8] Consolidation takes time, sleep and repetition. In the late 70s it was believed that for memories to consolidate they required repeated rehearsal.[9]

Rehearsing involves both receiving the input and producing it. If receiving it, a number of factors are important: how often it is repeated, the intervals between the

[5] Baddeley and Hitch [4].

[6] Wei et al. [5].

[7] Ullman [6].

[8] Nadel et al. [7].

[9] Atkinson and Shiffrin [8].

repetitions, other input presented with it, the context, and the emotional state of the learner. Repeating a word in order to learn it can be effective but what will work better is testing its use.[10] Testing helps learning more than repeated study, because among other things it allows the learner to check the effectiveness of the recall strategies used and to change them if they are not successful.

Memories are also formed via strong emotions experienced just once, you will always remember the death of a beloved pet. However, even non-eventful emotions are key in the perception and interpretation of social feedback and thus learning. Immordino-Yang and Damasio[11] suggest that emotion underlies other cognitive processes, such as attention, memory, decision making as well as social functions. Emotion is the process that interprets feelings or the changes in the state of the body. Our interpretations are very much conditioned by culture, what is *positive* in one culture might be *negative* in another; for example, in the USA, individualism is a more positive trait than in China.

Children between two and five begin to develop the concept of positive–negative/good–bad and this influences their decisions and their learning. A child who has developed the good-bad concept will not spill cranberry juice on a tablecloth even if told to do so (by a researcher).[12] The child might never have seen it done before but from previous similar experiences they have learnt that it is a *bad* thing to do. A previous similar action likely resulted in an unpleasant bodily-state (maybe *fear* when they were shouted at). Emotions, the *fear* of being told off or the *embarrassment* of having done something wrong, have determined the actions of the child.

So far, we have been talking about explicit knowledge, what the student has been trying to acquire consciously, knowing the *what*, facts, dates and events. When consolidated, this unpredictable, arbitrary, knowledge (your neighbors name, how to say *hello* in Nepalese, what happened to Marie Curie) is stored in declarative memory. The process can be very fast and might not require much repetition—most people will remember their neighbor's name after hearing it just once. Children keep on improving their declarative memory until early adulthood when it starts to decline. Declarative memory is associated with the female hormone estrogen, left-handedness, good sleep and exercise.[13] So an athletic left-handed 20-year-old female who sleeps well might be expected to remember what happened to Marie Curie better than a seventy-year-old male who does no exercise and has insomnia.

There is another form of knowledge which is implicit. Acquiring it is a process through which "we become aware of regularities in the environment"[14] but we are not aware that we are learning those regularities and learning was not our intention. A sub-set of implicit memory is procedural or unconscious memory. We recall it automatically, without having to think about it, allowing us to talk, ride a bike or walk. These things are done following extensive practice of set processes (shift weight to

[10] Eysenck et al. [9].

[11] Immordino-Yang and Damasio [10].

[12] Kagan [11].

[13] Ullman [6]. As above.

[14] Cleeremans and Jiménez [12, p. 20].

one foot, bend the other knee, lift foot, balance, etc.) that eventually allow us to make fast, intuitive predictions. The basal ganglia help consolidate these sequences and the frontal cortex plays a role it their production. Children are good at procedural memory but this seems to start declining during adolescence (a process that continues into adulthood).[15] This explains, at least partly, why learning to ride a bicycle looks very easy when a child does it but is hard for an adult. Some implicit knowledge can also be stored in declarative memory and explicit knowledge (what we are consciously aware of) is exclusive to declarative memory.

3.2.1 Declarative and Procedural Memory

Declarative and procedural memory can work together in second language acquisition, sometimes allowing the acquisition of the same information in both systems, although this is achieved in different ways. Explicit instruction, even if it is of rules, leads to declarative memory, as when you explain to your students how to form the past tense of regular verbs. Some implicit knowledge might also end up in the declarative system. For example, if you hear a conversation about the banker and someone says her name, you might learn the banker's name implicitly. On the other hand, too many rules which are impossible to work out, or lack of them (riding a bike but trying and falling), might help form procedural memories, such as when presenting sounds and letters to students and letting them implicitly learn phonemes.

Declarative memory can be formed from implicit and explicit input. Therefore, taught rules (explicit input) as well as those that have been worked out from observations (implicit input) can both be learnt relatively quickly in the classroom. For these rules to become automatized, allowing an L2 speaker to produce rule-bound speech without thinking, they need to be learned in procedural memory. This is not a transformation of the declarative knowledge into procedural but a parallel longer process that requires practice and involves different brain systems. When learning rules, young adults might have an advantage over younger and older learners in that their declarative memory seems to be stronger than their procedural memory at this stage of development. Children's procedural memory is more dominant than their declarative memory, which helps explain the relative ease with which we all learn our L1, even without explicit instruction.

The declarative/procedural model predicts that arbitrary words will be learnt in declarative memory, in both the L1 and the L2, together with phonemes, meanings and irregular forms. Chunks of words will also be stored here along with taught grammatical rules. Implicit connections between words will be stored in procedural memory. L2 learners will store chunks such as *I am reading* in declarative memory. With exposure and production the pattern *be* + *gerund* will also be learnt in procedural memory, eventually taking over the declarative memory. Most students are aware of a number of techniques, such as using mnemonics or repetitions, that help

[15] Ullman [6] as above.

with cramming before an exam. Ullman and Lovelett[16] review other techniques that help declarative memory including: testing yourself, deep encoding (processing information at a deep semantic level), gesture-based learning, sleep, aerobic exercise, diet and mindfulness. In particular, they focus on repetition. If repetition is done with strategically placed breaks—spaced repetition—it can benefit both declarative and procedural memory.[17]

Most of the information above might not have been of much interest to you. I think it is fascinating that a bunch of chemicals can allow me to write this and you to read it, but unless you are like-minded, I'm sure you do not remember much of it. Keep two key concepts in your mind:

- Riding a bike takes some practice to learn and it is hardly ever forgotten (procedural memory)
- By next week you might have forgotten the name of the new teller at the bank, information which took you a second to process and learn (declarative memory).

Even before neuroimaging confirmed these learning patterns,[18] studies in second language teaching and learning had already delved into how students learn, reaching similar conclusions. Already in 1974, Marina Burt and Heidi Dulay[19] were reporting differences in how L1 and L2 were acquired. Then, in 1985 Ellis[20] pointed out that adolescents are better (than younger and older students) at learning grammar and vocabulary. Nunan[21] writing in 1999, listed a number of key findings from various studies, concluding that learners who were taught grammar at the right learning stage did outperform those who were not, especially if form was linked to meaning during the teaching.

3.3 Aptitude

Aptitude, the ability each one of us has to learn a language, is related to genetic variations. Individual language differences in episodic memory (one of two types of declarative memory that relates to recalling personal facts) and working memory have been associated with specific genes. Differences in working memory, in turn,

[16] Ullman and Lovelett [13].
[17] Atkinson [14].
[18] Ullman [6]. See above.
[19] Burt and Dulay [15].
[20] Ellis [16].
[21] Nunan [17].

have been found to be accurate predictors of language learning (counter-intuitively, it seems that higher working memory might hinder learning!).[22]

Much of the work on aptitude is based on the MLAT scores, the Modern Language Aptitude Test. This is a test developed in the 1950s by John Carroll and Stanley Sappon that predicts how successful a language learner could be in a formal context. It has five parts that test phonetic, grammar and memory skills. These are based on a number of abilities linked to aptitude including phonemic coding and the ability to generalize, form associations and categories. Initially, aptitude was seen as distinct from other cognitive abilities, however now it is recognized that there is a strong link between aptitude and intelligence and a moderate link with working memory.[23]

A number of similar tests have also been developed, including the *Pimsleur Modern Language Aptitude Battery*, the *Defense Language Aptitude Battery*, the *Cognitive Ability for Novelty in Acquisition of Language—Foreign* or *LLAMA*,[24] developed by Paul Meara. LLAMA is based on the MLAT. Freely available, it is one of the most popular tests today for L2 as it was designed for languages other than English; it is based on images and also includes a section on working memory. Both MLAT and LLAMA scores have been shown to be good predictors of language learning, although they do not explain why learning occurs. Aptitude is one of many factors affecting learning but if specific aptitudes, such as preferences for rational or experiential learning, can be matched with explicit or implicit teaching, learning is likely to be more successful. The reality is that teachers become aware of students' aptitudes not through tests but by observing them in the classroom. Unfortunately, existing contexts leave little room to divide students by aptitude and cater to their specific needs. Teachers who know their students can ensure they offer them a range of activities to choose from to play to their strengths, e.g. written based vs. aural, implicit vs. explicit explanations.[25]

3.4 Motivation

Motivation and aptitude are given as the two most accurate predictors of success when learning a language. But, as Dörnyei and Skehan[26] point out, there are many other factors that might not have been taken into consideration. Among these are

[22] For more information on this, refer to the work of *The Laboratory for Language, Learning and the Brain* at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Under Prof. Patrick Wong the lab is developing this idea of individual differences and researching the benefits of personalized language education, based on behavioural, neural and genetic markers.

[23] Li [18].

[24] Meara [19]. The LLAMA tests are free online at https://www.lognostics.co.uk/tools/LLAMA_3/index.htm.

[25] Lourdes Ortega has a chapter on Aptitude in Ortega [20], where she gives a good summary of a number of studies done on aptitude. A good summary of the history of aptitude testing can be found in Skehan [21].

[26] Dörnyei and Skehan [22].

individual learning and cognitive styles and strategies. Motivation tries to explain why we do what we do. In language learning it seeks to explain why students embark on the learning, do all the tasks we assign them and keep on coming to class: Why would an individual choose to learn French and not Japanese? Why do they keep learning it (persistence)? And, why do they expend the resources they do to learn it?

Much of what we do depends on our ability to receive, process and discard stimuli. This is what the *central executive* system does, with the help of dopamine (among other neurotransmitters) and the regulatory framework of emotions. In *working memory* (think of it as a working table with all your notebooks and books on it), bits of stimuli are received from the various sensors and either moved on for further processing or discarded. From a neurological perspective, motivation is tightly linked with dopamine which acts as a neurotransmitter in the brain, sending signals to nerve cells that lead to action. Dopamine is linked to social cognition and emotional recognition.[27] It is often associated with pleasure but its role is actually that of providing motivational salience (prominence) to an outcome and thus triggering the behaviors that will achieve it (an outcome could also be avoiding something from happening). Dopamine-deficient mice eventually die because they do not eat, even if food is given to them. They are hungry, but they also would like to move, to scratch an ear, to explore a smell… but the lack of dopamine is not prioritizing any of these desires or needs so the mice are paralyzed. As you can imagine, dopamine has also been found to influence learning. Dopamine levels vary from individual to individual and even within individuals, in women they fluctuate with the menstrual cycle, and they also decline with age. This implies individual (and daily) differences in a person's learning capabilities.

Our motivations are varied, but they can be categorized as external and internal (or intrinsic). External motivators would be obtaining a reward or avoiding a threat (getting promoted or avoiding getting fired). Intrinsic motivators would be those related to self-actualization. Actualization here means externalizing the perception of yourself, basically proving to yourself that you are who you think you are through your actions. It could be argued that eventually all motivation is intrinsic and lead by society-based behaviors: you work to earn a salary to feed yourself because that is what is expected of you and you want to go on living happily among others.

Each one of us will be more or less motivated to do things at different points in our lives. Students learning a language come to class with different reasons for learning, ultimately mostly related to the notion of self-actualization. As teachers, if we can help them identify a more powerful motive than just *I like Manchester United so I want to learn English*, this might help their central executive system to prioritize coming to English class!

Motivation used to be hailed as a key element in learning, but it is not enough. Dörnyei states that motivation is needed to start learning but to actually *learn* one needs engagement. In a second language classroom Dörnyei highlights the need for engagement with the school/institution context, the target language, the syllabus, tasks, peers and the teacher. The lesson plans presented in this volume provide ideas

[27] Schuster et al. [23].

as to what can be done in the classroom to motivate students' engagement with tasks, each other and us, their teachers.

Another concept growing in popularity is that of *flow*. If you are passionate about a hobby you have probably experienced that state where you are *at one with* your activity and you are so engrossed in it that you have lost any idea of time. That state is *flow*, it is associated with affect, positive emotions and rewards. Just being in this state is intrinsically motivating, and this is the mindset you want your students to have in class. To get there, the tasks designed for a lesson need to be challenging but doable, to have clear goals and allow students to feel they are in control.

There is a practical element that we cannot ignore: when addressing 30 students, it is almost impossible to give individualized attention or to provide different versions of tasks or textbooks to cater to each learner's differences. Instead, what might be feasible is to design tasks with variable elements that can be assigned to (or chosen by) individuals and to help individuals identify learning strategies and specific skills or tactics best suited to their individual learning style, and to implement them.

3.5 Attention

Dörnyei refers to engagement as "active participation and involvement in certain behaviors",[28] an education psychology definition. In contrast, the psychological concept of attention refers to being able to selectively concentrate on specific aspects of received stimuli and preparing to respond to them. Without attention, we will not achieve engagement and at the same without engagement there will be no attention.

You might remember that for learning to take place the central executive system needs to be directing attention to the right input (or you might not remember because you were not paying attention when you read the previous section on the brain). Even when students are interested in a topic and want to learn they will inevitably find their thoughts wandering away from the classroom. A large part of the teacher's job, in my view, is to attract students' attention and hold it. This is how students begin to learn.

Attention allows input to remain active longer, which allows for it to be processed. As long as one is paying attention to the task, the possibility of learning is there, even if it is incidental. When students listen to an audio about Christmas celebrations they might learn about cultural traditions but they are likely to pick up some new vocabulary too, even if that was not the objective of the audio.

Attention requires some level of awareness, of consciousness, including both a superficial one, which allows us to recognize that there are words on a page, and a deeper one which allows us to process those words and make meaning from them. The more attention we pay to things the more effective the learning is thought to be. But learning also occurs at a *body-related* subconscious level, which is why we might not want to order an onion soup at a French restaurant. It is not that we dislike

[28] Dörnyei [24, p. 19].

onion soup but our intestines struggle to process them and the gut (which has been found to have strong links with neurons in the brain)[29] makes the decision for us.

Most second language acquisition practitioners agree that attention is necessary for learning. Let me qualify that sentence: it is necessary in the classroom. In a formal context, time is so limited that there is little time for unconscious acquisition, and most of the language is learnt consciously. In an immersion context, the language can also be acquired through low level awareness, repeated encounters and bodily experiences (which also trigger emotional reactions—more on this below). The body lives through these experiences, over and over, perceiving different aspects of them and learning, albeit not conceptualizing them into the same sort of representations that we develop from the activities in the classroom. These experiences lead to procedural knowledge (the sort we cannot explain, such as how to stay upright). We might not be able to think about something we were inattentive to but our body learns nonetheless. Procedural knowledge, and a good ear, allowed my brother to pick up a Welsh accent when in Wales, a Sheffield accent in the Midlands and a Californian accent in the USA. He heard and he mimicked.

Lacking repetitive experiences, to keep input active attention, or conscious engagement, is required. This is best achieved when in a state of relaxed alertness. Even in the classroom, students have constant access to many channels of information and stimuli that compete for their attention. The main ones, sadly, not being their physical peers but those virtual ones accessed through smart devices. The question is how can we, teachers, grab students' attention and keep it, or in other words, engage our students. One strategy is to lower students' affective barriers which interfere with the learning process.

3.6 Affect and Personality

The affective state of the learner is well known to be one of the keys to successful learning. It is, of course, a term akin to emotion, I refer to *affect* as that is the term preferred by many second language acquisition scholars. In second language acquisition, affect mostly relates to feelings of anxiety, self-confidence and willingness to communicate.[30] It is a very complex concept because emotions are idiosyncratic and culture-based. Neurologically, we can measure the state of the brain and its changes, and we know that those changes vary by individual, age, gender and also by context. Although scholars shy away from giving a clear definition of emotion, a simple one is that of an awareness of a change in body-brain state.[31] That is, we *feel* something and we are able to interpret it. In the physical world it is obvious that we respond to changes in our environment—if there is a rock in our path we go around it. Change engages our attention because we need to respond to it. The same happens with our

[29] For a light article on this, see: Underwood [25].

[30] MacIntyre and Gregersen [26].

[31] Kagan [27].

brain, conscious changes in its state trigger processes that can enhance learning. Embodied learning proposes an integrated body-mind-environment focus. Feeling, thinking about those feelings and the subsequent emotions the thinking triggers are factors in the learning process. Some brain states are more conducive to learning than others and those are the ones we need in our classroom.

Jane Arnold[32] stresses that affect is a social construct. Our emotions are an internal reaction to interactions with the world around us. They are also shaped by our society and the moral frameworks it has developed.[33] Our emotional reaction towards animal cruelty is much stronger now than it would have been even fifty years ago because society's attitude towards animals has changed. Before they were working tools, now they are companions. Different cultures react differently to the same input. Stereotypical views describe the Chinese as non-confrontational and pragmatic, Australians as fair-minded and easy-going, and the English as reserved and rule-abiding, for example. These stereotypes, while generalizations, are founded on shared values that define communities which ought to be recognized and respected when teaching. When teaching a second language we ought to also teach any cultural traits that might trigger different interpretations of feelings. That is, we also need to teach the emotional reactions which are expected and accepted in the culture of the L2.

One of the most-studied factors relating to affect has been anxiety. In the early 1980s Krashen[34] had noted that when students became anxious they were unable to learn, the *affective filter hypothesis*. Horwitz[35] developed this idea further and noted that there is a specific form of anxiety, *Foreign Language Anxiety* (FLA) related to low self-esteem, especially in one's ability to communicate which can result in an unwillingness to communicate. Fear of a negative evaluation, also related to low-self-esteem, causes learners to freeze up in front of others or to blank out in exams.[36]

How we teach and the micro-society we develop in our classrooms is as important as what we teach, if not more so. You have probably heard teachers talk about *safe classrooms*. *Safety* here does not refer to the physical safety of the students, although that is also important, but to their emotional safety. As teachers we need to create safe mental spaces where students feel comfortable: comfortable to make mistakes, to try new things, to be challenged and to interact with others. Every student in the classroom needs to contribute to create this *safe space* but the teacher must give the lead. Each group of students is different, and their interactions and emotions will also be different. Teachers learn how to create *safe spaces* not by copying from a book but by observing their students' interactions and emotions and adapting to their needs. To avoid conflict or situations where anxiety might develop, experienced teachers are able to adapt their content and activities constantly. To think on your feet like

[32] Arnold [28].

[33] Kagan [27]. As above.

[34] Krashen [29].

[35] Horwitz [30].

[36] The concept of FLA was developed by Russell and explained in Russell [31].

that you need a clear plan to start with. In my opinion this is the hardest part of being a teacher.

3.6.1 Personality

Apart from being linked to wider cultural traits, affect is also related to personality. Personality is not new within the field of psychology. Personality tests like the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator (MBTI)[37] have been used for decades to establish levels of extraversion and cognitive preferences as to how information is processed. Personality pairs include: extraversion/introversion, feeling/thinking, perceiving/judging and intuitive/sensitive. One of the most popular personality tests today is the Big-Five Inventory (BFI),[38] measuring five traits: openness (to new experiences and ideas), extraversion, agreeableness (tolerance focus on values and relations), conscientiousness (focus on goals, organization, norms) and neuroticism (emotional stability).

Although well researched in psychology, the effects of personality in second language acquisition are still being studied. It has been observed that neuroticism might impact learning negatively while openness, extraversion, agreeableness and conscientiousness all have a positive effect on learning.[39] Personality traits are linked to how students prefer to learn: some like to work in groups, others individually; some prefer to analyze input and reflect on it, others prefer to do. The next section will cover these learning preferences and strategies.

3.6.2 Personality and Learning Strategies

We all have our own learning routines, some we might have learnt at school, others we developed by ourselves. At school, we were often asked to write down bullet point outlines with the key ideas of the texts we were studying and I still do that. I have tried 'modernizing' it and typing it but that does not work for me, I have to write it by hand if I want to remember it. Creating schematic outlines is certainly a tactic I learnt at school, a teacher taught us how to do it; writing them by hand was self-learnt.

All of these little tricks to retain new information are considered tactics or skills that help implement *learning strategies*. In respect to language learning, Andrew Cohen defines these strategies as "conscious thoughts and actions that learners can

[37] The questionnaire can be retrieved from: https://www.myersbriggs.org/my-mbti-personality-type/mbti-basics/.

[38] Goldberg [32].

[39] Chen and He [33].

deploy at any stage of the learning process, from beginners to advanced levels, to attain a specific learning goal."[40]

The concept of learning strategies emerged from cognitive psychology in the 50s and entered the field of second language learning in the mid-1970s (although I am sure various learning strategies were already well known by Greek teachers in ancient times). Initially the concept was heavily criticized for lacking a solid theoretical framework. Researchers were not able to agree on the definition and classification of learning strategies and as criticism grew, research on learning strategies dwindled to be replaced by work on the somewhat similar notion of self-regulated learning strategies.[41] Today, Ullman and Lovell's[42] research confirms the conceptual theory behind a number of these strategies.

One of the best-known scholars in the field of learning strategies is Rebecca Oxford, who in 1990 categorized strategies as cognitive, mnemonic, metacognitive, compensatory, affective and social.[43] She summarized their common elements as specific to the individual and the learning task but always with the aim of improving communicative skills in the second language. These actions are more than just cognitive and expand the role of the teacher, allowing students to be more self-regulated. They enhance learning, both direct and indirect, and can be taught and learnt. They are flexible and are affected by numerous factors. In her follow up work, Oxford presented a revised model of behaviors that learners can develop to self-learn, the *Strategic Self-Regulation Model*.[44]

Self-regulation in learning refers to the holistic management of the learning process, from establishing the goals that will motivate us to evaluating our performance. It covers the whole learning process and it requires a very diverse set of strategies. This model groups these strategies into three dimensions: cognitive, affective and socio-cultural-interactive, which are in turn managed by metastrategies.

Cognitive strategies are those mental processes engaged when trying to process an input or produce an output, what we cover later under embodied cognition and conceptualizing. Affective strategies refer to activating positive beliefs, emotions and attitudes towards the learning process. Socio-cultural-interactive strategies are related to the context, culture and the communication process, essentially the usage-based role of the language. These include developing and using interaction skills that facilitate communication, such as asking for an utterance to be repeated or seeking clarification. Learning how to learn, in other words developing self-learning strategies, is now one of the outcomes measured by many institutions and education policies. These include the Hong Kong New Academic Structure (NAS)[45] designed to develop students' further studies and future competencies needed for work in Hong Kong.

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[40] Cohen [34].

[41] Oxford [35].

[42] Ullman and Lovelett [13]. As above.

[43] Oxford [36].

[44] Oxford [37].

[45] Curriculum Development Council [38].

Even a cursory analysis of the strategies will confirm that they follow the principles of cognitive linguistics, a point that is often missed. Learners don't always use all of these strategies, either because they are not familiar with them or don't find them useful. There might be many reasons for this, including perhaps having misused a strategy in the past by applying the wrong tactics, and subsequently dismissing it as useless in all situations. Teachers can help students by presenting them with a range of options and exploring which strategies (and tactics) might work best for the development of different skills for each individual and context. Integrating strategy teaching within the language classroom is eventually more time-efficient than providing separate instruction which is more likely to be generalized and not context or skill-specific.[46]

3.7 Concluding Thoughts

For me, holding students' attention is one of the hardest things I have to do in the classroom. It is of course partly personality-related; I am not the sort of person who stops a conversation when I enter a room as some people do, because of their manner or appearance. Do not discount these qualities if you have them, be self-aware and use them to direct students' attention to where you want it (and not necessarily to you). A group of students is a live entity with its own energy. As a teacher you need to be able to read that energy and to shift it where you need it.

A teacher's role is akin to that of the brain's central executive. They decide when students should be paying attention to what. The authors of the lesson plans had this in mind when creating tasks that have relevant content for the students, making the experience emotional, personal and real to engage them. In most cases the authors employed a range of multimodal resources and strategies to accommodate different learning preferences.

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[46] Chamot [39].

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Abstract

Since the need to perform a meaningful task motivates students to use the appropriate language, the ideal scenario in the second language classroom would be to recreate the environment of the target language and have our students carry out every-day activities in that language. However, this is not always feasible, although the goal of task-based pedagogies is to help our students establish a relationship between form and meaning as they use the language. Unsurprisingly, social interaction by language users aids this form-meaning link both in first and second language learning. An ongoing discussion in language teaching is whether to implement implicit or explicit approaches and this chapter covers this topic. In the East Asian context there is a preference for explicit instruction but it is worth noting that the two approaches differ in their benefits to learners of different ages. The constraints imposed by teaching institutions and external bodies often mean that an L2 is taught not to communicate with others but to pass exams. Teachers have the difficult task of balancing the two objectives.

Chapter 4
How We Teach—Usage-Based Methods

4.1 Introduction

Since the need to perform a meaningful task motivates students to use the appropriate language, the ideal scenario in the second language classroom would be to recreate the environment of the target language and have our students carry out every-day activities in that language. However, this is not always feasible, although the goal of task-based pedagogies is to help our students establish a relationship between form and meaning as they use the language.[1] Unsurprisingly, social interaction by language users aids this form-meaning link both in first and second language learning.[2] This is because interaction provides different contexts in which to use and test new items, increasing the range of affordances associated with situations and objects. Affordances are the features of objects and situations that drive how we interact with or in them. A group activity in class will afford interaction and the opportunity to manage the discourse. A fill-in-the-blank activity does not have this affordance. The more situations we experience in relation to an object (or event), the more complete our understanding of that object's qualities or affordances, and our overall conceptualization of it and the language that can be used to refer to the object in different contexts.

In the L1, communities of users code information, processing it as a result of the interaction between perception, action, body and environment.[3] In the second language classroom, the challenge is to replicate a meaningful multi-sensory environment to allow the creation of an independent (from the L1) mental representation of the concept.[4] This mental representation[5] or concept should provide an association

[1] Langacker [1].

[2] Kuhl et al. [2].

[3] Barsalou [3].

[4] Li and Jeong [4].

[5] Johnson-Laird [5].

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of semantic and pragmatic information encompassing temporal, spatial, causal, motivational, personal and object-related elements which will enable deeper processing, and thus learning. Learning anything we do not fully understand is difficult and easy to forget. For example, every time we go to a restaurant the experience is slightly different. Restaurants vary in price, cuisine, decoration, utensils and so on. Our mental model of the *restaurant experience* becomes more complex with every visit and eventually we will be able to form subcategories of the *restaurant experience*, each with its own associated language and behaviors.

The concept is not just one representation for each linguistic unit. *Restaurant* is not one specific establishment but a complex model with superimposed frames, one for price, one for cuisine, another for location, and so on. Even the concept for something as simple as a *banana* is formed by a series of frames each containing some information about a banana: colors, smell, texture, where they grow, where they are sold, how to eat them, which allows speakers to extrapolate from the model and apply it in different scenarios.[6] Knowing that a banana goes soft and brown when old is a clue that an apple with soft brown patches might not be the best. Once our students have the frames, we also want them to learn to extrapolate the knowledge they have to understand different scenarios.

One option to help conceptualize new ideas is to create multiple frames by activating as many sensory-motor systems as possible, ensuring these do not conflict with each other. Information processed through each system will develop or strengthen a different memory trace. The more of these the deeper the processing, the more complex the model, and the better the learning.[7] However, showing videos and playing audios might not be enough. The issue in the classroom is the lack of a social drive, the usage-based element. This is why communicative task-based activities are thought to be more successful than fill-in-the-gap and memorization. In an activity where processing the language is necessary to share information with others, the language is used for the reason it came to be, not to fill in a hole but to allow us humans to live and work together.

4.2 Task Based Language Teaching (and Learning)

Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is a communicative method that asks students to complete tasks using language authentic for that specific interaction.[8] TBLT considers not only the final communicative competence of the student but also how this competence is achieved and developed throughout the learning process. It considers the language as a unified system in which speakers need to relate their linguistic resources, social needs and expectations and what it is they want to express.[9]

[6] Cutica and Bucciarelli [6, 7].

[7] Matheson and Barsalou [8].

[8] Ellis [9]; and Ellis et al. [10].

[9] Breen [11].

Task-based language teaching has been criticized for not providing a clear definition of *task*. Is a classroom-based pedagogical activity still a task? Ellis argues that it ought to be; even if it lacks situational authenticity (it does not mirror a *real-world* scenario), it is still authentic from an interactional point of view in that a problem has to be resolved.[10] Tasks are not set as a series of independent exercises with unrelated goals; their strength lies in building on what students already know (or are familiar with). The complexity of the task depends on the complexity of the reasoning and the duration of the planning required. The simplest tasks are generous with the time given to the students to carry out the task and demand simple reasoning. The most complex tasks require complex reasoning and have a tight time constraint.[11] There are, however, other elements that make a task more or less complex, such as its modality.

A few years ago, I undertook a study of task complexity where I asked English L2 students to read, listen to and watch (without sound) a cartoon story and then retell it in English. The three stories had the same number of characters, contained a similar number of words or were of a similar duration and the time constraints were the same. The participants were the same age but some were from Hong Kong, some from Spain and others from Iran. Results differed based on the nationality of the participants. Hong Kong students found the text the easiest to recall and reproduce by far. Iranians found the text slightly easier than the audio and the video was the hardest. For the Spanish students the audio modality was the easiest and the video the hardest, although they also found the text challenging. The tasks were the same for the three groups but the context of each group had been very different, including how they had been taught to learn English. This impacted the complexity of the task. Hong Kong formal instruction is text-book based, Spanish is speech-based (the teacher talks to the students) and most of the Iranians were used to multimodal input (American TV and films) as well as text-based instruction. Participants' previous experiences modulated task difficulty.

A task does not need to be *real world* situational authentic to be pedagogical. What is important is that the interaction should be authentic, that it mirrors how people talk to each other. For example, the level of formality used with a fellow student is not the same as that a student will use with a teacher, at least not in most Chinese contexts. Asking students to compare each other's personalities is not a *real-world* task, it is unlikely that they will encounter a situation in life where they have to do this. A role play where one student pretends to be a language student asking for information from a receptionist in a language school is a *real-world* task and one that our students might encounter in the future. Both tasks are pedagogical and interactional but only the second is also situational. The role-play is likely to be more motivational, just by reason of having a clear goal. It is not hard to add goals to interactional tasks by imagining a context for them. For the first task, students could be told to compare their personalities to identify who would be more suited to baby-sit and who to dog-sit, for example.

[10] Ellis [12].

[11] Robinson [13].

There are other classifications of tasks based on whether they are input- or output-based and focused or unfocused. TBLT is mostly associated with oral output,[12] such as the role-play I described above. However, other skills can also be practiced. Tasks can be input-based and not require production. Of course, in this case, the task has to be designed so that students have to do something to indicate that the input has been understood and processed. An input-based task will ask the students to move or manipulate an object based on the input. Ellis[13] suggests giving written instructions to build an airplane model. This might not be feasible in every context but instead you could ask students to follow instructions to build an origami swan. I like to get students to draw, as some are good artists and very creative. To check their reading comprehension, I often ask them to draw scenes from books we are reading in class or from dictations.

Some advocates of TBLT, such as Michael Long[14] do not believe that tasks should ask students to process a specific linguistic element (semantic or syntactic). But I believe they can and need to be focused in order to integrate them into our institutional curricula. A focused task is one designed to cover one item of the syllabus, such as learning to write a CV. If it is input-based students could be asked to select the best candidate for a specific job, by sifting through 20 CVs. If it is output based students could be asked to write their own CV, or the ideal CV for the job of the previous input-based task. An unfocused task could ask students to describe the different jobs their institution could be advertising.

Although tasks can be input based and done individually, if language is a social tool then it follows that the most effective tasks are likely to be those with a social interactive element. I am not saying that individual tasks are not effective, but group and pair work is likely to be more engaging for students, triggering emotional responses that will help the learning process. By focusing on meaning TBLT allows students to gradually develop other competencies once meaning has been negotiated. TBLT puts the student at the center of the learning with the teacher acting as a facilitator, rather than leading it.

Tasks are the closest we might get to recreating an authentic context in the classroom. Popular tasks are based on role-play, where students have to pretend they are going to the doctor, for an interview, or to a restaurant. These roles will be based on students' existing knowledge, developed from their experience of interacting within their L1 communities. The caveat is that behaviors in these contexts might be culture-dependent. Waving to attract the waiter's attention in Hong Kong is quite normal, but might be considered rude elsewhere. How can a language student pick up on that without having access to the real context? Most people will eventually work it out when they see the waiter ignoring them but it might be faster if they were just told it was rude.

As we learn, we develop mental models of the new concepts. These mental models are grounded on physical experiences which are then used to explain abstract

[12] Samuda [14].

[13] Ellis [9]. See above.

[14] Long [15].

concepts. The models built under the L1 experience sometimes interfere with those needed to operate in the L2 and no amount of role play will allow students to redesign the model if the real experience is not possible. This is where the teacher needs to step in.

Studies on the implementation of TBLT have not always reported benefits to students. One of the most documented experiences is that of Flanders, in Belgium, where a TBLT project was implemented by the government in the 1990s to teach Dutch in their schools. This was a top-down initiative which was successful for the first decade of its implementation (1995–2005), with an initial improvement in language performance levels, as measured by standardized reading comprehension tests. Teachers were trained and supported in the shift to this more communicative approach and text-books were developed by experts, together with teachers' guides, to support teachers. Students reacted well to the new approach but teachers, despite all the support, were found to adapt the new tasks to the old traditional methods, teaching vocabulary explicitly before the task, replacing group activities with whole-class ones or focusing on the grammar. Over the last two decades students' language performance has begun to decline. Van der Branden and Van Gorp,[15] who have been documenting the situation in Belgium, noted that with time, teachers' enthusiasm and interest in TBLT has also declined. Their conclusions point to a complex web of reasons from teachers feeling a loss of control to institutional issues, though they also suggest that perhaps the initial benefits were not so much related to the approach itself as to an increased interest in language learning overall.

TBLT is not easy to implement if teachers are constrained by institutional or national structures and processes, such as specific syllabi and written exams, that do not integrate well with the flexible TBLT approach. As teachers, we tend to teach how we were taught, unless we are constantly developing our skills; most institutions are still structuring classes the same way they did a century ago, with fixed times for fixed subjects; and language evaluations today, although they might have updated content, are not that dissimilar to those I grew up with.

TBLT is associated with Western liberal ideas, such as equality, free thinking and speech, democratic values and with teachers who are also mentors seeking to develop the full potential of their students. Although Hong Kong is a mixed East–West context, culturally most of its population, the parents and grandparents of today's students, share more with other Eastern cultures than with Western ones.

In Hong Kong, the curriculum has incorporated TBLT and yet this is not always obvious from lesson plans. The Curriculum Development Council provides teachers with a framework that strongly supports TBLT, albeit accommodating traditional form-based approaches. Pre-tasks are to include explicit explanations of new concepts and controlled practice of items according to a pre-designed syllabus and

[15] A summary of Van der Branden and Van Gorp's findings can be found in Van den Branden and Van Gorp [16]. For more information on the Hong Kong context see: Ng [17]; Chan [18]; and Carless [19]. For more information on the mainland China context see (see other chapters in the same volume for other countries): Luo and Xing [20].

textbooks are designed with this in mind. Since the 2000 Education Reform, school-based assessments have become even more examination-oriented with writing skills and grammar as the focus, which negates the main principle of TBLT which is that of *meaning-making*. Teachers navigate this paradox by doing what is best for students and ensuring they are prepared to pass the exams.

In mainland China similar difficulties have also been reported. Large classes, poorly trained teachers and an exam-oriented culture make it difficult to successfully implement a TBLT approach, although the National English Curriculum Standards (NECS) also advocate a communicative teaching approach that develops learners' English skills and their interest in the language, putting the learner at the center of the process. Over the last two decades, textbooks have also developed a more communicative approach, with the focus both on meaning and form. In a study[16] on the implementation of TBLT in China, teachers report being encouraged to adapt materials to make their approaches more task-based and many confirmed their satisfaction with TBLT. This same group of teachers also highlighted issues relating to lack of training and resources: learners' resistance to participating in class and a grammar and translation-based examination system.

Considering the reality in Asian classrooms and my observations above about accessing L2 information (such as understanding a seemingly rude waiter) it becomes quite obvious that a certain amount of explicit teaching is necessary. The challenge then is to design tasks that allow the teacher to step in and fill the gaps left by task-based interaction in the classroom.

4.3 Task Preparation

Tasks are divided into pre-task, task (usually involving free production) and post-task steps. The pre-task is an introduction to the topic and can also include an example of a potential result. The post-task focuses on reporting the results and feedback, both about the task and, if the task sought to develop a particular concept (semantic, pragmatic or otherwise), this will also be reviewed. It is not always feasible to design free production tasks for students to be creative and communicative and to learn the syllabus. Thus, in recent years the PPP method (Presentation, Practice, Production—the order of the three Ps is flexible) has made a come-back as it can be integrated within TBLT and adapted to be successful.[17]

One of the most popular methods of presenting new information and sequencing activities is the three steps of the communicative approach (PPP)[18]: *Present* the concept with an introductory activity; *Practice* it by allowing students to discover more about the concept with your help; ask students to *Produce* it by themselves. This method seeks to gradually increase students' control over the language until

[16] Chan [18]. See above.

[17] Anderson [21].

[18] Byrne [22].

they can use it freely, even if with some errors. It is quite possible to integrate a PPP sequence within TBLT.

During the *Presentation* phase the teacher presents new content, previously selected to contain examples of the input to be taught or formal explanations of its use. The aim is for the students to understand the new input, structure, meaning, when and how to use it (the teacher might choose to focus on one aspect at a time). The teacher's role is that of an informant.

During the *Practice* phase students carry out controlled and semi-controlled exercises, usually to fill in information gaps with the new input or repetition tasks. This is the learning stage, where drills are designed to help memorize the new input. The teacher manages the exercises and students' participation.

The *Production* phase encourages students to produce the language themselves by setting up contexts which will demand use of the new content, such as role plays, discussions or problem-solving tasks. Students should show control of the new input and their ability to freely express themselves (errors and all) as spontaneously as possible, considering the formality of the context. The teacher guides the production of the language.

PPP has been heavily criticized for being an inflexible teacher-centered approach that does not consider students' needs, including those that might arise during the lesson.[19] Its critics define it as form-focused and based on rote-learning as a way to automatize the language, resulting in knowledge that does not always translate into communicative competence.[20] Cognitivists argue that pushing for the acquisition of an item that does not follow the natural order of acquisition might even have a negative impact on the process. However, the reality is that most teachers are bound by systems that guide or dictate what is to be learnt and when. Another criticism is the explicit presentation of form, rejected by those who believe that discovering the rules should be an inductive process.[21] Tell that to the Hong Kong tourist who is still waiting to be served by their English waiter! Sometimes explicit instruction is necessary and even more effective than implicit, deductive approaches.[22] The next section discusses this.

I often plan my classes around PPP, knowing that I can be derailed at any point by students' questions or needs. The order of the Ps can be flexible, allowing an experienced teacher to introduce an ad-hoc element in response to a real need. Very often students will come across language that is new to them or does not fit what has already been learnt, for example in songs, thus providing an ideal opportunity to develop the topic, which can then be done following a PPP method.

[19] Scrivener [23].

[20] Ellis [24].

[21] Ellis [25].

[22] Norris and Ortega [26].

4.4 Deductive Versus Inductive Teaching

The brains of children are amazing, each one of us was able to learn our mother tongue to native level. Most of us were speaking by the age of two without having had any lessons on grammar. Our brains are designed to structure information into patterns; even when information is missing we will make it up to fill in the gap. But children's brains are very different from those of adults, with millions of additional neurons and connections between them that die off by adulthood. It should not surprise us to find that the language learning processes are likely to be much slower in an adult. However, adults do have an advantage: we have already processed at least one language and might be, consciously or unconsciously, aware of its rules. Therefore, using those rules as the foundation to learn a new language will actually facilitate its acquisition.

The discussion about grammar has been swinging from one extreme to the other for decades. The question today is not so much whether to teach grammar as how to teach it. Cognitive linguistics proposes a holistic approach that combines all the elements that make meaning, not just syntax-related rules. The rules of the language refer not only to its form, the grammar, but also to the phonology, semantics and pragmatic meaning. This means integrating meaning, sounds and symbols to develop models to conceptualize new items.

How this information is presented, through inductive or deductive teaching, is another topic of heated discussion. Curiously, no one would question a teacher who tells their students that the *h* in *honest* and other Latin derived words is silent, so why all the fuss about teaching grammar explicitly? CL moves away from this discussion by accepting both an inductive, reason-based approach, that presents enough examples of the language for students to start to conceptualize by themselves and a deductive approach where the models are given explicitly. Both methods can be easily integrated within a PPP-TBLT approach. New forms can be explained in pre- or post-task while the free production task allows learners to observe the language and develop its rules. This is when teachers ought to be observing the interactions, noting the difficulties or misconceptions that can be addressed explicitly later.

4.4.1 Deductive Teaching

Explicit or deductive instruction is usually described as that where the rule is given first and then students practice it through non-creative exercises such as filling in the gaps or circling the right word. If the involvement of the teacher is limited to reading out the rule and confirming that students have filled in the gaps correctly then, at best, students might have stayed awake. This approach is not deductive nor does it lead to explicit knowledge. Students have not had the chance to analyze and conceptualize (basically to understand) the rule. They know how it works but not why it works.

During the 1980s, there was a paradigm shift, moving away from traditional form-based approaches (also known as *Structural or grammar based*) to functional approaches based on the communicative needs of learners. The *Communicative* approach swung the other way as far as grammar was concerned and many teachers stopped teaching it explicitly. Grammar was ignored in preference to learning how to communicate appropriately in real situations, following the sociolinguistic focus of the 1980s. At the beginning of the 2000s, it got to the point where teachers were just not teaching grammar at all. This resulted in very fluent speakers producing very incorrect speech (and the same was true for their writing). Since then, we have seen grammar making a come-back.

The deductive approach leads to the generation of explicit knowledge, that is knowledge that can be stored and articulated. We know we have it and are conscious of when we are using it. It is knowledge that is easy to share with others as it is stored in a structured manner. In a second language context this is the knowledge that allows us to extrapolate from known rules to produce new content. For example, if I know that the future can be expressed with the auxiliary verb *will* as in:

(5) I **will** call you tomorrow.

I should be able to work out that I can say:

(6) I **will** see you tomorrow.

The deductive approach, when well implemented, helps students to be aware of and understand the rules, which allows them to store and apply them to new content. It also allows students to generate forms that have been studied but forgotten.

Deductive approaches have been criticized for being teacher-led, using metalanguage students do not understand, and for providing rules that are not fully understood even by linguists. Detractors argue that knowing the rules conditions their users to apply them without understanding, which translates into not being able to use them in practice.[23] Defenders point out that it saves time, allowing teachers to get straight to the point, but most importantly, it answers (adult) students' need to structure information. Even if teacher-led, the presentation of grammar rules can be done in an interactive manner. Providing a rule can save students' much frustration, especially when the input students have access to is limited and their opportunities to compare and contrast are few.

Many teachers are put off by the belief that teaching grammar metalanguage is a necessary evil. Metalanguage refers to more or less technical linguistic terms used to talk about language: *verb*, *subject*, *nominalization* are all metalanguage terms. Some of these might be familiar to students but perhaps not their meaning. For example: most students have heard the term *direct object* but not all know what it is.

Whether or not to use metalanguage in class has been much discussed. I believe that a certain amount of metalanguage is required to refer to things by their name. If you do not use the term *direct object* you will end up saying *the person or thing that receives the action of the verb*. Studies with primary and secondary children

[23] Kumaravadivelu [27].

suggest that metalanguage does not need to be a constraint when the terms are well explained.[24] Students are able to pick up metalanguage as they do any other terms. If you find them useful, use them.

4.4.2 Inductive Teaching

Implicit knowledge, related to the inductive approach, is knowledge that we know we possess but we are not aware of when we deploy it. Higher proficiency and native speakers make use of this type of knowledge all the time. The inductive approach is associated with implicit knowledge as it seeks to create it before making the student aware of its existence. A teacher following this approach presents students with real samples of the language, better if produced by the students themselves, guiding the process to find patterns of use and establish the rules from their observations.

Implicit learning takes place without the learner being conscious of the process, it is effortless. Implicit approaches present input in communicative tasks, encouraging its free use. If students comprehend and engage with the input they will begin to process it and eventually learn it. Implicit instruction allows for implicit learning to take place, but it can also lead to explicit learning if the input is processed explicitly. If the learner begins to analyze the input, activating a series of effortful cognitive processes, then this turns into explicit learning. The input is carefully selected to ensure that it is comprehensible, to allow the learner to engage with it. Implicit instruction should always have a goal but it tends to be flexible in that learners might pick up additional information also being presented.

4.4.3 Mixing the Two

Both approaches can be used for more than just teaching grammar; they can be used to develop the mental models needed to conceptualize new items and they can both lead to creative and stimulating exercises. Each teacher has their own preference as to whether to teach implicitly or explicitly. In East Asia the preference tends to be for explicit instruction, mostly because that is how East Asian teachers were taught and we tend to do what we know. The effectiveness of both approaches has been documented, with a clear distinction depending on the age of the learners. Children learn better implicitly and adults benefit from explicit instruction.[25] One of the issues raised by Karen Lichtman[26] is whether this is an age-related difference or an instruction-related one. We tend to do what we know: Lichtman suggested that we learn better if taught in a manner we are familiar with. Her study confirmed

[24] Humphrey [28].

[25] Ellis [29].

[26] Lichtman [30].

that explicit instruction in the L2 was more successful than implicit instruction after adolescents had begun to be schooled with explicit strategies. The transition from implicit to explicit instruction took place in the sixth grade. Her conclusion was that age was not the determinant factor for the success of the type of instruction but rather the fact that students were already familiar with that type of instruction. The catch here is that, as she points out, her sixth graders were aged 8–12 and had been placed in that grade not because of their age but, presumably (she doesn't specify) because of their cognitive skills. These students were likely to be more cognitively mature and an explicit mode of instruction was found to be more effective, thus the school introduced that mode in this grade.

Most studies on this topic group participants as either children or adults, mixing adolescents with either group. Because the onset of puberty, one of the factors defining adolescence, varies, there is no standard age to define an adolescent (usually the age range is given as 10–18).[27] The adolescent brain is a fascinating and complex world in constant flux. Including individuals from this age group into a study involving cognitive functions is likely to lead to inconclusive results. However, a review of studies with adults does indicate that they perform better in explicit rather than implicit tasks.[28]

The rules governing the English language are complex and not all the rules are known. Linguists and psycholinguists like Steven Pinker might have a very good grasp of them, but the average language teacher is somewhat familiar with only some of the rules. Most students do not even remember those they have learnt.[29] The teaching of specific rules works well in the context of a linguistics class (grammar or phonetics) but it might not be very useful to build the mental models the L2 requires. In the L2 class, rules are best taught grounded in the physical world and integrated with other concepts after students have already acquired some competence in the language.[30] This does not need to wait until intermediate proficiencies. Once learners are able to produce a few sentences without relying on rote learning, achievable in the first session, they will notice differences in utterances that do not correspond to what they think they already know. Explicit teaching can start then.

4.5 Concluding Thoughts

Traditionally, second language teaching has focused on grammatical rules, rather than more holistic patterns. Speaking in 2015, Krashen[31] concluded that grammar is not bad but its use is limited and only when strict conditions apply. These are: knowing and remembering the rules, and having the time to apply them. He also

[27] American Psychological Association [31].

[28] Norris and Ortega [32]; and Spada and Tomita [33].

[29] Pinker [34].

[30] Krashen [35].

[31] Krashen [36].

stated that he would not teach grammar to younger children, just to high school students and in small doses. On the other hand, when I asked 53 language teachers whether grammar should be taught 55% responded yes and 38% said it depends (saying that some grammar should be taught, at least sometimes). There seems to be a disconnect between what the scholars tell us to do and what teachers want to do in class. These 53 teachers studied and worked in China, while most of the scholars cited come from an Anglo-Saxon tradition, and perhaps there is a cultural difference. These teachers are preparing students for grammar-based tests, whereas scholars are thinking about communicative competence. Perhaps we are just talking about two different things.

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Part II
A Cognitive Linguistics Teaching Approach

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Abstract

For cognitive linguists, language is a social skill which is part of the thinking process, it is *cognitive*, and it reflects our thinking: how we focus our attention on specific things, how we establish logical connections between ideas, and how we view the world through the prism of our identity and knowledge. Language is thus a dynamic system that develops with use to share meaning, making it *usage-based* and *meaning-driven.* It is subjective, as it reflects how each one of us views the world, the principle of *construal*; and those views are based on our physical experiences, the principle of *embodiment*. These are the key ideas of cognitive linguistics which will be introduced in this chapter. The next chapters in this section will expand on these principles and describe how they can be integrated in the L2 classroom.

Chapter 5
Introduction

For cognitive linguists, language is a social skill which is part of the thinking process, it is *cognitive*, and it reflects our thinking: how we focus our attention on specific things, how we establish logical connections between ideas, and how we view the world through the prism of our identity and knowledge. Language is thus a dynamic system that develops with use to share meaning, making it *usage-based* and *meaning-driven.* It is subjective, as it reflects how each one of us views the world, the principle of *construal*; and those views are based on our physical experiences, the principle of *embodiment*.[1] These are the key ideas of cognitive linguistics which will be introduced in this chapter. The next chapters in this section will expand on these principles and describe how they can be integrated in the L2 classroom.

5.1 Cognition

Language is a cognitive skill shaped by other cognitive processes such as attention, memory and the ability to compare and categorize new information. Under normal circumstances, most students are already speaking at least one language. How do they do it? How do you do it? We know that the processes involved in learning our mother tongues (the L1) and those employed when learning additional languages later on in life are not always the same. Children 3–5 years old might have been producing words for a few years but most of their sentences are short, 4–5 words, and they stumble with exceptions to rules (such as saying *falled* instead of *fell*). Adult learners, on the other hand, even after a few lessons, are able to produce irregular forms and to string together complex sentences such as: *I am Japanese but I live in London.* This is because they have developed cognitive abilities that have not yet matured in children. These cognitive abilities allow them to process new information in a way that children cannot.

[1] For a general introduction to cognitive linguistics, see: Dancygier [1].

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Initially, infants interact repeatedly with objects and scenarios, testing their affordances, until locomotion becomes effortless and subconscious. At around two years of age, they develop abstract mental models for those events and concepts, *schema*, and now can imagine things which are hidden and understand that an object or a word can stand for something else. This is when language emerges and with it the ability to refer to an entity by one of its parts or characteristics (*metonymy*). At about the age of seven, they can categorize knowledge. Learning is led by the environment around them and the socio-cultural needs it imposes, how others think and feel, and they become aware of membership demands. They are able to think logically in relation to concrete events but not yet about abstract ones. This ability comes with adolescence, at around the age of twelve. Adolescents are able to think logically about hypothetical scenarios and abstract events that include *metaphors*. By this age, humans become more focused, able to discriminate between transient (background) input and persistent input on which they can fix their attention. Identity drives thinking.[2]

New information picked up by the senses or the motor system is categorized by comparing it to existing information using cognitive processes, like inferences or analogies, which are externalized in the language as *metaphor* or *metonymy*, reflecting how we think. Cognition processes allow us to map concrete physical events we experience onto more abstract concepts to help us conceptualize and talk about them, such as *the slowness of time*, a metaphor. Cognition allows us to compare events, this is reflected in *polysemy,* where a second meaning is added to an existing word. Thus, *get* means 'to procure' but also 'to understand'. Polysemy is often the result of *metonymy*, when we refer to something by one of its more salient characteristics. For example, saying the *White House* to refer to the president of the USA.

We share cognitive processes with other humans but not always the results of those processes. Not all languages share metaphors or metonyms or even their underlying concepts.[3] In Chinese 汗青 *han qing*, literally 'sweat bamboo', now, means 'history'. The expression comes from a famous Chinese Song Dynasty poem. It refers to the process of roasting green bamboo to dry it in order to use it as a surface for writing on. No amount of guessing will help to understand the term!

Understanding physical events and how different societies view and refer to them can help the language learner establish patterns of meaning which traditional teaching methods might not capture. Often, these relationships are quite unique and engage language learners, helping them to remember but also to lower their affective barriers. English is full of idioms and phrasal verbs that make learning them quite a complex task. By introducing the concepts behind them students should be able to extrapolate this knowledge to identify new ones.

[2] Smith [2].

[3] Littlemore [3].

5.2 Embodiment

If our brains can process information it is only because our bodies interact physically with the world around us. As we grow up and become mobile we learn to stand up and what we see is in front of us, when we learn to walk we do so going forward, we start at one point and we walk towards a destination, following a path. When we play we throw things out of the cot, or we put objects inside boxes. All of these physical experiences define how we conceptualize the world, in terms of orientations, paths, containers (and many others). The information we receive is conditioned by the bodies we have. Conceptualization is reflected in the language we use daily as metaphors and metonyms: e.g. *moving forwards with a project*; *leaving our past behind*; *taking things out of context*. Our objectives tend to be *in front of us*, so that we can *keep an eye on them*, and we *move forward* towards them. Even more abstract notions, like a *promotion*, are described as being based on physical realities. Our language is based on physical experiences. The meaning derived from those experiences is known as *embodied meaning*.[4]

The notion of embodiment in language is obvious in the links between abstract and concrete concepts. Metaphors, the mapping of physical concepts onto abstract ones, allow us to share abstract thoughts in terms of physical ones that we believe the majority of people experiences like we do (we need to be aware that the majority does not mean everyone; not hearing or seeing, processing information more slowly or faster will affect the physical experience).[5] An excellent example of this is time. Time is an abstract concept that has been studied in many cultures and languages. We have given it a *body* that can be located in space, can move and can be modified physically: time stretches and is *cut short*; it *flies* and it *stands still*; it can be ahead of us or behind. These embodiments of time are not specific to English, they can be found in all languages, but the conceptualizations might vary if experiences of the world differ. In cultures where the past and traditions are important, the past is often conceptualized in front of the person, leading our actions. In most Western cultures, where innovation drives society, and traditions have been forgotten, the past is conceptualized as being behind us.[6]

To be able to conceptualize a new idea, one that might not exist in the learner's existing languages, it might be necessary to explicitly show how the information is to be categorized. By making the categorization parameters explicit—for example, the idea of containment underlying the preposition *in* **in** this sentence or in the expression *to be* ***in*** *danger*—learners are able to conceptualize new items, using that knowledge as scaffolding for further learning. A cognitive approach presents those relationships from a meaning and usage-based perspective, incorporating new items into the existing physical and social experiences of learners, sometimes building on them and sometimes recategorizing them to reflect the reality of a different culture. The concepts of orientation, paths or containers are very much physical, they can

[4] Tyler [4].

[5] Lakoff and Johnson [5].

[6] Casasanto and Boroditsky [6].

be easily explained through diagrams. In the second language classroom this is invaluable, because new L2 content can be physically grounded also through actions, gestures or images.

5.3 Usage-Based

Embodiment is also a social concept. How can you interact with your environment and others without making that interaction social? Despite this, not all sociocultural theorists want to be associated with embodied cognitivists. As mentioned in the Introduction, when we *hear* someone speak, their accent, intonation, expressions, grammar, and gestures evoke certain attitudes in us, *feelings*, which are grounded on past experiences as well as social stereotypes. For British people—of a certain generation at least—Received Pronunciation (RP) used to mean upper class, public school, money. Members of the aristocracy all spoke *RP*. A Cockney accent would conjure images of a lower social class, working people, London's East End. Different varieties of English also have this effect on interlocutors, taking us back to the undeniable link between language and the social context.

Language is usage-based, it allows thought and action and develops with these and for these. Using language is a dynamic process that reacts to its environment, the context, the participants and the purpose of the event. These factors need to be considered when discussing, investigating or teaching language. New events (at the time of writing), like *COVID* or the *Metaverse*, require new language to refer to them. Changes might be most obvious in the introduction of new vocabulary but, with time, we also see the development of new structures or changes in them.

For language to emerge there needs to be a communicative purpose—children deprived of social contact do not speak. On the other hand, deaf children will develop their own sign language to communicate if not given other means. For the communicative act to be successful words are not enough, interlocutors need a context to refer to. The context includes the event leading to the communicative act and the socio-cultural knowledge of the interlocutors, their *encyclopedic knowledge* of the world as well as the awareness of one another's knowledge. Each language is a complex dynamic system that integrates all that pragmatic knowledge (knowledge about the context) with syntax, semantics and phonetics to make meaning. Meaning can be found in all the elements: in prosody, in grammatical constructions, as well as in words. It is seldom arbitrary, instead it is the result of conscious decisions, it is *motivated*.

It is difficult to separate cognition, embodiment and what is usage-based; one leads inevitably to the other. Language reflects our perception and interpretation of situations, which in turn is determined by our physical perceptions. For example, if we are observing a group of trees from afar we will indicate that distance in our speech by using:

(7) Those trees are big.

As we approach, we notice they are oak trees and now that we are next to them, we compare our size to theirs and then we are more likely to say:

(8) These oaks are massive.

Conceptualization is also present as the viewpoint we take when we talk about events and grammatical structures reflect it. With experience, our schemas or conceptualizations become more complex. Eventually, the complexity is simplified by generalizing stable characteristics in each schema and creating more abstract *frames* as guidelines. Each one of us creates our own frames based on our particular experiences and how we interpret them. When we share ideas with others we pick the relevant frames forming a specific viewpoint. We can modify that viewpoint depending on our communicative intent, what and how we want to communicate. *Construal* is the ability to view an event from different perspectives conceptualizing the same situation in alternative ways.

The language we use to communicate is thus subjective and also subject to change. Different viewpoints are externalized as specific grammatical constructions. Imagine I am looking out of the window and I see a bird, I follow it as it catches a bug and eats it. My attention was originally caught by the bird and in my version of events the bird is the protagonist, so I say:

(9) The bird is eating the bug.

I know you share with me the frame about how insects crawl up tree-trunks and how birds feed on them, so there is no need to specify all that. I could also have the bug as the protagonist, and say:

(10) The ladybird was eaten by a bird.

Even if the meanings are similar, the grammatical constructions are not and neither are the perspectives I have taken. I have further modified (10) by using the indefinite article *a*, instead of *the*. In (10) I am zooming in and classifying the bug as a ladybird. I have also chosen the progressive form *is eating* in (9) which focuses on the action taking place by removing the time boundaries, start and finish, imposed by *was eaten* in (10). All of these are choices made consciously, albeit automatically, to communicate the event as I want you to see it. These are all elements of construal.

Construal is defined by a number of choices: By changing (9) to a passive structure I have changed the focus of *attention*. In (9) I have zoomed in on the action that is taking place now, describing a snap-shot of it, zooming in or out is known as *constitution.* Example (10) is a finished action at a time removed from where I am now, that is *perspective.* In (10) I specified the bug was a ladybird, that is *categorization.* Another element of construal is the *force* behind the action, whether this is external or internal and its strength.

All of the elements I manipulated in (9) and (10) are the result of my physical experiences in and with the world. I have created a library of knowledge which is based on the knowledge of communities of speakers I have interacted with, including small communities of a few friends, work-related groups and larger ones with which

I share a culture or a language. Thanks to this knowledge I am now able to extrapolate from the physical experience of closeness to provide abstract distance between my utterance and its contents, so I use a past tense. I know that there are many types of insects but I am also aware that you, my audience, are partial to ladybirds (I have seen you smile when you've spotted one) and I want to engage your attention further, so I tell you that the bug was a ladybird. As I say it, I also stress *EATEN* and I show my disgust through my facial expression while I bring my arm up and down. All of these are the factors that make meaning, not just words and grammatical rules.

Language usage stabilizes new items and consolidates their form-meaning relationship, grammaticalizing them. New concepts enter the language as content words and then, over time, they become grammaticalized.[7] Twenty years ago, *google* did not mean much to most people; today, you will find it used as a verb even among non-English speakers. The name of the company has become grammaticalized as an action! This happens not only to words but also to structures. This is a parallel process taking place both in the language system and in the minds of speakers. As speakers, we are aware of specific structures, like *who does what to whom*, which guide us in the processing of new items. *To google* has become a transitive verb only in the last two decades, entering the language system and speaker's existing language knowledge through repeated experiences. The speed of its grammaticalization can be explained by the universality and frequency of the action and the pre-existence of the structure *to XXX something*.[8]

Understanding language means transforming input into abstract representations, recognizing those as words, interpreting them and being able to integrate utterances within a wider discourse.[9] For second language learners, focusing on word recognition might work to pass an exam but it will cause serious problems in a communicative act. When we communicate with others we expect to share cognitive processes with them, the ability to identify and categorize input, and also a certain encyclopedic knowledge of the world. Shared encyclopedic knowledge is the result of interacting with the world through similar bodies, we all learn to stand up, to walk, to grab things, and so on. Thus, even if we do not share the same language we are able to communicate successfully. Societies where speakers of different languages have come together are proof that eventually those speakers will create a language they can all understand, like the English-based Jamaican or the French-based Haitian creoles. Languages are dynamic systems developed by their users to cover their needs.

[7] Littlemore [3]. See above.

[8] Ellis [7].

[9] Cutler and Clifton [8].

5.4 Cognitive Linguistics in the Second Language Classroom

It is misleading to refer to just one embodied cognitive theory as there are a number of them. What is common to all theories is the belief that one's body, mind and environment interact to allow entities to change their behavior and learn. Cognitive linguistic approaches to teaching a second language seek to integrate all the factors that make meaning; they build on students' existing knowledge and concepts to present the second language in a way that will be intuitive. This intuition is possible because we all share similar cognitive processes and we experience the world through similar sensory-motor systems. As the focus of this approach is to make meaning, it is also a sociocultural one where language is a seen as a dynamic, practical tool that changes with use.

According to CL, language is a social tool, intrinsically linked to the context in which it is used and through which it appears. Physical interaction with the context and the objects within it leads to the development of new expressions and utterances. These interactions refine the mental models or spaces we have acquired via experiences which in turn inform the language that we use. As children, we develop mental spaces from our experience of the world. As adults, we continue that development by integrating new information with old and redefining existing mental spaces.

Applying the principles of cognitive linguistics to second language teaching is not as easy as it might seem initially. Not because they are at odds with how teachers would like to teach or how learners learn but because teaching languages in the classroom is subject to a number of constraints, from the national syllabi to the time available, which make implementing these principles difficult. Conclusions from research on the effectiveness of CL teaching approaches are overall positive, showing deeper, longer-lasting learning when the language is taught as meaning-making and embodied.[10] However, most of this research has been under controlled conditions so there are still a number of question marks as to the effectiveness of CL in the second language classroom.

I was teaching from a cognitive linguistics approach even before I learnt about CL. From the beginning, my view of language was that it was to be taught with all its elements (e.g. gestures, prosody) as a means to communicate meaning in a way that would be engaging, motivational and useful in real life. My students learnt the alphabet through words like *toilet* and *station*; the progressive by drawing images; vocabulary by creating word-clouds (of related items, sometimes drawn); modality by acting out scenes with just one word (changing its prosody).

Although CL integrates all of the language elements that together make meaning, in the classroom it might be necessary to separate them to avoid overwhelming students. Another reason for separating them is that most extra-institutional evaluation systems are still exam-based, focusing on discrete elements that learners need to have mastered.

[10] For examples of these studies and a more detailed account of how to apply cognitive linguistics to teaching and learning, see: Littlemore [3] and Tyler [4] both mentioned above.

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Abstract

Traditional Western philosophy separates mind and body. The mind, housed in the brain, is serviced by the body, which follows its orders. Many Eastern philosophies, on the other hand, are based on the idea that mind and body are one system. The mind extends beyond the brain to the rest of the body. Embodied cognition shares that premise, although the extent of the cognition-body link is still a controversial issue. The chapter discusses how the body plays a role in learning and how educators can incorporate embodied practices into their teaching. I focus on the use of hand gestures as a teaching resource. Despite their clear benefits to thinking and communicating, gestures are seldom taught in language classrooms.

Chapter 6
Embodied Learning (and Teaching)

6.1 Introduction

Traditional Western philosophy separates mind and body. The mind, housed in the brain, is serviced by the body, which follows its orders. Many Eastern philosophies, on the other hand, are based on the idea that mind and body are one system. The mind extends beyond the brain to the rest of the body. Embodied cognition shares that premise, although the extent of the cognition-body link is still a controversial issue.[1] Cognitive linguistics is based on this idea of embodiment and holds that language integrates both body and mind. The language we speak is based on our interaction with the world around us and our physical experiences.

Each organism maximizes the use of its perceptual systems to gather key information from its environment. How the organism perceives the world is dependent on the body of the organism and its sensory-motor systems, the resources it has access to. If it can, when an organism needs more information it enhances perception via movement or the recruitment of additional senses. The organism's reaction to events changes its perception and so the body becomes a contributor of cognition.[2]

As humans, our interactions with the world come given by the shape of our bodies and the various organs that permit us to see, hear and so on. These characteristics of humans, our *affordances*, allow us to see what is directly in front of our eyes, for example, but not at ninety degrees to them, which a fly can do (thanks to the structure of if its eyes). Similarly, all objects in the world have their own affordances, which dictate how we sense and interact with them.[3] We can sense the heat from a lightbulb but not from a pencil.

[1] For a full discussion on the various definitions of *embodiment* see: Bergen [1].

[2] Gibbs [2].

[3] Zlatev [3].

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We have a sense of our own body and at the same time our body allows us to sense the world around us and interpret it through how we feel towards it.[4] We gather information by seeing, hearing, tasting and touching but also through other *internal* senses that permit us to feel pain, thirst and hunger, to be aware of the space occupied by our bodies and movement (proprioception), to balance (equilibrioception), and also to feel temperature and even the passage of time.[5] Our bodies dictate the experiences we have and how we feel towards them and, as we saw earlier, the interpretation of those feelings leads to emotions which in turn play a key role in attention and decision making, among other cognitive processes.[6] Our own bodies, how we move and feel, give us nuanced perspectives of the world (e.g., we are always facing the things we see; we tend to move in a forward direction so we associate that movement with progress; we can feel gravity when we trip and fall; etc.) which we can also map onto abstract ideas (e.g., *facing problems*, *moving on with our life*, or *falling in love*). How we ground ourselves, the referents we choose to establish the *here* and *now* also affect our perceptions and interactions, e.g., whether it is the *end of the week* or *the beginning of the weekend*; if we have eaten or not (and are grumpy or looking forward to a nice meal); whether we share our location with others (and refer to *here* or *there*). Even more emotionally-dependent groundings, like our *relationships with others* (if we see them as equal or not, for example) will affect our cognitive processes and social interactions. We are embodied beings.

The integration of the sensory-motor systems is very complex, allowing for overlaps in perception. When we *imagine* a kicking action, we activate many of the same neurons in the motor system as we do when we actually kick a ball. If we have learnt to associate the action of kicking with its concept, when we hear the word *kick* our neurons will also fire. Furthermore, when we *see* someone kicking a ball our neurons will fire too as if re-enacting the action. These neurons, *mirror neurons*, were first accidentally observed in macaque monkeys in the lab. Macaques' motor neurons became active when doing the action and when observing the same actions being done by a researcher.[7] Subsequent studies have found mirror neurons in humans too, activating auditory as well as motor neuronal networks upon seeing others perform hand and mouth actions.[8] Linked to this are the observations that deaf people imitate the accent of the speaking communities they interact with by mirroring the shape of speakers' mouths,[9] or that we learn by observing others perform actions. Mimicking, repeating others' actions but without copying them exactly (imitating), can be seen in humans from infancy and is a skills and knowledge acquisition strategy. Not everything is copied, we are able to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information to distil the key components of what we observe and create a new version of things.[10]

[4] Fuchs [4].

[5] Maiese [5].

[6] Maiese [5].

[7] Rizzolatti and Fabbri-Destro [6].

[8] Gazzola et al. [7].

[9] Bedny [8].

[10] Smith [9].

When you next observe an interaction between two people pay attention to their bodies. If the two people are in sync, their bodies will start to mirror one another, crossing and uncrossing legs or arms or changing their overall body posture. If they are discussing a topic it is likely that they will mimic each other's hand gestures, producing new versions of previous ones and building on them. When we observe others gesture (with any part of their body, including the mouth when articulating), our own motor neuronal systems become active. This allows us to interpret those gestures as if they were our own and to anticipate our interlocutor's next action, or sound. We are able to make those predictions because our interpretations are based on shared knowledge, picked up from previous experiences within a community of speakers.

Much of our mimicking is unconscious, it is learnt by our bodies without us being aware of it and is *reused* when we interact with others. Even the mirroring of an interlocutor is usually unconscious, it is a survival strategy to blend in and to be accepted by others. But we can also mimic, even imitate, when we are consciously trying to learn something. This is very obvious in the classroom when students repeat what the teacher has said exactly, copying prosody and gestures.

Aside from facial expressions, gestures, movements of the body with a communicative intent, can be noticed in infants as young as nine months old. Initially, these are just pointing gestures. By the age of two children are producing iconic gestures with semantic meaning that illustrate concepts or re-enact actions, like pretending to drink from a cup. At around three years, children begin to produce the same number of gestures as adults and these are integrated with their speech.[11] This suggests a strong speech-gesture relationship.

Most gesture scholars defend a thought-gesture-speech-link, the thought developing as the gesture and the speech are generated. The gesture generates a mental model or schema—rather than just reflecting it—which is grounded in the embodiment of physical properties (e.g., movement or aspect), and it is these that influence the thought.[12] The mental models are externalized by the gesture by simulating some of the salient physical features of the real object or event,[13] a process akin to the creation of metonyms. Hand movements have been classified depending on their relationship with speech and function. Gesture meaning in relation to speech allows further categorization based on the nature of this relationship; McNeill[14] places gestures along a continuum by their resemblance to the content of speech. Gestures can illustrate the speech iconically or metaphorically and they can also point to existing or abstract objects or ideas (deictic gestures). Non-representational gestures, or beats, mark salience or prosody with quick up and down movements.[15] From a functional categorization point of view, when the gesture illustrates semantic content it can refer to entities or events, re-enact them, draw, shape or replicate

[11] McNeill [10].

[12] For a deeper discussion on this see McNeill [10].

[13] Ping and Goldin-Meadow [11].

[14] McNeill [10].

[15] McNeill [10].

them.[16] Gestures can also have pragmatic functions: metadiscursive, interactive or cognitive. Metadiscursive gestures help manage the flow of the discourse, making parts of it salient, like beats, indicating clarifications or disfluencies. Interactive gestures engage interlocutors by pointing at them, managing the turn or ensuring understanding. Cognitive gestures link parts of the utterance by indicating inferences, causality and consequence or they provide additional modal information about the speaker's stance on the utterance.[17] These gestures include recurrent gestures of a metaphorical nature which can be observed in different speakers and contexts.

Gestures perform a communicative function, aiding the interlocutor with the comprehension of ideas and the overall structure of the discourse. In adult native speakers, gestures are co-expressive, synchronous with speech and not always redundant to it. For example, if I say:

(11) I went for a walk in the park.

while at the same time drawing a small circle in the air with a forefinger, I am providing information not encoded in the speech indicating that it was a short circular walk. I can speed up my gesture, suggesting it was a quick walk or end the gesture by pointing towards the park, bringing attention to it. We can conceive (comprehension) and portray (production) situations in a number of ways depending on how we adjust various factors that can also be communicated by gestures: the level of detail (mostly specified by the lexical choice), the focus (background or foreground), the perspective the speaker takes and the relationship between the trajector/landmark or agent/object.[18] We will discuss these factors in the next chapter.

In a face-to-face communicative event, interlocutors focus on verbal and non-verbal cues to make meaning. The holistic experience is much more than the concept of *language* as a codified system of symbols following a set of rules, and considers not only what is being said, but how the body is saying it (including hand gestures) and the context in which it is used. If noticed by the interlocutor, gestures performed by the hands are thought to play a significant role in input uptake, although they can also result in input overloads[19] (the benefits of gestures in instruction are linked to a number of variables not yet well understood, including personality, age and cognitive abilities).

Gesturing also has a cognitive function, it helps speakers in tasks of comprehension, memorization and learning. The process of observing or producing iconic gestures (representing the contents uttered or read) creates a mental representation with perceptual and motor features although, in the case of production, it also makes it personal. Engelkamp and Cohen[20] proposed that these motor actions were beneficial to learners as they were engaging both procedural and declarative memory, creating a multitude of memory traces that strengthen neuronal networks relating to the concept,

[16] Müller [12].

[17] Lopez-Ozieblo [13].

[18] Cienki [14].

[19] Castro-Alonso et al. [15].

[20] Engelkamp and Cohen [16].

leading to deeper learning in both the L1 and the L2. This deeper learning takes longer to consolidate but it is longer-lasting. In L1 adults, gestures have been found to be beneficial in recall of vocabulary, sentences, overall narrations, and scientific texts.[21] The benefit of gestures in recall has also been confirmed with three-year old children, who remember the actions and the actors better when gestures are present.[22] Five to seven-year-olds were found to be better at problem solving when presented with explanations enriched with iconic gestures than those presented with just verbal input. And better and longer retention of mathematical concepts was observed in nine to ten-year olds when they were asked to gesture when explaining mathematic concepts.[23] Ilaria Cutica, Francesco Ianì and Monica Bucciarelli[24] suggest four interlinked explanations as to why gestures help process information: (1) Gestures help to ground the thought in an action; (2) gestures bring additional information into the mental representation that is being created; (3) gestures help to lighten the load on working memory and (4) gestures create a spatial mental representation in working memory thus helping spatial thinking.

Much research is currently underway to understand how L1 and L2 speakers gesture. There are many variables, ranging from cultural to language typology factors as well as idiosyncratic variations related to individual cognitive differences, that affect gestures. Confucian cultures are thought to somewhat restrain hand movements, at least when compared to Romance-based cultures. Speakers of satellite-framed languages such as English are more likely to use one gesture to show the path and manner together while a speaker of a verb-framed language such as Spanish might produce two gestures – remember that Chinese sits somewhere between these two extremes. Speakers also gesture to mark prosody and to stress strong syllables, so the gesture patterns will vary whether the language is a stress-timed one, like English, or syllable-timed, like Chinese, where every syllable takes a similar amount of time (although duration is affected by prosody). When encountering speech difficulties, most speakers pause both speech and gesture, presumably while they think what they want to say, and how to say it.

Thus, communicative gestures are meaningful movements of the arms and the hands used together with speech in the communicative act. Gestures externalize the thought together with speech and can be both a conceptualizing and a communicative tool.

[21] Two meta-studies on the benefits of gestures are: [17] and [18].

[22] Aussems and Kita [19].

[23] The Goldin-Meadow lab has done extensive work on children and gestures. See: https://voices.uchicago.edu/goldinmeadowlab/.

[24] Cutica et al. [20].

6.1.1 Non-Communicative Gestures

There are, of course, other non-communicative gestures which allow us to interact with the objects around us, for example grasping a cup or holding a pen. These actions, if you can imagine them, differ in the force used and the shape of the hand, based on the shape and function of the object, its particular affordances. If we focus on the element of force we can then map the concrete physical feelings to abstract ideas, like ***holding*** *a thought* or ***grasping*** *an idea*. This is the principle of metaphorical embodied thinking, which is developed further in the next chapter. When teaching these two ideas, interacting with the actual objects, a cup and a pencil, might facilitate the conceptualization of the difference between *holding* and *grasping*, as well as abstract metaphors related to these actions.

Using objects in teaching was one of the core ideas of Maria Montessori's pedagogy. Her intuitive understanding of how we learn via object-interaction has subsequently been proven by a number of studies that link object manipulation to learning effectiveness.[25] However, objects need to be carefully selected to ensure they do not distract the student by allowing affordances other than the intended ones. Using M&Ms to teach colors might result in indigestion rather than knowledge! The qualities of objects, their affordances, dictate how we interact with them, and thereby the cognitive processes that they might trigger. When the mapping between the affordances of the object and the concept being taught is transparent enough these objects can be very valuable teaching tools. For example, in developing learning comprehension, if students can enact the content of the text with toy figures, the closer the toys resemble the characters and objects in the text, the better the comprehension.[26] Although, of course, objects are not always necessary to understand how physical actions and perceptions affect cognition.

6.2 Teaching Embodied Beings

Language learning of both first and second languages benefits from an embodied cognitive teaching approach where information is processed as a result of the interaction between mind, body and environment (the environment integrates social interaction). When teaching a second language in a formal context (where the environment is constrained), the aim should be to activate as many sensory-motor systems as possible to create complex mental models with detailed information about the affordances of entities and events. Information processed through each system will develop or strengthen a different memory trace, and the more of these there are, the deeper the processing and the better the learning.[27]

[25] Carbonneau et al. [21].

[26] A description of this and other studies, as well as a more detailed account of the affordances of objects can be found in [22].

[27] Matheson and Barsalou [23].

Within the classroom context, learners are not able to experience the language as a real-life social tool integrated and dependent on the environment. This leads to the formation of concepts which are not contextualized and which therefore miss much of the motor and perceptual information that allows for the representations—schemas—of those concepts to be formed. The result is that new concepts in the target language are stored either incorrectly or through the mother tongue, interfering with the L2 learning.

The challenge is to create teaching content and contexts that recreate, in as much as possible, the factors that make L1 learning so successful. One of those factors is social learning, language being a tool for social interaction, in itself integrated within embodied learning. Ping Li and Hyeon Jeong describe social interaction in language learning as related not only to other people but also to objects and the overall environment because, "learning through real-life or simulated real-life environments where learners can interact with objects and people, perform actions, receive, use, and integrate perceptual, visuospatial, and other sensorimotor information, […] enables learning and communication to become embodied."[28] In a classroom environment, it might be possible to add some elements to allow learners to experience real-life environments, such as taking the classroom outdoors or virtual reality. Realistically, most teachers do not have access to either. Instead, their alternatives are to enrich teaching with objects that can be brought into the classroom and to use other multimodal resources such as images, videos or audios.

The benefits of visual and audio input in adult L2 learning (and a combination of both) have been noted by Mayer and Moreno,[29] although cognitive overload can also result from too many input modalities. Multimodal content is known to benefit L2 learners by allowing encoding of new information in more than one modality-specific system, which strengthens the memory trace. Although a number of studies report enhanced students' performances when the modality of input matches their learning preference and cognitive abilities, others point out that it is still not clear how these various elements relate to multimedia learning.[30] Learning preferences (e.g., visual over auditory) need not be a limitation on what can be processed from a specific modality[31] as preference for one learning style or another only means that the input is recoded into the preferred modality. A visualizer will just transfer the verbal content into imagery, and a verbalizer will transfer the images into words for further processing.

Gestures are another multimodal resource that have also been found to benefit L2 learning, both when observing and enacting them, just as in L1 speakers. In addition, gestures in language learners have been shown to help recall speech learned, manage the discourse by referring to past elements and introducing new ones, help with disfluencies such as repairs, manage the turn and involve the interlocutor, stress

[28] Li and Jeong [24].

[29] Mayer and Moreno [25].

[30] Zhang and Zou [26].

[31] Miller [27].

some elements of speech and downplay others. These uses can also be observed in L1 speakers but might be more pronounced in lower proficiency language learners.[32]

6.2.1 Teachers' Gestures

If you have the chance to observe a teacher at work you will have noticed, in most cases, that they are very expressive with their hands. Aside from using their hands to point at things or students, they often illustrate the concepts being taught. Sometimes gestures are used to mimic actions: mopping the floor, cutting vegetables, hanging the laundry; other times they trace or draw objects: a triangle, a rectangle; or they pretend to be an object: a piece of paper and a pen. Although in gesture studies mimicry is slightly different from gesturing, here we will talk about all these gestures as iconic, as they illustrate concrete actions or objects. These gestures are essential for teachers when learners' vocabulary is limited but the same concepts being taught are shared between the L1 and the L2. However, speakers of different languages conceptualize differently and so also gesture differently.[33] Often, new L2 concepts might be novel to learners and pose a challenge for teachers to provide explanations linked to students' past experiences. Representational iconic gestures, illustrating the concept, can enhance these explanations and facilitate an embodied experience for learners.

Integrating gestures in the classroom allows teachers to reach students of diverse learning types (visual, kinesthetic), often left behind by more traditional teaching methods. A number of studies have shown that teaching through gestures is beneficial to the long-term learning of both vocabulary and concepts.[34] Using gestures in L2 teaching, as part of the visual modality, is recommended by many pedagogues from different disciplines, including cognitive linguistics,[35] neurology,[36] and psychology.[37] Moreover, they can be resources to manage the classroom,[38] engage students by creating immediacy with them[39] and minimize potential face-threats, a potentially embarrassing situation to students if disagreeing or correcting them.[40] Teacher-student gestures also create a shared communicative space with a cohesive narrative that facilitates interaction.[41] Students contribute to this communicative

[32] For more on this topic see: Lopez-Ozieblo [28].
[33] Gullberg [29] and also Stam [30].
[34] Two examples are: Macedonia [31] and Goldin-Meadow et al. [32].
[35] Holme [33]; Littlemore [34] and Tyler [35]. See notes in previous chapter.
[36] Macedonia [36].
[37] Goldin-Meadow et al. [37].
[38] Belhiah [38].
[39] Mehrabian [39].
[40] Lopez-Ozieblo [40].
[41] Smotrova [41].

space by imitating teachers' gestures, also creating their own to aid their thinking processes and facilitate the interpretation of their speech.

In a second language classroom, students' speech can often be broken and not very coherent and so gestures, if attended to, can be a useful resource for teachers and learners. Most gesture related studies report that the use of gestures is beneficial to learners, although it seems that not all individuals benefit equally, so it is surprising to note that pedagogical methods seldom make use of gestures.

Pedagogical gestures

Teaching is a multimodal activity and most teachers use gestures as a matter of course without reflecting on their power in the communicative act. Hassan Belhiah[42] identifies two main functions of content-teaching gestures: to reinforce the meaning of verbal utterances and to disambiguate new lexical items. Gale Stam and Marion Tellier[43] describe these gestures as "gestures to inform about the language", providing lexical, grammatical, phonological or phonetic information about content. As cognition is embodied, gestures make the input easier to conceptualize facilitating the learning of new concepts that can be associated with the body and its movements. Gestures can also be used to provide corrections or to make learners aware of their errors, sometimes without speech to avoid interrupting the production of learners, these gestures have a specific assessing function.[44] Daniela Sime also referred to these gestures as "cognitive" ones, enhancing the learning process.[45]

When preparing a lesson, teachers know what vocabulary is to be covered and they might prepare a series of pedagogical gestures to help them explain the new concepts involved. However, the use of pedagogical gestures has limitations when trying to explain more abstract concepts, such as being overwhelmed or a pragmatic nuance in the speech which implies a cause and effect relationship. In these cases, native speakers also use gestures, usually of a metaphorical nature, to illustrate the idea. These gestures, just like metaphors, are closely linked to the context and are often used by teachers without prior planning. As they are not planned, their execution might be faster, less well defined and inconsistent. If the lesson is about shapes (triangle, square, rectangle and so on), the teacher will mark these words, make them salient, by drawing them in the air every time. Unplanned gestures, like a negating one with two hands facing down spanning outwards (see Fig. 6.1a) with the negative particle *don't*, will not necessarily be repeated next time the teacher uses *don't* and yet it is the gesture which might give the learner the sense of negating (note that even negating gestures might differ between cultures, See Fig. 6.1b). If learners observe the same gesture with *nothing*, for example, they might pick up on the negating element of *nothing* even before fully understanding its meaning.

Pedagogical gestures can be used, instead of diagrams, to explain more complex concepts that involve movement or actions in progress. The difference between

[42] Belhiah [38].

[43] Stam and Tellier [42]

[44] Stam and Tellier [42].

[45] Sime [43].

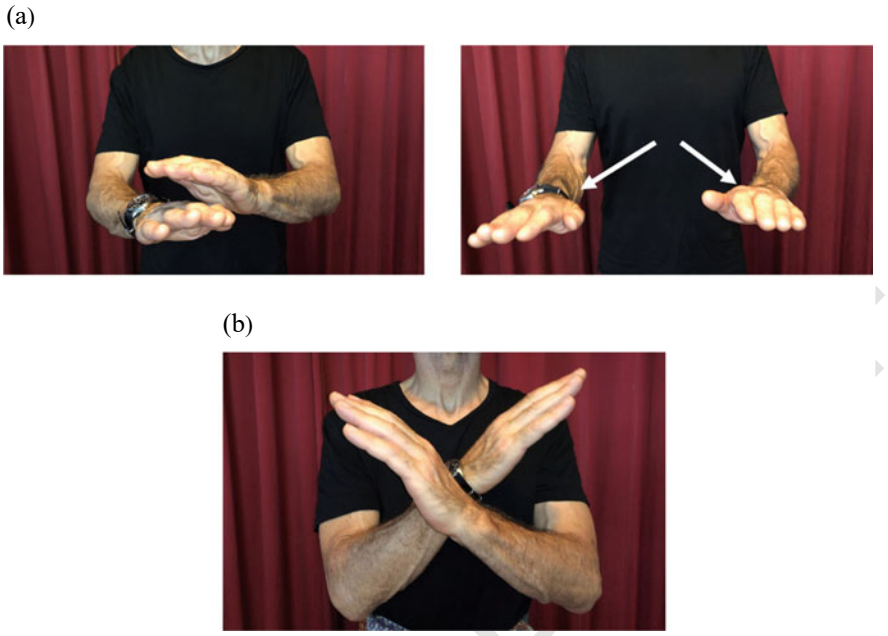

Fig. 6.1 Negating gestures,[46] **a**—negating gesture (English speaker), **b**—negating gesture (Chinese speaker)

(12) *She is eating an apple.*

and

(13) *She ate the apple.*

is more easily illustrated with a series of gestures than explained with words or even with a static image. Not only that, on asking students to gesture to re-enact these actions it might also be possible to assess whether the concept of a progressive action has been processed.

A number of scholars have also explored how gestures are used to described verb tense, modality and aspect,[47] confirming the benefits of integrating gestures with oral explanations. Conceptualization of grammatical functions can be facilitated by an instructional cognitive approach enhanced with representational gestures semantically related to the concept being explained, thus illustrating it iconically. Gestures can also enhance learner's understanding of phonology and phonetical content with simple practices such as drawing intonation patterns in the air or marking stress.

Albert Mehrabian coined the term *immediacy* to refer to the psychological distance between interlocutors. In today's terms, we would consider immediacy as part of a

[46] These are gestures observed in participants narrating stories, copied by an actor for illustrative purposes (from various projects by Lopez-Ozieblo, R.).

[47] Saddour [44] and Matsumoto and Dobs [45].

teacher's behavior to engage students. Verbal and non-verbal behaviors have been studied to assess how they build immediacy between teachers and students. These include smiling, making eye contact with students, walking around the classroom and gesturing, although their effects are not as marked in Chinese classrooms as in Western ones.[48] Many of these behaviors are the same as those identified under politeness strategies to reduce face-threat to students. Teachers are usually aware of the potential face-threat that a disagreement or a correction might have to a student and will produce gestures to mitigate that threat.[49] Sime refers to these as "emotional" gestures, communicating to learners how teachers feel and their emotions. It is generally accepted that teacher behavior affects learners' levels of engagement, anxiety and enjoyment. Teachers and students confirm that gestures attract the attention of learners improving engagement. However, less is known about how specific gestures might impact anxiety and enjoyment.[50] Gestures can also be used to manage the classroom, to regulate levels of noise, activity, speed of response and, overall, to structure lessons. Gesture can generate cohesion by managing the floor (who is to speak next) and help learners understand instructions related to classroom activities, such as closing a book or standing up.[51]

6.2.2 Students' Gestures

When we teach, our students' gestures can be an invaluable source of information and feedback, if we are able to pay attention to them. Students are not generally aware of how they employ gestures as an additional tool to communicate—their focus tends to be on the speech—and so they miss many opportunities to communicate via gestures.

Making students aware of the impact of gestures in the communicative act will give them an additional tool when their linguistic knowledge lets them down. Instead of going silent when asked a question they might be able to gesture the answer and so indicate they understood what was asked and were able to conceptualize the answer. Although learners' gestures vary by individual it is possible to design activities for the classroom that will trigger the use of gestures, such as only gestures without speech, acting out texts that appear in textbooks, or specifically asking students to gesture when presenting to the class.

Students often mimic their teachers' gestures which helps develop a cohesive classroom discourse as specific gestures are copied to refer to the concepts being discussed. The teacher should also be attentive to new gestures produced by students and repeat them, if appropriate, to strengthen the concept and help develop cohesion by creating references to previously produced gestures, just as we do in speech by using pronouns. Gestures generated spontaneously by students can help teachers

[48] Lopez-Ozieblo [46].

[49] Lopez-Ozieblo [40].

[50] Belhiah [38].

[51] Belhiah [38], Sime [43] and Stam and Tellier [42].

identify mismatches between students' thoughts and the target concept, how they are conceptualizing the idea, usually based on their L1 knowledge, versus how speakers of the L2 view it.

Outside the language learning classroom, gestures are important in the various speaking activities on which students are often assessed, such as oral presentations and group interaction tasks. Research has shown that gesture can be explicitly taught to students to enhance their awareness of the role of gesture and multimodality in the spoken presentation format, although there is still little evidence of the findings of this research being applied outside of specialized domains.[52]

Aside from differences by culture, Marianne Gullberg[53] identified certain differences in L2 gestures attributable to the proficiency of the speaker. Language learners of lower proficiencies produce more deictic anaphoric gestures than those with higher proficiencies to provide coherence to the narration and relieve the speakers' cognitive load. Other gestures might also be used to reduce cognitive load. Speech in a second language increases the complexity of the task[54] and this is reflected, in some speakers, by an increase in gestures, in particular, referential ones. As gestures are idiosyncratic, teachers need to be aware of learners' gesturing patterns in the L1 to make any evaluation of their significance in the L2. Gestures can thus be an invaluable tool in the evaluation and assessment of students' proficiency. How we gesture depends not only on the language but also on the culture. Gesturing like a native increases the perception of proficiency, making it a valuable resource for the L2 speaker.[55] Yet, despite their clear benefits to the communicative act, gestures are seldom taught in language classrooms, and if they are taught, then it is not clear that teachers are well-informed and equipped with empirically-based materials.

I have indicated before that integrating a cognitive approach needs to be done slowly, as the novelty of the approach itself can have a negative impact on the learning process. The same is true of gestures. It is first necessary to turn students' attention towards gestures, so they begin to pay attention to them and to process them as an important part of the communicative process. One easy way to do this is to show muted clips from reality TV shows where emotionally charged people are asked to discuss personal matters. The gestures produced in these shows can be a useful tool to teach interjections and focus on pragmatic meanings. Educational presenters like those on TED talks are a good source of iconic gestures, those that illustrate concrete or metaphorical concepts. These presenters use their gestures to strengthen their explanations by making it easier to visualize new concepts. Students can also be encouraged to gesture when speaking in the L2, especially when lacking lexical items.

[52] Harrison [47].

[53] Gullberg [48].

[54] Nicoladis et al. [49].

[55] Neu [50].

6.3 Concluding Thoughts

The extent to which the body, including the brain, affects the mind is captured by the concept of embodiment, central to cognitive linguistics since its inception.[56] As different bodies and minds respond differently to the same environment, concepts are developed through the organism's perceptual, motor and affective experiences with the physical and social world.[57] Speakers use their cognitive abilities, including emotion, categorizing and interpreting their experiences in order to construct meaning within their communities of speakers. Concepts develop as individuals experience the physical and social worlds through their perceptual and motor systems,[58] suggesting that both learning and language are mental and physical experiences of which gestures are a part.

Although the whole of the body can be involved in the communicative act (head, body, gaze, hands, sometimes also feet), this chapter has focused on hand gestures as:

- By reason of their range of motions, the hands can be very expressive, and we have two of them, which allows us to depict more complex thoughts portraying, for example, an object and an agent, making them a valuable tool for language learners.
- Infants use hand gestures and these are a good predictor of speech development, suggesting that something similar might be the case in language learners.
- The consensus is that speech, gesture and thought are tightly linked, with the thought being externalized through both speech and gesture, at least in native and high-level proficiency speakers. This means that gesture gives us an insight into the mind, providing an illustration of how the speaker might be conceptualizing the idea they are trying to express.
- Observing others do things also activates in our brains similar neuronal networks as those active in the brain of the doer, thanks to mirror neurons.[59] This means that when students observe actions, or gestures, their brains are also mentally re-enacting those actions. As already discussed, the more sensory-motor signals we process the stronger the memory trace, so doing and seeing others do can help us learn.

Despite top–down support for gestures and the provision of stimulating and motivational content, the classroom reality suggests that we have a way to go yet. Although integrating gestures in the language classroom has many advocates,[60] few textbooks integrate gestures with the content being taught. Gestures in teaching are seldom based on empirically-grounded materials or delivered by research-informed teachers. Teachers might be more familiar with the use of multimodal resources, video, images

[56] Bergen [1].

[57] Matheson and Barsalou [23].

[58] Lakoff [51].

[59] For an interesting account on mirror neurons: [52].

[60] Holme (2009), Harrison [47], Littlemore [34]. See above.

and audios although their pedagogical effectiveness seems to be dependent on the age and the cognitive skills of the learner.[61] Adults benefit more from gestures than images as gestures reactivate existing networks, strengthening them. Children, however, have not had sufficient exposure to gestures and so, seeing or enacting them builds up a network rather than reactivating an existing one, and does not lead to immediate learning. This suggests that a gesture-based cognitive approach might be more beneficial to adult learners.

In addition to these benefits, learners with special education needs (SEN), in particular autistic children, have been observed to benefit from gesture-based teaching methods. Gesture allows these children to focus on one particular aspect of the communicative act, rather than having to integrate language and paralanguage cues (volume, speed, pitch). It gives them a tool to communicate in situations of stress where they might not be able to use language.[62] The benefits of gesture in SEN education are thus recognized but still underexplored.

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[61] Andrä et al. [53].

[62] So et al. [54].

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Abstract

This chapter develops the concepts of metaphor and metonymy. We learn by making associations, of how things look, what their function might be, where we might find them, all of these associations help us remember new ideas.

Chapter 7
Teaching Vocabulary with Cognition in Mind

7.1 Introduction

Although CL defends an integrated approach when teaching a second language, the reality is that most textbooks, at least in the Chinese context, still focus on discrete elements of the language, vocabulary being one. In the 1990s, western pedagogies saw a renewed interest in teaching vocabulary, recognizing it as one of the most reliable predictors of proficiency.[1] Teachers and learners of English in Chinese contexts report vocabulary issues as their most significant problem, at least when writing.[2] Aside from a limited range, the main issue is understanding *chunks* of more than two words. In a series of studies of English learners in Hong Kong published in 2003, Thomas Li concluded that the more advanced the learner, the higher their percentage of errors related to vocabulary. We see this often in written assignments, where students' grammar is impeccable but the sentences do not make much sense due to issues with vocabulary (often through the selection of the wrong synonym) when translating from Chinese. The depth of vocabulary knowledge, how much is known about each word, is letting these students down.

Vocabulary in Chinese contexts, including Hong Kong, is often still being taught via rote-learning, with two long lists, one in the L1 and one in English. Exercises are text-based where students have to fill in blanks with a list of possible words. If vocabulary is based on a text then, apart from the meaning associated with the specific context, few attempts are made to really explain the meaning of new words, nor are meaningful relationships built between them.

Many of the studies of the last few decades have tested how best to teach vocabulary. It is known that more frequently used words are easier to learn. Also, the more times a new word is encountered, the more likely it is to be learnt. These two points are related, as students are more likely to come across more frequently used words. Hearing a word just once or twice is unlikely to lead to retention, coming across it

[1] Iwashita et al. [1].

[2] Li [2].

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ten times in different contexts and in different modalities increases that likelihood. Different modalities trigger different sensorimotor processors and each one of them will create a memory trace that, together, create the concept of the new word in the learner's mind. We tend to think of these concepts as images but it is more accurate to think of them as schematic representations, or *schema*, general and abstract enough to apply to a variety of objects and events, creating a pattern.[3] Schema come together in *mental models* or *frames*, where they are related and filled in to represent stereotyped events. Because schemas and frames are multimodal, triggered by different senses, it is more effective to learn vocabulary when it is thematically related (e.g. *warm: hug, squeeze, arms, safe*) rather than semantically related (e.g. *warm: hot, cold, freezing*).[4]

For second language learners it is also easier to learn vocabulary which is related to the intrinsic properties of entities, those which are usually shared across communities.[5] Intrinsic properties are based on the physical qualities of the entity. For example: a *tree* has *branches*, *leaves* and *roots*, *birds make their nests in trees*, *trees provide shade*. Extrinsic knowledge, that which might be specific to a community based on their shared culture (e.g., history, religion, politics, climate) is harder to learn. In communities where wood is a common construction material terms like *stud* or *joist* will be used; where trees are used in ornamental gardens: *hedge* or *pruning*; and if used for fuel: *logs* or *kindling*. Someone not familiar with these uses will first need to conceptualize them before being able to learn the extrinsic terms. If these are key terms within the L2 community they, and the concepts behind them should be taught.[6]

CL proposes that teaching vocabulary should employ methods that are cognitive, embodied and usage-based. A cognitive-based approach grounded on physical experiences has been shown to have some long-term benefits when it comes to vocabulary learning[7] and its effects are also noted in a better understanding of the associated grammar.[8]

7.2 Chunks

In order to teach vocabulary, CL advocates methods that will elicit associations between concepts. One of these is creating networks of words to cover specific topics. This approach provides paradigmatic knowledge, word associations based on semantic content. For example, when talking about *dinner*, words like *cutlery*, *food, restaurant* form the semantic network of associated semantic terms. If students have

[3] Johnson [3].

[4] Tinkham [4].

[5] Littlemore [5].

[6] See Section 1 and the chapter on Englishes.

[7] Boers [6].

[8] Zhao et al. [7].

access to real texts they will notice that L1 speakers also use chunks of two or more words that often go together (e.g., *dinner plate*, *dinner time*, *dinner table*), these are syntagmatic associations, much harder to acquire for the second language learner.

Specific communities create expressions, chunks of a few words, that become set, or grammaticalized, with use. These chunks have a specific meaning within that community, often based on metonyms or metaphors, known as idioms. The meaning of an idiom is not the same as the meaning of each of the words that form it. This can lead to much confusion as the second language learner tries to visualize—for example—an argument with legs, when coming across the utterance: *that argument doesn't stand up*. English has many of these somewhat abstract chunks, idioms and also phrasal verbs which are embedded into everyday language and processed effortlessly by native speakers, so much so that we forget to teach them. Native speakers process them with the same facility as literal expressions, suggesting that in most cases they do not do a literal interpretation first and then work out the figurative meaning. This is not true of second language learners who struggle when the literal and figurative meanings of the chunks are not close. Idioms, phrasal verbs and culturally related proverbs are among the biggest learning problems for Chinese learners of English.[9]

To help second language learners with chunks it might be necessary to deconstruct them explicitly, looking for their origins. As an activity this is highly engaging and motivating for students, it is like solving a mystery! Higher engagement leads to more effective learning. The basic building drivers of chunks are metaphors and metonyms, two of the processes in thinking. We think in metaphors, which allow us to understand an event, object or entity by referring to another. We also think of whole entities or events by one of its constituents or characteristics, metonyms. The former allows us to conceptualize abstract notions while the latter speeds up the whole process.

7.3 Metaphors

Chunks are often metaphors. Many of these are also shared across cultures: from infancy, our bodies experience the world and create associations, concepts based on those experiences, like standing up is good or warmth from mum is good. As our range of experiences widens, our concepts become more complex: living and being in love have the same ups and downs as roads; a negotiation is the psychological equivalent of getting our way in the school-yard. These concepts allow us to project corporeal experiences onto abstract notions. We think about abstract objects and events (target domains like *success* or *life*) through other more concrete objects and events (source domains like *standing up* or *journey*). These concepts affect how we

[9] For a review and one of the first studies on idioms and L2 learners: Cooper [8].

perceive the world around us and how we interact with it and others. They are an intrinsic factor in how we think which is reflected in language.[10]

Metaphors are not just figures of speech used in poetry but constant occurrences in every-day speech, in all languages. They are so ubiquitous that we do not realize we are using them. Many languages share conceptual metaphors, especially those related to body parts and the senses. In English knowing is seeing while in Chinese thinking is seeing (these concepts are noted in small caps). Both use seeing as the physical experience to map the more abstract cognitive processes of thinking and knowing. At the same time, metaphors also encapsulate fundamental cultural differences. In Chinese, thinking occurs in the heart but in English in the brain. For example, the equivalent of the English *state of mind* is *state of heart* in Chinese (心態, *xīntài* [literally heart-state]).[11]

Conceptual metaphors shared between languages are easier to process, but even when the concepts are shared the actual metaphors seldom translate literally. Both Chinese and English share the physical concept of the mouth being an opening but in Chinese it is also an opening that gives access to other things, thus *doorway* is 门口*ménkǒu* [literally door-mouth]. The link mouth-accessway also exists in English (e.g. *mouth of a cave*) but the metaphor **mouth of a door* does not. Thus, metaphors can be hard for second language learners to understand, remember and use.

7.4 Similes

Usually, when teaching metaphors, similes are also mentioned. A metaphor like *Inflation is high* uses our concept of more is up—as things stack up they become higher—to explain an increase in prices. A simile, on the other hand, compares two unrelated events or items, referencing the attributes of one to explain the other. *Inflation is (spreading) like a virus.*

This process of comparing two unrelated items and seeing some qualities of one in the other is one of the cognitive processes that gives rise to polysemic words. With use, the comparison becomes grammaticalized within a community of speakers and a new meaning is added to the term. For example, sand is deposited and accumulates in rivers, forming banks. It would seem that this sense of 'depositing and accumulating' was referred to when dealing with money. The act of depositing your money with an institution became *banking* and eventually the building where the money was held became a *bank*, attributing a second meaning to the original (sand) bank. Referring to the building by the activity that goes on inside is a different process, a metonym. A metonym takes part or an attribute of something to refer to the whole.

Polysemy occurs when words have more than one meaning and the meanings are related but distinct.[12] If the meanings are not systematically related they are

[10] Conceptual metaphor theory was developed in the 1980s by Lakoff and Johnson [9].

[11] Hu and Fong [10].

[12] Lakoff [11].

homonyms. A word of caution, at first the two meanings of *bank* (1) the institution and (2) the sides of a river, might not be seen as being systematically related. However, the etymology of *bank* suggests they once were. A better example to explain homonyms might be *corn ear*. *Ear* in this case is a homonym of the human ear, but the two meanings are not related at all. Their etymology suggests two very different origins, one linked to the plant and one linked to the process of hearing.

7.5 Metonyms

Metonymy is another thinking process, a simpler one than metaphorical thinking as both referent and referred can be concrete items. When I see a snake skin outside I do not need to see the snake to figure out that there might be one in the garden! Children as young as three[13] can identify a referent via one of its salient characteristics (e.g., *hat-man* is understood to refer to *the man wearing a hat*). As with metaphors, there are higher order conceptual metonymies that underlie the relationships we make. Some of these are[14]:

Producer for product—*The **Picassos** are in room 2* [referring to the paintings by the name of the painter, Picasso].

Action for a complex event—*I am going to **wash my hands*** [instead of explaining all the things I am going to do in the bathroom].

Member for category—*Will you lend me a **biro**?* [*Biro* is a brand of ballpoint pen, I am asking for any pen].

Container for contained—*Do you want another **bowl**?* [When asking a guest if they want more soup].

Despite the ubiquity of metonyms some cultures might not share all of these higher order conceptual mappings. Another difficulty is that metonyms can be conventional but also spontaneously created to address the situation. Speakers who are familiar with each other use metonyms constantly. When my husband tells me:

(14) *You have to cut the **bougainvillea** .*

I know that he does not mean just that particular tree but all the trees in the garden. He is using the concept of membership for category. Communities of speakers, like people who work together, develop specific discourse patterns that initially baffle newcomers. Where I work, the *8th floor* stands for 'the office of the Faculty of Humanities and the Dean'; in my husband's company the *27th floor* stands for the 'IT team'. These shortcuts create efficiencies but they can also unite groups of people and create barriers for outsiders. Jeannette Littlemore, in her book on metonymy,[15] also mentions the many other functions of metonyms: they can be used as euphemisms to

[13] Köder and Falkum [12].

[14] For a more detailed explanation on metonymy, see: Littlemore [13]; and Bierwiaczonek [14].

[15] Littlemore (2015). As above.

avoid embarrassing terms, see example (14) above; they can be used when wanting to be intentionally vague; to create inferences, irony or humor. For example:

(15) *I made **a smell*** (euphemism, meaning 'I farted').

(16) ***NATO** is discussing **Russia** (vagueness, meaning 'the representatives of the countries in NATO are discussion Putin's actions in Ukraine).*

(17) *Of course, this book will be a **bestseller!*** (irony, meaning 'it is unlikely to be a popular book').

One really has to stop to realize how often we use metonyms and what their origin is. Metonymy is a dynamic process, linked to how we think, that often results in novel expressions, specific to a context. For speakers, these are harder to process than established metonyms and not always understood by second language students. An added difficulty is that the metonym is often not associated with just one word but is encapsulated by the whole sentence, often with a nuanced pragmatic meaning, as in (17).[16] Teaching metonymy is a complex task due to this additional pragmatic content that is often not shared across cultures. Students need to be made aware of metonymy in their L1 first to ensure they understand the concept. Identifying the origins of metonyms in the L2 might help students to understand the higher order conceptualization, if shared in the L1 (e.g., in (15) part for whole; in (16) institution for people responsible; in (bestseller) part—or subcategory—for the category) but additional information might be needed, especially if the origins of the metonym refers to historical events or no-longer used objects.

Polysemy

Words can become polysemic through a process of metonymy, by comparing two distinctly different items in terms of any one of our senses: A computer mouse looks like a real *mouse*; spicy food makes us feel warm inside, so we refer to *hot* peppers. For example, *paper* is a polysemic word with a metonymic origin:

(18) *I wrote a **paper** for my English class* = I wrote an article [metonymy: the material on which I write is used to identity the final product, despite me writing my article not on a piece of paper but on my laptop].

(19) *I read the **paper** every morning* = I open my phone and read the news from a site that consolidates articles from various media [metonymy: the media where news was first printed was made out of paper].

Common items and actions tend to be polysemic with meanings acquired via metaphor and metonymy. When new words are needed, it is usually easier to refer to something that already exists than to make up a new word, *google* being an exception! If the idea is to ensure that others will also understand the new word, it makes sense for this to be a shared concept, such as a part of the body or its functions or an action carried out by the body. Take the word *trunk*:

[16] Littlemore (2015). As above.

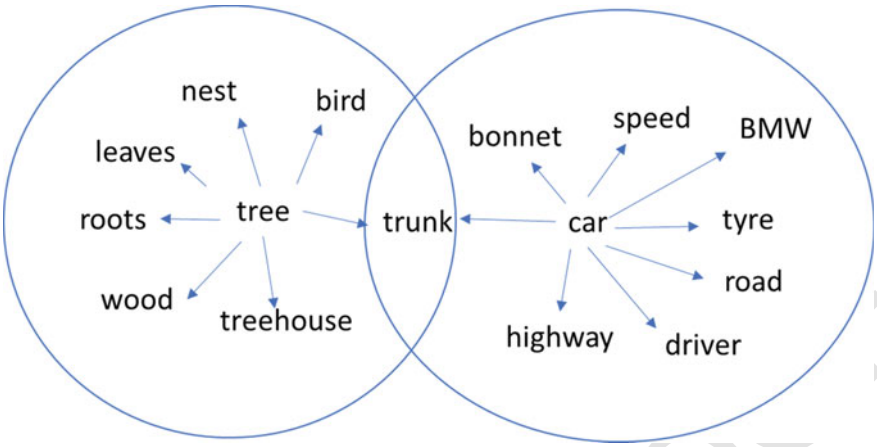

Fig. 7.1 Venn diagram for related concepts

(20) *Cedar **trunks** were perfect for making ships' masts.*

(21) *In many animals, the heart and the lungs are in the **trunk** of the body.*

(22) *In medieval Europe **trunks** were used to store household items.*

(23) *This car is perfect, it has a massive **trunk** for luggage.*

The visual relationship between a tree trunk and an animal trunk is obvious, the function of 'organ store' might have been the link between the human trunk and the piece of furniture, which in turn would have led to that of a car trunk. Perhaps the material the piece of furniture was made out of, a tree trunk, led to a metonymic term which, many centuries later, was applied to the car part used for storage, initially a physical trunk strapped to the back of the car.

In most teaching approaches, vocabulary is learnt contextually, a term is explained when it appears in reference to that context. Following such an approach, a learner might come across the term *tree trunk* and later on *car trunk* and never associate the two. Cognitive linguistics research suggests that it might be more beneficial to present the meaning of new items not just in one specific context but in a variety of contexts to extract the overall concept.[17] This is an addition to the original word-cloud, in the form of a Venn diagram, where additional sets of terms are developed around other contexts, see Fig. 7.1.

By specifying the common link of seemingly unrelated lexical items, learners are able to accurately interpret other meanings of that term.[18] The process of exploring the links between words is also more memorable than rote-learning and so learning might be enhanced.

[17] Csabi [15].

[18] Verspoor and Lowie [16].

Many polysemic words are also high frequency ones, as mentioned above, which also means they are likely to have undergone a number of changes throughout the many centuries they have been in use. With each change, the common link might have grown more diffuse, like *river bank* and *bank* (the building). At the same time, the integration of a new language or the mixing of different communities of speakers, introduces parallel terms to those already in use, sometimes as calques or direct translations (e.g., in Singapore-English, Singlish, the expression *Catch No Ball* is a translation from the Hokkien dialect *liak bo kiu* meaning that the speaker 'does not understand what is being said'.)[19]

7.6 Phrasal Verbs

To the second language learner, many words might appear to be polysemic. They might be polysemic in some contexts but not in all, and this also causes a number of issues as students are unaware of the core meaning that differentiates them. *Hold* and *keep* are two such items, often confused for synonyms. However, *hold* implies an agent whose hand supports an object, while *keep* involves possession.[20] These nuanced differences in meaning affect whole constructions as they dictate the satellites (prepositions, adverbs or objects) that they can occur with, so it is possible to say:

(24) *I am **keeping** busy/well*

but not (* indicates an utterance which is ungrammatical or unacceptable):

(25) **I am **holding** busy/well.*

Understanding these core meanings can also help with the formation of phrasal verbs. Thus, it is possible to say:

(26) *The elderly lady rose to her feet **holding on** to the chair for support*,

but we cannot say:

(27) **The elderly lady rose to her feet **keeping on** to the chair for support.*

Phrasal verbs, set verb + satellite constructions (very often a preposition), are quite common in English and also quite difficult for Chinese learners who prefer to avoid them in the lower proficiency stages, partly because of their polysemic meanings.[21] Studies have found that phrasal verbs have on average 5.6 different meanings, some less frequent than others, which is seldom mentioned when first introducing them in class.[22] Mélodie Garnier and Norbert Schmitt raised this shortcoming in existing lists

[19] For other examples see: Gosh [17].

[20] Csábi (2004). As above.

[21] Liao and Fukuya [17].

[22] Garnier and Schmitt [18].

of phrasal verbs and developed their own PHrasal VErb Pedagogical List (PHaVE List) with 150 phrasal verbs, which make up over 75% of all entries in the *Corpus of Contemporary American English*. For each meaning they provide an explanation. The example below for the phrasal verb *make up* is taken from Schmitt's website[23]:

MAKE UP

1. Form the whole of an amount or entity (this use accounts for 42.5% of all entries)
   *Hispanics **make up** more than 15% of the U.S. population.*
2. (+ for) Compensate for something lacking, lost or missed (18.5%)
   *Some solution has to be found to **make up** for such losses.*
3. (Make up one's mind) Make a decision (15.5%)
   *You should **make up** your mind about who you will vote for.*

A key to teaching lies in the embodied meaning of the prepositions. Up is more, but up is also good, as are the concepts in categories 1–3 above, in the sense that they refer to completion or resolution, both positive concepts. If after this discussion a student is given the examples:

(28) *I am **holding up**.*

(29) *The team is **keeping up**.*

They should be able to infer a positive sense, even if not aware of the full meaning.

However, teaching phrasal verbs and idioms using a cognitive linguistics approach based on metaphor and embodiment needs to be well-integrated within the regular teaching approach. In studies carried out with Chinese learners of English, teaching following a metaphorical approach to differentiate between the various meanings of phrasal verbs helped long-term learning but only for older and more advanced learners. In these studies, rote memorization allowed participants to answer short term questions, but after a few weeks only the deeper processed metaphorical learned content was remembered.[24] Younger learners struggled with the metaphorical conceptualization as it is likely that they either had not yet reached cognitive maturity or that they found it harder to get used to the novel style of teaching. Less proficient learners did not benefit as much as more advanced ones, as they were not able to process the information in the second language yet. The solution for these issues is to use the L1 to present the metaphors, if necessary. The benefits are only obvious in the long term as declarative memory works well in the short term.

When teaching phrasal verbs there is also a conceptualizing distinction between the Chinese L1 and the English L2 that dictates the structure (or perhaps it is the other way around: the structure dictates the conceptualization!). An English phrasal verb, such as:

(30) *Joan tiptoed out of the room.*

[23] Schmitt [19].

[24] Lu and Sun [20].

carries within the core meaning of the verb *tiptoe* the concept of moving delicately, without making noise, this is the manner in which the action is performed. The preposition *out* indicates the path Joan took. English is categorized as a satellite-framed language as the path is usually expressed with an additional unit, the satellite. In verbs with Latin roots, such as *exit*, the path is contained within the meaning of the verb, *to go out*. Latin-based languages are classified as verb-framed.[25] Chinese sits somewhere in between satellite-framed and verb-framed language categories, so the concept of the verb containing information on the manner might not always be clear to the Chinese learner.

7.7 Frames and Pragmatics

As we interact with the world we are constantly learning and building up our knowledge bank. This encyclopedic knowledge allows us to interpret events around us, so when we see someone running down the escalator in the underground we infer that they are in a hurry to get to work, and not that they are running away from someone. If our experience of people running was solely based on Hollywood movies we might think they were indeed running away from someone. Our knowledge is stored by context in *frames*, which lead us to different interpretations of the same event. In the example above if my frame is *Hollywood film* my interpretation is 'running away', if my frame is *commuting to work*, my interpretation will be 'late'. As indicated before, communities of speakers develop specific frames which help to bring their members together and allow them to understand shared metonymic language (and keep outsiders out).

When talking to others we need to make sure that we share frames, otherwise we risk misunderstandings. This is quite common in new jobs or for language learners when the L1 and L2 cultures do not share frames. When a Hong Konger says *let's go for* ***yum cha*** (饮茶, literally drink tea), they do not mean literally to go and drink tea but to go and eat *dim sum* (点心, small shared dishes, often as brunch). Not sharing this encyclopedic knowledge often results in minor etiquette faux-pas, like over or under dressing or misunderstanding the meaning of your interlocutor. A few years ago, an ex-student brought me a present, when I politely said there was no need, he took it back! I was just trying to show my appreciation by saying he shouldn't have and he took it literally.

[25] Slobin [21].

7.8 Concluding Thoughts

Trying to remember vocabulary lists is not dissimilar to remembering the year of the French Revolution, it is the sort of knowledge that is stored as declarative memory. Factors like frequency play a big role in ensuring that a specific piece of information is processed further and remembered, even in the long term. Aside from frequency, coming across the same item in various contexts helps to consolidate the new concept and our understanding of it. The more related information we have, the stronger the neural networks and the likelihood of remembering. That is why understanding where words come from can be a powerful cognitive tool for learners to develop their vocabulary, not just as a list of items, but as concepts they can relate to. This allows for information to be processed as procedural as well as declarative memory, increasing the chances of learning it. Understanding metaphors and metonyms is one of the strategies that can help develop procedural memory.

Although studies with learners as young as 11 have shown that conceptualizing leads to longer-lasting retention of idioms for both high and low proficiency learners,[26] there are a number of caveats. One is that presenting thematically related vocabulary successfully requires presenting a context and building up the connections between the various elements. Having more connections means increasing the cognitive load on students and the information takes longer to consolidate. Learning new vocabulary the traditional way, memorizing words from a list, works if students are preparing for a vocabulary exam the following day, whereas the benefits of conceptualizing the vocabulary and learning it thematically are more apparent after a few days, by which time the list of rote-learned words has been forgotten. Another issue is whether younger learners whose cognitive functions have not matured and those with a low proficiency, who will not understand explanations, will also benefit from this method. In Chinese contexts, rote learning is a common method.[27] Students are used to learning this way as learning written characters follows a memorizing, rule-based approach. This is an important point because introducing new teaching methods requires learning those methods first. Students used to rote-learning might not respond well if a new teacher insists on changing the teaching method from one day to the next. Not only that, but if learning is going to be tested, the testing needs to be consistent with the teaching methods.

The lesson to draw from these studies is that it might be counter-productive to change teaching approaches mid-stream, instead ideas from cognitive linguistics should be integrated whenever possible without disruption to the normal flow of the classroom. If the L1 is needed to explain more complex concepts it should be used. Gestures and visual information can also be considered to enhance learning. With younger learners, teachers should consider learners' ability to process more complex information, bearing in mind that not all students have the same mental age.

[26] Pan [22].

[27] Shanahan [22].

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Abstract

Language is usage-based and user-based. We choose what and how to communicate depending on our intent and knowledge of the language but also on our interlocutors' language skills and our shared knowledge of the world. With every utterance we reveal how we see the world and our position in it.

Chapter 8
Teaching Usage-Based Grammar: Construal

8.1 Introduction

Language is usage-based and user-based. We choose what and how to communicate depending on our intent and knowledge of the language but also on our interlocutors' language skills and our shared knowledge of the world. With every utterance we reveal how we see the world and our position in it. The viewpoints we express are not fixed. For example, when I talk to students I am more authoritative than when talking to a colleague. The content is more detailed and factual because I cannot assume they know as much as my colleague and they need to be aware of the various theories on the topic.

However, we are not entirely free to structure our utterances as we wish. We are constrained by the patterns developed by our communities. Languages have developed structural patterns that carry meaning regardless of the words used. In the case of polysemic words the structure alone might be enough to disambiguate meanings:

(31) I went to the **bank.**

(32) I **bank** with HSBC.

In (31) the inference from the structure would be that *bank* is a location, while in (32) *bank* is an action. The structure fixes the function of the words. At the same time, the structure is dictated by higher order conceptual frameworks, notions like *moving*, *changing*, *giving*, *owning*. These frameworks are built around physical notions of how an agent causes a change to a patient (rendered in traditional grammars as subject, verb, object). English presents the learner (and the teacher) with many cases that are difficult to explain from a traditional grammar approach but which CL-based grammar can help unravel.

Grammar allows us to describe how we conceptualize any given scene. Our view of any one event is going to be affected by many factors, from our mood at the moment to our relationship with the characters in the event and our physical and social relationship to it. Even the weather might affect how we construe that event!

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This ability to have alternative views of the same situation is called *construal*. Most of us can cleverly manipulate our words and grammatical structures to provide one view or another depending on the effect we want to have on our interlocutor. We are all capable of doing this in our L1 even though we might not be aware of exactly how we do it. For language learners, understanding how grammar reflects viewpoints will help explain a number of exceptions to the many rules they are asked to remember.

Infants start to communicate with gestures (and cries), pointing at things with an obvious communicative intent, often meaning 'I want that'. Their first utterances are usually single syllables which are also communicative acts, sometimes also accompanied by gestures: *Milk* meaning 'I want some milk'. When they receive input, infants do not extract independent words and try to understand them but instead seem to focus their attention on whole utterances and extract from those the functional role of the patterns they note. From this information, the child is then able to find those patterns. With time, when producing speech, utterances increase in the number of words although not necessarily in the correct order but meaning is given by prosody. The child repeats the patterns they have heard until around three years old when they begin to develop new ones. Patterns are associated with specific meanings such as indicating objects or attributing properties to them, or things happening to them, or to indicate an activity such as the transfer of an object, or a relation between items or events.[1] These constructions, including abstract ones, are based on input the child has experienced, processed and developed through use.

Although the earlier ontological development of language is not mirrored in the second language learnt in the classroom, longitudinal studies indicate that second language learning is also construction-based. Production develops from input and exposure to similar constructions until the learner figures out their underlying pattern, establishing a construction-meaning pairing.[2] Learners form categories of constructions grounded in physical experiences (mostly in an L1 context) and use these categories to develop and express a personal view of the event, which is constrained by the context. This context includes what the speaker knows about the interlocutor, how much information they share and also the objective of the speaker when sharing the information (again usually from a L1 perspective). Speakers thus adjust their language according to the context and these adjustments are based on previous experiences in society.

The ability to have different perspectives, or construal, has led us to develop resources to externalize all of those perspectives: vocabulary, the specific lexical items we use; how we structure them, syntax; prosody and gestures.[3] Again, not all cultures interpret what they perceive the same way. For example, in English whether an object is countable or not is a key property which is reflected in the structure containing that object:

(33a) A few pens.

[1] Tomasello [1].

[2] Eskildsen [2].

[3] Within CL Construction grammar studies the pairings of meaning and constructions. See Goldberg [3].

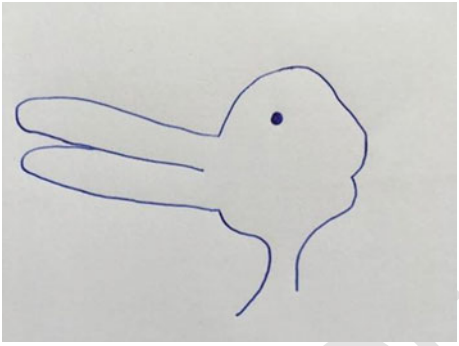

Fig. 8.1 Rabbit or duck?

(34a) Some water.

In Chinese, the countable characteristic is not relevant. Instead, the shape or nature of the object is so salient that it is marked with a classifier:

(33b) 几支笔 *jǐ**zhī** bǐ* [several (classifier) pens]

(34b) 一些水 *yī**xiē** shuǐ* [one (classifier) water]

We can adjust our language quite finely to provide all sorts of information to our interlocutors, from hierarchy in relationships, to the quality of the force causing the action. Speakers can also establish viewpoints or interpretations of events: temporal, the factualness of the event, our emotional reaction to it, the forces related to it or even our position in space. These viewpoints, constrained by both our social and physical interactions and our cognitive processing of them, shape the language we choose.[4]

8.2 Perception and Viewpoint

Different viewpoints are the result of idiosyncratic perceptions. We all perceive the world in slightly different ways. When they first look at Figure 8.1, some people see a rabbit and others a duck, and either a vase or two faces in Figure 8.2. If you refocus, you may see the alternative object, but you will not be able to simultaneously see both objects in each figure.

These differences in perception and interpretation are ubiquitous and they change constantly with the context and the presence of others, in the same way that our presence changes theirs. How we perceive and interpret the world, in turn, will change our behaviors: a speaker will orientate themselves differently whether speaking to one person or five, the volume of their voice will change as well as how far it projects. These factors will be constantly adjusted to accommodate new listeners and so will the constructions used.

[4] Dancygier and Modern [4].

Fig. 8.2 Faces or vase?

8.2.1 Deixis

When we speak, we clarify where we and others are by using *deixis*, terms that we can use to establish a reference point. A reference point can be personal, spatial, temporal or relational/social. The following sentences highlight various deictic items:

(35a) *Dude,* ***he*** *was here a minute ago* (terms that help us identify who is who in the utterance, or what is what, such as names and pronouns).

(35b) Dude, h*e was* ***here*** *a minute ago* (terms that establish a spatial location or the direction of a movement, based on where we are, such as adverbs, demonstratives or verbs).

(35c) Dude, h*e was here* ***a minute ago*** (terms that establish a reference point in relation to time and the duration of events, such as adverbs. Tense is also used to provide a time reference point).

(35d) ***Dude****, he was here a minute ago* (terms that indicate social distances, such as nouns. This can also be achieved through the register and modality).

How we perceive the word and so the language we use depends on where we are (socially and physically): A grandparent anticipates respect from their grandchildren following society's expectations and a wife looking down from the top of a staircase at her husband is perceiving the world from above, a purely physical perspective. When grandpa hears his grandson address him as *dude* he might be offended and when the wife shouts to the husband *Bring me* ***down*** *a cup of tea please* he is likely to be quite confused. The physical aspects are usually shared among humans and, for a teacher, are easier to refer to when explaining the language being taught. For example, differences in physical location impact the language. In these two sentences, is the narrator inside or outside the room?

(36a) *When he* ***came*** *in everyone in the room stood up.*

(36 b) *When he* ***went*** *in everyone in the room stood up.*

The use of *came in* indicates that the speaker is viewing the scene from inside the room (physically or in their mind's eye). Using *went in* indicates that the speaker

is viewing the action from the outside. Verbs like *come* and *go* are deictic verbs, marking the direction of the path or trajectory of the movement.

The social aspects, the beliefs and values of an L2 community, are not always shared in the L1 and need to be explicitly explained to students, this is usually done under the umbrella of pragmatics. Cultural differences play a big role in our interpretation of information. Consider the following story:

> *A man and his son were in an accident. The man died on the way to the hospital, but the boy was rushed into surgery. The emergency room surgeon said "I can't operate, that's my son!"*

There are two possible answers, either that the surgeon is a woman or that the child has two fathers. In societies where children are assumed to have a mother and a father, the notion of having two fathers is not yet very common. Those same societies seldom see women becoming surgeons. Interpreting this story is determined by cultural knowledge.

The idea that the language we use depends on the viewpoint generated by perception is not an obvious one and in the second language classroom, even young adults struggle with this notion, mostly when discussing pragmatic functions. Whereas the perception-language link might be obvious in their L1, this link might not yet have been formed in the L2. Teachers of young children are in an optimal position to highlight and make explicit the link when teaching basic concepts, such as vocabulary related to giving directions, *right and left*, *in front and behind*, *up and down*, which is very much dependent on the individual's perception of their own location and their use of deixis.

8.3 Attention: Ground and Figure

Our perceptions are also reflected in what we highlight in the constructions we utter. We perceive whatever it is we are paying attention to, this in turn is often dictated by the societies we live in and their values. Let me illustrate what I mean: as an academic, my calendar is based on the school year, ending in August. If I worked in finance my calendar would end with the financial year-end which is March in Hong Kong but September in the USA. When talking to others about *the end of the year*, the context is key to understanding what month I am referring to.

At a basic perceptual level, we focus our attention on a specific element first, and this allows us to prioritize the processing of information. In most scenarios human figures will catch our attention first, then animals and objects. If you glance at the image in Figure 8.3 and then look away, you will probably remember there was a girl lying on the bed but you might not have noticed the bags, also on the bed. The girl stands out, the *figure*, while the walls, the bed, the clock, the suitcase, etc. are less important, and we refer to those as the *ground*. The focus on the figure is then reflected in the constructions. In English, we will give prominence to the figure, often naming it first. We will say: *The girl is on the bed*, rather than: *The bed is under the girl*.

Fig. 8.3 Figure versus ground[5]

An unusual figure position can be used to catch the attention of the interlocutor, often a reader of literature or poetry, and allow them to experience a completely different perspective of the scene. Picture this sentence:

(37) *The bed under her felt hard and uninviting, she didn't think she would be able to sleep.*

You have probably pictured the bed first and the human second. You are probably developing some theories as to where the person might be (not who the person might be as you would if the girl had been prioritized).

Apart from ground and figure there is another element relating to how we perceive events, the *who* or *what* responsible for the action—the *agent*—which is the source of energy. We can indicate how important the agent is by either mentioning it or not and by placing it at the beginning or end of a sentence. We can also use an active or passive voice to stress whether there was an agent or not:

(38a) *The cat broke the vase.*

(38b) *The vase was broken by the cat.*

(38c) *The vase broke.*

In these sentences the entity affected by the force is the vase, the *patient*, which changes its state due to the agent's (the cat's) actions.[6] Notice that in (38a) the figure is the cat but in (38b) the figure is the vase. We have completely changed the viewpoint through which we described this event; the end result might be the same but we are more likely to shout at the cat if we view the action as in (38a).[7] How we perceive an action will lead to active (38a) or passive voices (38b). Whether we select a passive or an active sentence will depend on our focus of attention, what we perceive as important in the event we are describing. In the active voice the focus is the agent (*the cat*) whose energy affects the patient (*the vase*). In the passive voice the focus is on how the energy has affected the patient (*the vase*) while the agent is not necessarily important.

[5] Image by Chow, J. for the author.

[6] Langacker [5].

[7] The intensity of the force employed by the agent is also another relevant distinction in the physical world, and also whether this force comes from within or is external to the body. We will cover this in the section about Modality.

English is a language that prioritizes the agent or subject doing something, and so its structure follows an agent-action-patient or *Subject-Verb-Object (SVO)* order. Not all languages follow this order. Japanese and Korean, for example, use a SOV structure. Other structures are much rarer but they exist (or existed). If the L1 of your students follows a different structure to that of English make this difference explicit early on in your teaching.

8.4 Perspective

The language we use to refer to spatially-related concepts is shaped by where we are and from where we are looking at the world, from above or below, close by or from a distance, inside or outside. The awareness of the position and movements of our body, *proprioception*, is a key factor in how we describe our interactions with the world. We face people when we are interacting with them, we move closer to them to indicate intimacy, we become tense when encountering trouble. We are aware of these positions, movements or reactions and map those concepts to describe other situations:

(39) *I am **close** to my brother-in-law, we get on really well.*

(40) *The **face** of the clock is dirty, I can't see the time.*

(41) *It was a really uncomfortable situation, it was a very **tense** meeting.*

We transfer those concepts physically to words. Uttering the word *tense* requires a certain tensing of the facial muscles! We also map these concrete concepts to abstract ones, for example to indicate how **close** or **far away** in time we perceive an event to be. The way we describe time, as you can see in the previous sentence, makes use of vocabulary based on physical perceptions. Aside from vocabulary we can also vary our syntax to indicate close or distant events.

Syntax also allows us to communicate information about the event such as the agent causing the motion, the intensity and origin of the energy involved, and positive or negative associations. Traditionally this information has been taught as tense, aspect and mood or modality. These concepts, when shared by different language speaking communities, can provide a foundation for teaching the constructions of the second language. When teaching, tense, aspect and mood can be described physically by placing the speaker on a timeline, viewing real or non-real actions. This physicality clarifies where the speaker is in relation to the events they are describing and how much of the action they are describing:

(42a) *She **wrote** a book* (an action referred to in full, that took place before the point the speaker is at),

(42b) *She **was writing** a book* (the speaker is viewing the past action through a window that curtails how much of the action is referred to).

(42c) *She **had written** a book* (the speaker is referring to the action in relation to another past action, which has become the 'now' from which they speak: *She had written a book* (42a) *before she became an academic*—the academic career is the 'now').

(42d) *She **has written** a book* (an action much closer to the present 'now' than *She **wrote** a book*).

A past tense indicates the distance of imaginary or wished-for events that have not taken place, these are conceptualized in an abstract dimension further away than reality.

(42e) I wish she **had written** a book.

Modal verbs, such as *could* or *would*, the past tenses of *can* and *will*, have been grammaticalized to indicate politeness, an imaginary distance from an interlocutor, and are now rarely used to just indicate a past tense:

(43a) She **could write** a book.

(43b) **Would** you pass me the book?

Time-based viewpoints can reflect psychological distance, such as that felt in a formal or polite context. Physically, you are likely to stand closer to your friend than to your boss. This distance is reflected in the language—this is very clear in languages like Japanese or Spanish where there are both morphological and lexicon choices to be made if formally addressing someone. In Spanish, when addressing someone in a formal context, the grammatical third person is used instead of the second person. By doing so, we place the addressee further away from us, in our mind's eye. As tense marks distance it can also be used to move ourselves further away from our interlocutor, as a sign of politeness or to indicate possibility (an abstract concept more distant than present reality).

The physical concept of location affects modality. Where we are (the *here)* is also used to conceptualize time, we equate *here* with the present *now*. This confidence about our presence *here* is reflected in the use of the present tense, which indicates a higher degree of sureness and more control over the action than the past (which is somewhere over *there*, a distance away).[8]

(44a) ***Shall** I turn the TV off?*

(44b) ***Should** I turn the TV off?*

If I ask whether I *should* turn the TV off I am implying even less certainty about the action, and the wishes of the interlocutor, than when using *shall*. The past tense indicates a distance from my *here (now)* where I am usually in control of the situation, which is why the past is also used as a politeness marker. By using the past tense, I indicate that I accept minimized control of the situation and pass some of that control to the listener who is then free to accept or not.

[8] For a full explanation see: Tyler et al. [6] and also Tyler [7].

Chinese teachers and learners often struggle with the many uses of the present tense. Tense marks the distance between the action denoted by the verb and another action, sometimes the act of speaking or writing. When teaching the present tense, the focus is on the time relationship between the act of speaking (now) and the action taking place. In most cases, this distance is a time-related one based on the time of the utterance (*today, now*) but it can also refer to a physical one reflected in the use of politeness (e.g. *would, could* instead of *will, can*). However, these uses of the present are not common:

(45) **I **wash** my hands right now.*

(46) **I **eat** an apple right now.*

Notice how to indicate that the action is taking place now, at the time of speaking, we do not use the simple present tense but the progressive. CL explains this through another key concept, that of boundedness.

Ronald Langacker[9] equated construal to the visual experience. We can take in the whole scene or zoom in to a very specific part. Nouns describe objects in that scene and verbs processes. When we describe a scene, a process within it can be described as a *whole process* or *part of it*. Imagine the difference between standing outside and looking at the sea (*unbound* by any landmarks) and standing on the street and looking at a puddle (*bound* by the edges of the hole in the pavement). The same applies to a process, *Richard **built** a Lego model* denotes a whole event (it has a beginning and an end, it is bound) –although I have not specified when the process took place, the understanding is that the action had a beginning and an end. But a process can also be unbound, *Rita **knows** how to ride a bike* –Rita's knowledge is obviously dependent on her being alive which will have a beginning and an end but that is not the focus, the focus is that the process is a continuous one. Unbound processes have an *imperfective aspect*, they are continuous, ongoing or habitual actions. It is possible to attribute an imperfective aspect to a bound process, imagine looking at the puddle from a window, the window allows only for a partial view of the puddle. Now, the edges of the hole are not visible and the water in the puddle seems unbound. In English we can do that by using the structure *be …-ing*.

(47) *Richard **is building** a Lego model.*

(48) **Rita **is knowing** how to ride a bike.*

We are now looking at Richard from a window and can only see the continuous action of him arranging the Lego pieces. However, we cannot unbind the process of Rita's knowing again, as it was already unbound. When we use the imperfective aspect (*be …-ing*), we tell our audience that we expect the process to end. That is the key difference between these two sentences:

(49a) *I live in Hong Kong* – Hong Kong is my home, where I lived before is not important.

(49b) *I am living in Hong Kong* – Currently I live here, as my job is here, but as soon as I get a better job I will relocate.

[9] Langacker [5]. See above.

Many habitual actions, *talk, sleep, walk, eat, wash*, can create problems as, at first glance, they might be seen as unbound. However, they are perfective (bound). When we conceptualize the action, we think about a whole process (*wash my hands, eat an apple, walk from home to the office*) and so they accept the progressive *-ing*:

(50) *I* ***am washing*** *my hands right now.*

(51) *I* ***am eating*** *an apple right now.*

8.5 Forces and modality

Language reflects our viewpoint not only about where we are, but it also maps elements from physical movement. When we start to walk, we do so in a forward direction, going from point A to point B, establishing the concepts of *origin*, *path* and *destination*. How the movement is carried out, its *manner*, can also differentiate one journey from another. Another factor is the *agent* (and its force) that originates the movement. Every interaction is the result of a force and it results in some form of change. These physical forces, origins, paths and destinations are the foundations of our understanding of a number of abstract concepts such as permission, ability, obligation, suggestion or advice. How we speak about these acts reflects our attitude towards them, where the forces come from and how strong they are as well as our level of certainty. We express our attitudes by using modal verbs: *can, could, may, might, must, ought to, shall, should, will, would, need to*. The differences in the meaning of these modals is socially nuanced and often difficult to teach, especially to students whose language does not provide a distinction between modals. For example:

(52) ***Shall*** *I turn the TV off?*

(53) ***Will*** *I turn the TV off?*

Shall carries a connotation of obligation dictated by an external authority, in this case I am asking permission. *Will* denotes that the drive, the agency, comes from the doer, I am not asking permission, I am politely saying that I want to turn the TV off, by doubting my ability to do so. Notice how the forces are also affected by the context and the need to integrate society's conventions such as politeness and saving face, an important concept in Chinese but not so much in English. The context often obscures differences between modals as do changes in the use of the language itself. As languages are dynamic, they are constantly changing to accommodate the interactions of their users. Nowadays, most British speakers will use *shall* and *will* interchangeably in most situations, while North Americans seldom use *shall*, reflecting a culture which is much more direct than that of the British Isles.[10]

[10] As we have seen, language changes with use. Words change functions and develop new meanings. This was the case with many of the modal verbs which find their origins in lexical items used to express obligation or physical strength that became grammaticalized as the modals that we know. For an interesting account of these changes see: Sweetser [8].

Forces vary in intensity, they can be triggered by different agents (internal and external) and they result in different outcomes, movement through space or a change of state due to an interaction. If we think about the physical world we find objects or people (forces) that block or restrict our actions, facilitate or compel them.[11] Our actions are similarly affected by abstract forces that compel, restrict or block them based on our emotions and moral understanding of what is right and wrong.

Forces vary in strength in both the physical and abstract worlds. Native speakers have an intuitive sense of the strength of a suggestion based on the modal verb that has been used:

(54a) *You **must** go to the doctor to have that checked out.*

will be interpreted as a stronger suggestion than:

(54b) *You **ought** to go to the doctor to have that checked out.*

Second language learners, including Chinese learners, often misinterpret sentences like those above and misuse the modals, appearing rude or aggressive to native ears. Studies with Chinese learners show that they overuse some modals, such as *can*, *will, could* and *would*, while others, like *may*, are underused.[12] Not surprising, as many textbooks provide general rules for the use of the modals which leave learners unsure as to when to use which ones. From a cognitive linguistics perspective, these actions are classified not by the speech act: obligation, ability, and so on, but by the forces, agents and paths the speaker has conceptualized metaphorically as part of the action and is seeking to transmit to their interlocutor.

Mark Johnson, one of the fathers of cognitive linguistics, explains forces as schemas based on these physical experiences: *compulsion*, a strong force acting on a body to generate movement or action; *blockage*, when action meets an obstacle that causes it to change direction or stop; counterforce, strong head-on forces coming together; *diversion*, when two forces come together at angles to each other, causing a change in path; *removal of restraint*, when an obstacle is removed and the movement can continue its path; *enablement*, there are no barriers and there is a potential force that could make the action possible; *attraction*, instead of the force pushing the body to lead to movement it is pulling it.

As we have experienced forces physically, we are now able to map their intensity, agency and resulting movements (or lack thereof) onto abstract concepts of possibility, necessity or actuality such as obligations or requests. Eve Sweetser[13] describes forces from a sociophysical perspective as either external or internal. We are pushed to do things by external forces, physically by the wind or socially by friends, the institution where we work, the government, or by internal forces like our morals or ideals (of course, these are also shaped by society and dictate our actions, but in a more subconscious manner). When we use modals, we indicate our attitude to events and provide information as to the forces behind the actions. When a strong

[11] Johnson [9].

[12] Yang [10].

[13] Sweetser [8].

force *compels,* we have an obligation to act (we use *must)*; when a *barrier is removed,* we have permission and the option to carry on the movement/action (we use *may)*; when we are able to carry on the action we use *can*.

(55a) *I **must** hand in my assignment by tomorrow.*

(55b) *I **may** hand in my assignment today* (but I have until tomorrow to do so).

(55c) *I **can** hand in my assignment by tomorrow* (I have enough time to finish it).

In the previous examples *must* (55a) refers to an external force (the teacher) dictating when the assignment is due and compelling me to hand it in on time. In (55b), *may* indicates an option as the barriers to proceed have been lifted (the teacher allows early submissions). In (55c) *can* indicates my ability to finish the assignment. Other modals note an internal agency to the force:

(56a) *I **need to** hand in my assignment by today* (I have until tomorrow but I have other things to do so I have set this deadline for myself).

(56b) *I **ought to** hand in my assignment by today* (I have until tomorrow but I feel it would be better to do it today).

In (56a) *need to* carries a sense of strong personal drive, while *ought to* (56b) is also internal but implies a degree of uncertainty, a mapping of the force-event from the sociophysical world to the epistemic one of reason and logic. As discussed before, tense is used to indicate the degree of proximity to an event. It can be based on time (today vs. yesterday), social distance and politeness (the polite providing more distance) but it can also be based on how certain we are of the action occurring (the less certain the further away from the *here-now*). The modals could, would, should all use the past tense to distance the speaker from the action indicating less certainty.

8.6 Concluding thoughts

How we talk about the world is based on how we perceive it. As these experiences are grounded in physical actions it is possible to explain them to students with multimodal representations. One option is to ask students to draw or re-enact actions that relate to different forces and the ability, compulsion, permission associated with them, and then introduce the modals associated with them. Andrea Tyler, who has dealt with modals extensively, has developed pedagogical materials to visually explain the differences between modals, based on the content discussed above. Her visuals include all the factors: the agent being external or internal, the intensity of the force, the concepts of ability, compulsion and permission as well as the certainty of the event.[14] A more schematic representation of forces can be found in the work of

[14] Tyler [7]. As above (pp. 106–114).

Leonard Talmy[15] although I find Andrea Tyler's illustrations much easier to use in the classroom.

Tenses and the distance they convey can also be easily illustrated. Langacker,[16] the father of cognitive grammar, also provides schematic representations of tense and distance as well as of the concept of boundedness, although Grzegorz Drożdż'[17] account, specific for second language learners, might be easier to implement in the classroom. Academic representations often lack the affective element so important for language learners.

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[15] Talmy [11].

[16] Langacker [12].

[17] [13].

Part III
Integrating Theory and Practice

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Abstract

This chapter provides a comprehensive guide for teachers on how to structure and plan effective language lessons. I have highlighted the importance of understanding all the potential constraints, both external and internal, and having a clear and logical sequence of activities for the lesson, from the general to the specific.

Chapter 9
Planning It All

9.1 Introduction

Coming to class on the first day of term can be as harrowing for teachers as it is for students. After years of teaching, I still need to breathe in deeply and calm myself when I enter a classroom for a first lesson. Everything counts when establishing a rapport with students; your looks, mood and motivation, the physical space, the circumstances that bring you and the students together and, of course, their mood and motivation too. Many of these things will be out of your control but having a plan and knowing what you want to do will go a long way towards helping at least manipulate them to your advantage.

Our value as teachers is to push students to think for themselves, so that they can also learn by and for themselves, identifying the right time to say the right thing for the idea to grow and become another. It would not be realistic to expect each of our actions and words to have this result, but their combination might. Planning ahead will help to achieve our objectives.

9.2 Planning

For each hour of teaching, I spend about a day preparing if I know the subject well. If it is a new subject, it might be up to a week. My teaching planning starts well in advance of the term. Teaching itself, the few hours in contact with students, is a small part of the process but, because of the limited time, it needs to be well prepared. There is a third phase in teaching, that also feeds this preparation, that of evaluation. This refers not only to the evaluation of students' progress but also my own. Each class is different, sometimes things work out and sometimes they do not. Being able to identify what works and what does not is essential for planning the next lesson.

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Planning a course has different levels and the teacher's involvement and planning freedom might only be limited to the last level when in the actual classroom. The levels of planning are, in increasing level of detail:

- General framework for language teaching
- Curricular plan for the language
- Institutional curricular plan
- Subject program
- Class plan.

There are a number of second language acquisition frameworks used worldwide but the most important one in Europe is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The CEFR was created when the European Union developed its language objectives: European citizens were to be at least bilingual, speaking their mother tongue and another language. At that point, there was a need to consolidate all language teaching so that intermediate students of French or Italian would have covered the same content as an intermediate student of Danish or Greek.

For British English, the British Council provides a plethora of resources under their website but not a framework or a curriculum. Instead, this was developed by the Cambridge English Language Assessment board of Cambridge University. Mainland China and Hong Kong both follow the guidelines of the CEFR through curricula and pedagogues influenced by the guidelines of the British Council and Cambridge.

Institutions usually follow the national curriculum and develop their courses accordingly, with a number of subjects to be taken by students in sequence following a strict progression. Teachers in charge of one of these subjects will be told what the objectives are for the year/term and they might have the flexibility to create their own tasks. Most often, schools select textbooks that teachers have to follow, which provide a set syllabus and pre-designed tasks.

Considering that most teachers are given the material to be used for each lesson, is there any need to plan? I believe so. Having a plan makes you think about how you will achieve your objectives. It will make you reflect on how best to allocate time, present your tasks, arrange the space you have and motivate your students. A plan will allow you the flexibility to digress when necessary and not lose track of your final objective, to pre-empt problems and keep a log of your class-activities for their future evaluation.

Planning in detail is very time consuming and frustrating when you find that you did not have time to use half of the activities you had planned. However, once you have your lesson plan you will be able to use it for a future class, so it is unlikely that it will be wasted. Thinking things through leads to an increase in confidence, this is very useful if you have a new topic or a demanding audience. It allows you to be flexible, because you have the means to get back on track. If you have limited time, it is also useful to have a detailed plan to ensure you cover the key points you are required to teach.

However, if teaching is dependent on students' needs, then it cannot follow a strict plan. You have to be flexible enough to attend to the dynamic interactions that always take place in a group of people. These deviations could be short (explaining a

word) or take up the whole class. I once had a personality clash between students that took the entire class-time to resolve and gave me an excellent opportunity to cover vocabulary that was not in the textbook. Plans allow you to deviate from them and then go back to where you were. When you go into the classroom you are teaching, not following a plan.[1]

It is very difficult to plan for a new group of students when you are unsure about their proficiency level or its homogeneity across the group, not to mention their personality and energy. The first couple of classes might be needed to work these things out, to find out how fast you can go, how detailed your explanations need to be and even what other languages you might be able to use in class. For the first lesson always allow more time than you think you will need. As you get to know your students, the planning process will become easier as you will have a main target group, an objective matching their proficiency level and a starting point (your previous lesson).

In a large class you are not going to be able to address everyone's needs all of the time. There will be a group, formed by the majority of students who share learning pace and proficiency level, which will be your target group. Plan for them first and then add what you might need for the other students. This might be additional time and attention, even outside of class, exercises or even advice from the school's special education needs staff.

Once you have identified the objectives for the lesson you need to find suitable contents and integrate them in tasks that will lead to interactions, the more authentic the better. Think also about the skills you want to develop (reading, writing, listening or speaking interaction), and whether you want to introduce new vocabulary as well or revise old concepts. You will also need to plan the sequence of the tasks, the time allocated for each one and how students will work together. Keep your activities varied, practice different skills, present resources in multiple modalities and introduce an activity that will allow you to check progress or confirm that the final objectives have been achieved. Give time for students to present their work and to comment on the experience, even if only a quick thumbs-up. The activities can follow a logical sequence, from the general to the specific, for example. They can also be designed around a topic and varied according to the skill to be developed or aspect of the language to be acquired.

Experienced teachers with smaller groups of learners can also choose to improvise, developing activities as the need arises, usually starting from a planned sample of the language, a text, a video, etc. Whenever I have had the opportunity to follow this approach, it has always been with small groups of very interactive students. Most of the time I was able to cover my objectives but the discussion developed onto other content. On one occasion, I took to class a number of covers of an illustrated satirical political magazine. The objective was to highlight polysemy in commonly used words and yet the lesson developed into a cultural one as students wanted to know the meaning of the satire and the etymology of the polysemic terms.

[1] Scrivener [1].

9.3 Structuring the lesson

A formal language lesson is a very specific genre with a set structure: opening, activity-cycle and closing.[2] An ideal opening would introduce the pedagogical goals of the lesson but in reality teachers tend to spend the first minutes creating a positive learning environment by manipulating both the physical surroundings (turning lights on, moving desks, opening windows) and the affective state of students (motivating, helping students to focus, reminding them as to what has already been covered). Before doing all this, I find it useful to write on the board what it is I will be covering; I do this while students are arriving. Otherwise, in attending to those initial students' needs, I might forget to tell them the objectives of the lesson. If they are written down, I will remember to tell them and students can see them throughout the lesson and know where we are at each stage.

Most of the lesson time is spent on the activity-cycle, usually a sequence of activities leading to the main goal within the framework of TBLT. Activities have to be set up, contextualized and reviewed with transition elements in-between. All of this takes time but how long depends on the group of students. An experienced teacher, already familiar with a specific group of students, will be able to predict how long an activity is likely to take. I have been caught out many times by new groups, and even new activities where students were either much faster or slower (more usual) than I had anticipated. There is nothing to do but to revise the lesson plan as you go because the last thing you want is for students to get bored if too much time is given, or to become frustrated because they cannot finish an activity.

Controlling the duration of activities becomes easier as you get to know your students. Then, you can manage the grouping of students; sometimes you might want stronger students to help weaker ones, other times you might want students of the same level together. For stronger students it might be necessary to design tasks with additional steps. Overall, it is important to avoid complicated task instructions and provide a clear time-limit for completion.

Activities that require a change in students' attitude (from passive input processing to active production) or in the type of production (form-based to communicative) should be marked. Engage students' attention at this point to speed up their reactions, although gradual changes can also be implemented and can be done quite smoothly if an element of an ending activity is used to develop the next one.

Closing the lesson helps to consolidate the main objective and provides cohesion to all the activities. It also prepares students for future learning. I have to confess that I have on occasion run out of time to close a lesson. When that happens, I email students instead and make sure that I start the next lesson with a recap of the previous one. I find the easiest way to close a lesson is by providing feedback and summarizing the key points covered; this can be done by the students themselves or by me, if there is little time. Other closings include: answering questions; reviewing feedback on the activities; linking the contents covered with the general objectives of the course

[2] Lee [2].

or with real contexts where the language could be used; linking the lesson with past and future lessons; asking students to evaluate the lesson and its contents.

Throughout the lesson it is important to observe and note what is happening (things that seem to be important at the time will be forgotten if not noted!). At the end of the lesson getting feedback from students helps reflect further on what needs to be improved.

You have to be credible as a teacher. For some very eminent figures, Chomsky, Pinker, Crystal, their credentials precede them and audiences will fight to sit in the first row at any of their lectures. For most of us, we have to build that credibility and entice students to sit in the first row. Knowing your content is essential. But, for any topic, I believe that knowing it is not enough to teach it, you also need to know how to teach it, and that is where planning your lessons will pay off because it will allow you to pay attention to your audience: you need to be aware of how your audience reacts to you. When you enter a room, do people ignore you or look at you? Do you attract people with your physical presence, charm and charisma? This attraction has a name, it is called *immediacy*.

Immediacy, covered in Chap. 7, is a concept developed in the 1970s[3] and quickly applied to teaching as a way of improving students' grades and their evaluations of teachers. From a practical point of view, if you are working in an institution your contract is likely to be dependent on your students' views of you, not just what you know and how you teach but also you as a person. Students rate male teachers higher than they do female teachers.[4] Please read the previous sentence again. If you are female, you might be judged on your looks and personality more than a male teacher will. Developing immediacy with students should lower their affective barriers and improve learning.

There are also cultural differences that you might want to take into account when developing that immediacy. As your students travel and experience other educational systems these cultural differences are likely to be diluted but keep them in mind nevertheless. The figure of the teacher is not the same for a Chinese, a Canadian or a Brazilian student.[5] Asian countries in general rank the highest in terms of respect for teachers, but they also require a different role from them. A traditional Chinese student, for example, is likely to follow elements of Confucianism and see the role of the teacher as a holistic one where the teacher is not only a vessel for knowledge but a mentor, a confident and a friend. A metaphor for the teacher in China, is that of a candle providing light and consuming themselves for their students.[6]

[3] Mehrabian [3]. For some general observations about the Chinese classroom see: Lopez-Ozieblo [4].

[4] Mitchell and Martin [5].

[5] Dolton et al. [6]. For a non-academic summary see: https://www.studyinternational.com/news/where-in-the-world-are-teachers-most-respected-asia/.

[6] Jin and Cortazzi [7].

9.4 The space

Another unknown at the beginning of each semester, at least for me, is where I am going to be teaching; in which classroom, and how I am going to feel in the space. Where I teach I have a few favourite classrooms and a few I try to avoid, requesting changes if I can (although this is not always possible). If I am not comfortable in a space, I believe this affects me, my mood and my teaching and, chances are, students are also less relaxed. When planning your lessons, it helps to be aware of the physical space where they will be delivered. Space does affect interactions, from how you project your voice to what interactions you might expect from students. This is related to sitting arrangements, which can often be changed, and also to how you, as the teacher, manage groupings.

Almost everything in a physical space can contribute to its occupants' comfort: the lighting, the acoustics, the temperature, the size, the design of the furniture and its arrangement, access to technology (including power) and how these IT tools operate and work. I have taught in a room where the plug was so far away from the desk that I had to place the laptop on a chair in-between and jump over the cable every time I wanted to change slides. Eventually, I had to do away with the laptop. We can manipulate some of the physical elements but others we have to live with, and it pays to become familiar with them before the lesson.

You can stick things on walls and boards as well as project images and text onto them. I like to use the projector on the board directly so that students can write over the projected text, unfortunately not many classrooms are set up like this anymore. I seldom use power point slides in class. Instead, I prefer the board. For me the board is essential, I need big boards not only for me to write on but because I often ask students to write on them, and if you have 25 students writing at the same time you need space. My lesson-bag is full of white-board markers. For the first couple of lessons I give students the markers to encourage them to write on the board, but later I just empty the bag on the desk to make it faster. Different colours are great to differentiate contents and the board itself can be divided in sections (if you can) for different types of content. I try to have sections on either side that I do not delete, one for new words and another with the contents of the lesson. I encourage students to take their own notes by hand, as this enhances the learning process, contributes to better spelling and gives students time to reflect on what it is they are writing down.[7]

I was advised a long time ago to avoid doing in class anything that a student could do instead. I teach by that principle. If students can write it down, say it, explain it, draw it, translate it, then they do it. It takes more time than if I do it but it ensures there are enough activities for everyone. If it means walking all the way from the back or having to walk across a row of fixed seats, then so be it. I pretend to be half deaf to get students to speak up or repeat themselves and I often stand at the back so that they have to write with big letters on the board. Every lesson a student is in charge of the notes, they type them up, send them to me and after checking these are shared

[7] Mueller and Oppenheimer [8]. For a non-academic account see: https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/

with the group. This way they have their own notes but also a corrected version, as mistakes always happen when jotting down notes. If we have used illustrations we just photograph them and share those.

9.4.1 Grouping Students

Depending on how and what you teach, one of those elements you can manipulate is the configuration of tables and chairs. The physical space dictates how our students interact, and how we interact with them.[8] For larger groups in third level institutions, large lecture-theatre style classrooms tend to be assigned. These have front areas reserved for the teacher, large projector screens and no additional board space (this is usually under the screen), which limits the use of both. A space like this leads to lectures, with the teacher doing most of the talking, and very little student–student interaction. It is suitable for teaching large groups and best when presenting a topic as all students are facing the teacher. It is teacher-led, allowing teachers to give equal treatment to all students. In this setting there are few opportunities to address individual needs. Most teacher-student interactions follow the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) sequence (teacher initiates, student responds, teacher gives feedback).

However, the IRF sequence is not very suitable for larger groups as the majority of students do not contribute and it risks taking up too much time. With smaller groups of around 15 or so, it is more effective as it allows those who want to respond to do so and can lead to meaningful discussions among engaged and confident students. The teacher can also ask individual students to respond if only a few dominate the discussion.

Classrooms where the furniture is modular are more flexible as they allow the teacher to address all students, who can move to face the teacher, and they also allow for both individual and group work. When doing individual work each student progresses at their own pace (if the teacher has designed activities accordingly) practicing what they have learnt, usually in written format. This allows teachers to evaluate and give personalised feedback, although it might not be possible to supervise what each student is doing and faster students might run out of activities to do. It resembles the exam context and can be used in the *practice* step of the PPP cycle.[9] However, there are few interactions between students and few opportunities for authentic communicative experiences.

Certain cultures prefer to work in pairs, as do many Hong Kong students. Having to work together to complete a task is more motivational than working alone and it also encourages authentic use of the language (as long as students do not switch to their L1). Usually pair-work helps raise confidence levels and this can be further raised by placing friends together. By placing students of similar levels together

[8] Richards and Lockhart [9].

[9] See Chap. 4.

interaction can be prioritized and by placing students of different levels together learning can be enhanced—in this case one student will learn by teaching and the other by being taught. In large classes, this arrangement might be noisy and it will take longer than individual tasks. An issue is that students might use their L1 only and the teacher might not be able to check on all pairs and whether they are actually working on the task.

With larger classes you might want to ask students to work in pairs or groups –I have found that in groups of more than 4 at least one student usually does not do much, so whenever possible I limit groups to 3 or 4. Students can be left to arrange their own groups, this usually ensures that friends work together, but it also tends to leave a few stragglers behind. When I arrange students in groups I might want homogeneous or heterogeneous groups (in terms of proficiency level); sometimes it is random, depending on where students are sitting or numbering them 1–9 and grouping all the ones together, all the twos, etc.; but more often than not, I will group students by using a content-related activity (e.g., *find someone who shares your birthday month or videogame preference*).

Working in groups motivates students to interact and to be responsible for their own learning by contributing as much as they want. This arrangement usually creates a positive environment and it allows the teacher to spend time with each group. However, the dynamics of the group are affected by its size and the personalities of its members, and students might feel left out or lost if the objective and their roles are not clearly defined.

When students are working together, in pairs or groups, they should be able to see and hear each other well; to have access to the teacher and for the teacher to be able to move between groups and listen in without being conspicuous; to be able to see the board/screen if they need to refer to its contents. Most spaces allow for groups to work independently of one another and, if not, students can always be allowed to use public spaces and then come back to class to present their work. Most groups allocate the work organically, with one person taking the role of secretary, another leading, others researching. At times, the teacher might need to allocate these roles. I prefer to create different groups for different activities as this encourages students to work with new classmates. Cooperative work in groups or pairs can be presented to the whole class, or handed to the teacher for correction and evaluation. Presenting the work can be done group by group, as it would take place in a fair, one member presents to passers-by while the others attend other presentations.[10]

9.5 Concluding thoughts

With so many variables to consider, I always find it useful to plan my lessons. It allows me to be relaxed in class because even if the activities are student-centered, I am still in control of the overall process. Thinking about each activity and why I

[10] Lam [10].

want it done a specific way helps me to evaluate its success. I have to confess that in my earlier years I seldom developed teaching plans—the false confidence of the beginner! Sometimes things went right and sometimes they went wrong, year after year. After a disastrous class you think you will remember it forever but then the next year, when teaching the same thing again, you find yourself making the same mistake. That's where the lesson plans helped me.

I started making very detailed lesson plans which I have continued to use and update over the years. These have allowed me to pay more attention to the affective side of teaching, observing what works and when it works. They have also reduced class preparation time for existing subjects and they are always a good reference after a break from the subject. Most of my lesson plans for subjects I am teaching for the first time have ended up as web-pages, I might use them only once or change them every year, but they are so detailed they end up forming the course notes.

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Abstract

This section provides the reader with seven lesson plans designed to follow some of the principles described in the previous sections. The lesson plans are based on a communicative approach however, the main content-related objective is either a specific grammatical form or lexical item,usually to prepare for an exam-based evaluation. Key in most plans was to lower affective barriers, low self-confidence being an issue in many Chinese classrooms. The lesson plans follow a TBLT-PPP method, with an opening – task/ activity – closing structure.

Chapter 10
Lesson Plans

10.1 Introduction

Today, textbooks come with *teacher's companion* books and not many teachers feel the need to develop their own lesson plans. After all, they are just required to follow the textbook. Teachers are social, creative individuals who thrive in contact with learners (*learners*, not just students). Having the flexibility to adapt the material and try new things is what allows them to create *safe places* not just for others but for themselves. Burnout seems to be the alternative. So, when teaching *Second Language Teaching* to experienced teachers, I wanted to give them the confidence to adapt their existing classroom material. And, to ensure they understood why they did what they did in their classrooms. These teachers, about 150 of them over two academic years, worked in groups to develop lesson plans for one of their classrooms.

Most of these teachers were working in Chinese contexts, and their lesson plans reflect the demands of their institutions and the national curriculum. These lesson plans are designed to follow the principles described in this and the previous section. Each task is justified with a reference to one or more of these ideas. Key in most plans was to lower affective barriers, low self-confidence being an issue in many Chinese classrooms. The lesson plans are based on a communicative approach however, the main content-related objective is either a specific grammatical form or lexical item, usually to prepare for an exam-based evaluation. The lesson plans follow a TBLT-PPP method, with an opening—task/activity—closing structure. Each plan has been created for a specific group of students to cover very specific objectives, identified at the beginning of each plan. Each group was asked to think about every step of their lesson plan and to justify those steps, referencing its source, based on the objectives

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for the lesson. Often, these were to lower affective barriers and to encourage interaction—no choice was random. The sources are provided at the end of each lesson plan and are not included in the main References section.

As the Chinese context is textbook-based, most lesson plans refer to a textbook, and due to copyright issues any images or text from these has been removed or replaced (a reference to the textbook is included when relevant). Whenever the lesson plans refer to resources created for it, usually power points and handouts, these can be found online https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3921-3_10.

Each lesson plan starts with a summary of the context: the number, age and proficiency of students; a brief description of the students, how enthusiastic and interactive they are and what they already know; the objectives for the lesson and various other practical details such as the configuration of the room and the resources needed. The bulk of the lesson plan is a step-by-step account of the progression of the activities. For each activity there is a reference to the resources needed, how to carry out the activity and the justification for doing the activity at that point in the lesson. After each lesson plan a brief commentary provides ideas as to how to integrate the activities within a cognitive linguistics pedagogical approach.

I have edited the plans to make them more focused and readable but I have kept changes to a minimum to allow readers to make their own judgement as to the suitability of each step for their own classrooms. I hope these lesson plans will be inspiration for new ideas but also a tool to reflect on what might or might not work in each of our classrooms.

10.2 Lesson Plan I: Leisure "Inactivities"—Or How to Relax and Do Nothing

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Zhang Xin and Liang Qiangmei.

Introduction

This lesson plan focuses on vocabulary relating to leisure activities. However, the main objective is to guide students in the use of tools to achieve textual cohesion. It also revises previously learnt academic English terms that introduce definitions. The lesson plan is set within the program of a tertiary institution where students need to be familiar with academic English.

Context

Location and class level	Tier-1 University in Guangdong Province, China Class level: First year non-English major Chinese learners taking *College English level 2*	
Proficiency level	CET-4 (College English Test-Band 4); B1 level (Common European Framework of References for Languages); CSE-5 (China's Standards of English Language Ability)	
Age of students	18–19 years old	
Size of the group	24 students	
L1 of students	Mandarin	
Textbook	1. *College English Teaching Guidelines* (大学英语教学指南) 2015 and its 2020 revision by the National Language Teaching Advisory Board, Chinese Ministry of Education 2. The course syllabus (not provided but see Learning Outcomes on-line)	
Textbooks	Greenall, S., & Wen, Q. (Ed.). (2016). *New Standard College English—Real Communication: An Integrated Course* (Book 2) (2nd ed.). Foreign Language Teaching Research Press	
Topic	Lesson Title: '*Leisure "inactivities"*—Or how to relax and do nothing' based on Chapter 5 of the textbook	
Lesson duration	2 Consecutive sessions (90 min total)	
Classroom setting	Modular desks which allow students to interact in both groups and pairs	
Modality	Face-to-face	
Lesson objectives	Function of language	Language used to provide knowledge and as a communicative tool
	Communicative function	Speech acts such as expressing opinion, negotiating, justifying
	Language skills	Interpersonal skills; academic English (terms used in lectures); ways of achieving cohesion
	Generic skills	Integrated skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) needed in the workplace
	Values	How to have a balanced life

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Teacher's aims	By the end of the class, students should be able to: • Provide definitions using academic terms • Communicate and share opinions about leisure activities • Understand how to achieve cohesion in a text • Grasp different ways to give convincing reasons or ideas and develop critical thinking skills
Assumptions	• The material might be slightly challenging for some learners, but the activities are designed to minimize language learning anxiety • Learners remember the contents of previous lessons on academic English
Needs analysis	Cohesion has been identified as a strategy needing further development
Anticipated problems	Students have a limited vocabulary and might have trouble completing some of the exercises
Possible solutions	Provide examples, help in production exercises and feedback
Resources needed	Worksheets, whiteboard, computer, projectors, two smart TVs, two white boards, loud-speaker, audio system, Microsoft Office applications, etc. access to internet and personal smart devices (phones)

Resources (Available Online)

- Learning Outcomes; Worksheets 1–5.

  Additional resources:

- Audio and text used in the activities available at: VoA Leaning English (2014, March 16), "From couch potato to cabin fever".
  - Retrieved from: https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/words-and-their-stories-from-couch-potato-to-cabin-fever-132322483/118835.html
- External resources on cohesion:
  - https://ieltsonlinetests.com/zh-hans/writing-tips/coherence-and-cohesion-ielts-writing-task-2
  - https://www.ieltsadvantage.com/2015/08/12/cohesive-devices/
  - https://www.chinaielts.org/guide/band_descriptors_writing.shtml
  - Web App: https://www.sli.do.comhttps://www.sli.do.com.

Lesson Overview

1. Opening (25 min—suggested times)
   - Introduction
   - Warm-up: Board Game and Topic: Leisure activity
   - Lead-in: Listen and Match
2. Task (53 min)
   - Pre-Task
   - Text Analysis
   - Critical Thinking and Group Discussion
3. Closing (12 min)
   - Evaluation: Exercise in sli.do
   - Homework.

Lesson Plan

	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Opening	**Activity** Introduce the topic of leisure activities/*"inactivities"*, engage students with a game, elicit existing knowledge **Procedure** 1. Introduce the topic of this lesson: leisure *"inactivities"* 2. Introduce the major learning outcomes and main tasks for this lesson 3. Help students to understand the made-up term "inactivities" **Aims** 1. Introduce the topic and the main content of this lesson 2. Set up learning goals of this lesson **Rationale** The pre-task phase should offer the necessary background, knowledge and information on the task to be performed to help students become familiar with the topic [1]		T–Ss
Warm-up	**Activity** Board game **Procedure** 1. T shows the class the board game on the projector and explains what Ss have to do before starting the game Rules for participants: 1. Roll the dice and move the game piece the number of squares. Look at the question in the square. Ss gives an answer to the rest of the players who monitor the time. If Ss cannot talk for 30 s, they must move back one square 2. After S has finished speaking, the next player rolls the dice. The winner is the first person who reaches the finish square 2. T divides Ss into six groups of 4 students 3. T distributes board game, game pieces and dice to the different groups 4. T reminds Ss to answer questions using complete sentences 5. While Ss are playing, T is paying attention to the vocabulary and cohesive strategies used 6. As each group finishes Ss need to note down what they found difficult (e.g. speaking for so long, identifying the correct vocabulary, connecting their thoughts, etc.). If necessary, T could provide a feedback sheet to be completed covering the above points **Stage aims** 1. Get Ss ready for the class 2. Let Ss become aware of their leisure activities language knowledge **Rationale**: TBLT is based on "purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning" [2, p. 18]. In accordance with the premises of TBLT, this activity should be a meaningful and communicative one	Board game (worksheet 1 (game); A3 size; 6 copies needed) 24 Game pieces (one for each student) 6 Dice (one for each group)	T-Ss S–S group work

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Lead-in	**Activity** This activity introduces the audio of the text. Students are asked to identify the definitions of key-words **Procedure** 1. T reminds Ss of the contents of the previous class (focusing on academic English and how to explain the meaning of terms) 2. T introduces next activity which will be to listen to a text and identify the definition of some key-words (see Worksheet 2) 3. Before listening to the audio Ss are asked to guess the meaning of the words 4. Ss listen to the audio twice and match the term with the relevant definition given in worksheet 2 5. T invites volunteers to read their answers (using previously learnt terms to introduce a definition), T checks the answers and explains them **Stage aims** 1. Review academic English terms from last class 2. Anticipate information as a listening strategy 3. Be familiar with giving definitions **Rationale** 1. According to [3], problem-based lesson design focuses on teaching students' problem-solving abilities. In this activity, students practice their listening and gain language knowledge through the tasks 2. One of the learning outcomes of this subject is to understand lectures. A strategy for understanding lectures is to identify academic terms that signal different functions like providing definitions, examples or key points. This task practices listening skills and reviews what Ss have learnt previously. This audio also serves as the lead-in activity 3. To lower affective barriers the teacher can (1) form several groups in class; (2) give students enough time to discuss the answers with each other; (3) ask students to give their answers as a group [4]	Audio (see resources) Worksheet 2	T–Ss Ss

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Task Pre-task	**Activity** Reading comprehension This activity works with the written form of the audio previously heard. Students are asked to skim the text, focus on key words and later on cohesive devices (T can show these on the screen or provide students with a handout) Note: The text originally proposed for this Reading Comprehension activity is the one provided in the textbook (pp. 78–80). As not all teachers will have access to the textbook, it has been replaced by the text proposed for the *Listen and Match* activity **Procedure** 1. T explains the activity: 'How is this text structured to achieve meaning and cohesion?' 2. T ask Ss to scan the article for a general understanding (text) 3. T also projects the text onto the board (or on the smart board) 4. Ss are asked to underline keywords 5. T makes a list of keywords and asks Ss to work in groups of 3 or 4 and work out the definitions of as many words as they can within a set time (this will depend on the group). An example can be provided 6. Ss can consult dictionaries but cannot copy the definitions (they need to paraphrase) 7. Each group presents one definition using academic terms previously learnt (when presenting, Ss are encouraged to use illustrations and gestures) 8. For each term presented all other Ss evaluate their understanding on a 1–10 scale. This could be done on an app like sli.do.com which the T can set up while Ss prepare their answers and which Ss can access with their phones 9. After all the key words have been defined, Ss read the text again individually and in their groups summarize the key points 10. T leads Ss to summarizes the text. Together. Either T or a S writes the text on the board **Stage Aims** 1. Help Ss to understand the meaning of several key terms 2. Practice a specific skill: using academic terms that signal definitions 3. Help Ss to grasp the main idea of the article **Rationale** 1. Tactics that are used to enhance reading comprehension include underlining key points, note-taking and summaries [5] 2. Tasks must be integrated into the curriculum content, be compatible with students' goals and interests and their teachers' allegiance to school policy and practice [6, p. 529]	Text (see resources) Cohesive devices webpage or handout (see resources) Worksheet 3	T–Ss Ss–Ss
	Break		

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Task Presentation and Practice	**Activity** Text analysis **Procedure** 1. T gives a brief introduction of different strategies to achieve cohesion, including using cohesive devices such as discourse markers, anaphoric references (referring to items mentioned previously via repetitions, pronouns or synonyms) and punctuation 2. T asks Ss to read the text again and underline, on their copy of the text and the board, cohesive devices 3. Feedback: T corrects and explains when necessary **Stage aims** Help students understand how to develop cohesion **Rationale** Tasks should focus on forms and features of language and communication that students find difficult to learn on their own [6, p. 532]. Cohesion has been identified as a knowledge gap, it is evaluated in writing assignments	Worksheet 3	T–Ss Ss–T
Task Production	**Activity** Create a text about the leisure activities of celebrities and by combining knowledge on leisure activities and cohesion **Procedure** 1. In groups of 3 or 4, Ss are asked to match celebrities with the leisure activities provided in worksheet 4 2. Groups are asked to justify the matchings in writing (T will encourage Ss to provide creative answers with convincing reasons) 3. T asks Ss (all together) to brainstorm cohesive devices/discourse maker that introduce reasons. Then, Ss revise their justifications to include different cohesive devices/discourse makers 4. Each group presents their most creative justification **Stage aims** 1. Cultivate critical thinking and creativity 2. Practice speaking skills 3. Practice cohesion **Rationale** 1. There should be a progression from 'simple' to 'complex' tasks [7, p. 511]. Task complexity will be determined by both task design and implementation. The difficulty of implementing a task can be affected by: whether participants are familiar with it [8]; whether a model answer has been provided [9], if relevant ideas have been covered beforehand [10], time limits [11] 2. An indirect strategy to improve output delivery is to use discourse markers [12]		

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Closing Evaluation Post-task Evaluation and homework	**Activity** Students to evaluate what has been learnt and the lesson **Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to think of two things they have learnt and to post them in sli.do (sli.do could be set up to create a word cloud) 2. T projects the results on the screen and summarizes the contents of the lesson based on Ss' answers (T makes a note of any missing items to revise in the next lesson) 3. Ss are asked to evaluate the lesson and the overall contents (this can also be done in sli.do via pre-set questions that ask for an evaluation based on a 1–10 scale) **Stage aims** Check whether the lesson goals have been achieved **Rationale** According to [13], cognitive strategies operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning. Thus, when students are encouraged to reflect on what they have learnt, their knowledge will be enhanced	Mobile phones	T–Ss Ss
Homework	**Activity** T introduces the homework (worksheet 5): to write a cohesive text **Procedure** 1. T explains that Ss are to read the six sentences and put them together in one cohesive paragraph, using the tools learnt in the lesson 2. Homework to be handed in before following lesson 3. T will discuss the homework in the next session **Rationale** [14] suggest the strategies like rehearsal, organization and elaboration facilitate new learning	Worksheet 5	

Comments

This lesson plan on leisure activities (or "inactivities" as the authors title it) teaches students vocabulary associated with modern leisure activities, such as watching television or playing computer games, which do not require physical exertion, thus *"inactivities"*. The lesson plan begins with a warm-up activity based on a board game that requires students to talk about their leisure time and then presents information about this as well as cohesive devices. The whole class lends itself nicely to the use of gestures, from the enactment of the various leisure activities to the focus on cohesion. The following adaptations could be easily integrated:

1. Students could be further involved by creating their own grid of celebrities and leisure activities (or *"inactivities"*) in brainstorming exercises prior to the *Celebrities and Leisure activities task*.
2. The text could be dramatized by students to process the new vocabulary, creating gestures for the various terms and providing cohesion by repeating those gestures when talking about similar concepts.
3. Aside from iconic gestures that illustrate concepts, most speakers use gestures with a heavy pragmatic load, stressing parts of the utterance, keeping the floor, involving others in the conversation and also adding information to their speech such as inferences, causality or even chronology (what happened when). Very often this information is added via discourse markers but also with gestures (and prosody) that disambiguate the various meanings of those discourse markers. Discourse markers (or connectors), are categorized by function and are usually memorized as a list of words. Chinese learners have difficulties with connectors, mixing up their functions and overusing some of them while underusing others (at least when writing, which is the corpus for most studies). When presenting the various functions of the connectors, gestures could be used to clarify their meanings.

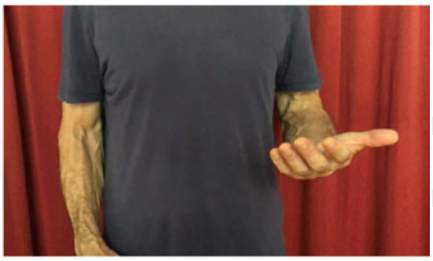
   When introducing discourse markers, students could be first asked to show how they would express with gestures each of the cohesive functions under study. Figure 6 illustrates some expressions observed in English speakers[1] but teachers should encourage students to come up with their own expressions first, and from those select the ones closest to those observed in native speakers.

   Once the gestures have been agreed on, students can practice them before describing the leisure activities of celebrities.
4. The warm-up activity would also be a very good one at the end, rather than the beginning of the lesson, to elicit free production incorporating all the new concepts discussed during the lesson (the duration of the game could be lengthened to half an hour). The game asks students to talk for 30 s, this could be lengthened and additional rules added to include:

[1] Examples from ongoing studies (Lopez-Ozieblo) and Lopez-Ozieblo, R. (2019). Gesturing to indicate time in L2 speakers of English. Presented at the *15th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference*. Kwansei Gakuin University, Japan.

- To use at least two connectors with different functions (the difficulty could be increased by not allowing repetitions in the next turn).
- Hand gestures can be used to elicit help from others (Fig. 10.1).

Addition (and also) / sequencing (next, then)



One hand rotates from palm down to up.

Contrast (on the one hand…on the other)

Qualifying (but, however, although)

Both hands palms facing front (as if stopping something)

Ordering (first, second)

One, two, three, etc., fingers extended with the fingers of the other hand over one or holding it (the finger extended is culture dependent).

Fig. 10.1 Discursive gestures

10.3 Lesson Plan II: The Story of Nian

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Cai Shangmin, Ma Yiwen, Yang Xinrong and Xin Zhou.

Introduction

This lesson is about the origin of one Chinese New Year custom. Several activities are developed to enhance students' lexical knowledge about traditional Chinese festivals. Students are encouraged to identify the meaning of words in the context and to focus on the rule of the third person singular present tense. The overall objective is to improve students' reading, listening, speaking, and writing abilities by focusing on a topic that should engage them. By focusing on Chinese, rather than Western New Year celebrations the topic is made more personal for students and should elicit language based on emotions.

Context

Location and class level	Grade five in a public primary school in Shenzhen, China	
Age of students	10–11 years old	
Size of the group	40	
L1 of students	Mandarin	
Modality	Face–to–face teaching	
Classroom type	Traditional classroom (modular furniture)	
Topic	The story of Nian, Spring Festival	
Learning experience	All the students have been learning English for five years, and some of them have been learning English since kindergarten. Students have already mastered some simple words and sentence patterns. They can use the present tense to express simple ideas and are able to use some simple interrogative sentences	
Learning style	Most students are extroverted. They like working with others and enjoy expressing themselves in English classes	
Lesson duration	50 min	
Framework	National English Curriculum Standard for Compulsory Education (2011 Edition) Textbook: Ron, H., Sam, M. 张春柏 & 施嘉平. (2015). 义务教育教科书英语五年级下册. 上海市中小学 (幼儿园) 课程改革委员会和牛津大学出版社 (This lesson plan is to be integrated within Unit 4)	
Learning objectives	Main objective • To improve students' reading, listening, speaking, and writing abilities	
	Sub–objectives • Practice the rule of the third person singular present tense	
	Language knowledge	• Grammar: consolidate the use of the third person singular present tense (–s, –es) • Vocabulary: village, monster, banners
	Language skills	• Listen and understand The Story of Nian • Read the passage aloud and find specific information • Retell the story and talk about it • Write about The Story of Nian
	Generic skills	• Collaborative skills • Creativity: produce original and imaginative dialogue
	Values and attitude	• Develop an interest in the language through multiple activities • Build up the confidence to speak English by engaging with others

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Teacher's aims	• To maximize engagement through activities, speaking and teachers' feedback • To provide assistance and effective feedback when needed • To incorporate real life information into the classroom
Assumptions	Students have learnt how to use the third person present tense and words relevant to the Spring Festival, a.k.a. Chinese New Year (e.g. dumplings, red envelopes, fireworks, dinner, etc.) in previous class
Anticipated problems	This is a large class and there might be discipline issues (there are 40 students divided into 4 groups with 10 students in a group in some activities)
Possible solutions	Simplify the task and give clear instruction. Allow students to react through pictures or gestures

Resources (Available Online)

- PowerPoint slides; worksheets.
- The text for *The Story of Nian* can be found in the textbook (it has also been provided in the PPT slides).
- The video can be found at: 金太阳教育集团 (2015). Story of Nian monster. [video] Retrieved from: https://youtu.be/PulUQxaNnr8
- Audio files have been embedded in slides 2 and 4. The audio files needed to present *The Story of Nian* can be extracted from the video.

Lesson Overview

1. Opening (7 min—suggested times)
   - Introduction: Greeting
   - Warm up: Revision
   - Lead in: Connection to new content
2. Tasks (38 min)
   - Pre-task: Presentation—Introduce *The Story of Nian*
   - Task: Practice—Designed to enhance story comprehension
   - Production—Story retelling as a role–play (group work)
3. Closing (10 min)
   - Post-task: Revision
   - Homework: Poster design of a festival story
   - Feedback questionnaire.

Lesson Plan

	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Opening Greeting	**Activity** Introduce the topic and the goals for the lesson **Procedure** 1. Teacher (T) introduces the topic by asking the students (Ss) what they remember from the last lesson (also related to Spring Festival) 2. T revises the content from the last lesson by asking students to recall the vocabulary already learnt 3. T introduces the *guest student, John*, starts the PPT and plays the audio of John (PPT 2) T's suggested talk: "Hi, boys and girls. Since your last class introduced the activities you do during the Spring Festival, today we have a foreign guest from the UK who is very interested in learning more, can you help him?" 4. Play the first audio of John from the PPT and show the dialogue /script of his audio on the slide with a few blanks (PPT 2) 5. Ask Ss to pay attention and fill in the blank (orally) on the PPT [answers in red, PPT2] 6. After filling the blanks, T invites Ss to respond to John's question by moving to PPT 3 which shows illustrations of Spring Festival activities T says: "Very good. Who can tell John what we do during the Spring Festival? Let's review it together." **Aims** 1. To attract students' attention and connect the course content to their existing knowledge 2. To reinforce students' listening skills through audios 3. To incorporate real–life context into the class to raise students' pragmatic awareness **Rationale** "Natural language samples can be incorporated into the classroom in a variety of ways. For beginner students, activities such as 'The Classroom Guest' help develop listening, speaking and pragmatic skills" [15, p. 33]	PPT slide 2 Audio embedded in the PPT	T–Ss

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Revision	**Procedure** 1. Use PPT slide 3 to show pictures related to the Spring Festival (or the pictures from textbook page 74 if available) and ask students to answer questions related to them (these revise content seen in previous lessons): T says: "Look at this picture, what is it? What are people doing in this picture? Look at this picture, what is happening?" **Aims** To revise existing knowledge **Rationale** Consolidating activities play an important role in vocabulary learning by ensuring that students recall the meaning of new words in listening and reading, and retrieve words from memory in speaking and writing [16]	PPT slide 3	T–Ss
Lead–in	**Procedure** 1. Go to slide 4 and play the second pre–recorded audio. John says: "Thank you for sharing these. I can see red envelopes, red clothes, red flowers, red firecrackers and so on. But, why is everything red?" 2. Let the students try to answer the question T says: "John is asking a good question. Why is everything red during Spring ?" **Aims** To cultivate learning autonomy by highlighting the fact that not everyone is aware of this Chinese tradition **Rationale** Students' autonomy can be better developed if students find the content useful and it leads them to their desired goals [17]	PPT slide 4 Audio embedded in the PPT	T–Ss

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Task Pre-task Presentation Paragraph 1 (this refers to the first few sentences in the video)	**Activity** Present *The Story of Nian*, sentence by sentence first in audio format (supported with the text if necessary) and later as a video **Procedure** 1. T introduces the story: *The Story of Nian* T says: "Well, let's find the answer from this story." 2. Use PPT slide 6. Play the audio which reads the first sentence. (If T has access to the textbook, it is recommended that the relevant image from the book or the video is shown together with the audio) T says: "Let's listen to this audio first. Pay attention to the new words." 3. After the audio, the teacher uses the image from the video (PPT 6) to explain the key words T says: "Nian is a monster. Who can show me what a monster is? We can see this scary animal in the picture. Please read the word 'monster' after me." 4. Using PPT6, T asks Ss to find words ending in 's'. T asks Ss if they can find what those words have in common (this might not be possible with younger children) T asks "Who do all of those words refer to?" 5. T reminds Ss of the use of 's' for the third person, present tense 6. T asks Ss to complete the first line of the "who–when–where–what table" together (PPT 7, suggested answers in italics) and to copy the results from the board onto their worksheets (worksheet 1) T says: "Please tell me, who is in this picture (PPT 6)? when is it? Where does he live? What happened?" 7. Practice activity: T asks Ss to match the words in the two columns in PPT 8, Volunteer goes up to the board to do the matching. T reads the text together with the Ss. **Aims** 1. To practice listening skills through the audio 2. To consolidate the application of the grammar—the third person singular **Rationale** It is suggested that "learners should first be exposed to new language in a comprehensible context" to understand its function and meaning, and then pay attention to the grammatical forms used to convey the meanings [18, p. 11]	PPT slides 6–8 Worksheet 1	T–S S–S, S–T

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Paragraph 2	**Procedure** 1. Use PPT 9 slide with the second picture of the story from the textbook and let students guess what happens next T says: "Look at the picture. What happens next? Who can guess what the old man says?" 2. Play the audio which reads the second part T says: "Let's listen to the audio. What does the old man say?" 3. T works with Ss to complete the "who–when–where–what table" together on the board and for each student to copy the results individually to their worksheet 1 T says: "Please tell me: Who is in this picture? When is it? What happened?"	PPT slides 9–10 Worksheet 1	T–Ss
Paragraph 3	**Procedure** 1. Show PPT 11 and play the audio that reads the third paragraph 2. T says: "Okay, let's listen to the third audio which is longer than the first two. Listen carefully." 3. After the audio, the teacher will teach students the key words through asking questions about red 4. T says: "Do you see any red things in this picture? What can you find? (Answer: red paper, red firecrackers.) 5. Ask students to imagine and act this scene: 6. T says: "What happens after Nian sees red things? What would he say? Who can act it out?") 7. Ask Ss to work in pairs to complete the "who–when–where–what happens" table (worksheet 1) 8. T says: "Write down, who is in this picture? When is it? What happened?" 9. When finished T checks by asking for some volunteered answers 10. T asks Ss to work in pairs to decide whether the statements on the board are true or false (worksheet 2). T asks for volunteers and corrects the answers	PPT slides 11–13 Worksheets 1–2	T–Ss S–S

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Paragraph 4	**Procedure** 1. Use PPT 14 with the last picture of the story from the textbook 2. Play the audio which reads the last part T says: "Now, let's listen to the last audio carefully." 3. After the audio, the teacher will talk about the items in red that scared Nian (e.g. couplets, envelopes, firecrackers) 4. Ss complete the chart of "who–when–where–what happens" in pairs (worksheet 1)	PPT slides 14–15	T–Ss

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Practice Group game—word pass game	**Procedure** 1. T shows the video of *The Story of Nian* 2. Show PPT 16 with the *Word Passing Game* 3. T divides the 40 students into 4 groups with 10 students working in a row and gives each group a card (worksheet 3) where the first word of the sentence is written 4. Remind students how to play the game (each student fills in a word, the aim is to produce a correct sentence related to *The Story of Nian*). Set the time and use a buzzer to indicate when the time is up (depends on the aptitude of the students). Stress the need to use 3rd person 's' correctly 5. Ask each group to write their sentence on the board and to read it 6. Every group evaluates the sentences according to content and language using the rubrics in PPT 17 and determines one winner 7. T checks and chooses the best one rewarding them with rulers or colorful pens **Aims** 1. To consolidate knowledge 2. To practice the students' sentence-making ability 3. To add more fun to the class and engage Ss 4. To strengthen autonomous language learning ability through observation and peer evaluation **Rationale** 1. When classrooms are organized to promote positive interdependence (that is, to participate in meaningful actions that are beneficial to everyone), our students will participate to a greater extent in "promotive interaction" [19] 2. Feedback from others contributes to successful learning [20] 3. Richards and Lockhart [21, p. 118] suggests that "accuracy-focused activities should precede fluency-focused ones. Feedback on accuracy can help students to strengthen their language ability	Video PPT slides 16–17 Worksheet 3 (one per group)	T Ss

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Production	**Activity** Students create a role-play based on the story (in groups) **Procedure** 1. T divides the 40 students into 8 groups, gives each group paper on which to write their scripts, and introduces how to retell the story (stipulate the time for the activity) T says: "I have already introduced the story to you, now it's time for you to role-play. You will work in a group with five people. First you need to design a conversation for each part of the story and explain what is happening. Use the *Who-when-where-what* table to help you remember. Designate three members to act as Nian, the old man, and the people from the village and the other two to retell the story. Record each person's role on worksheet 4 I will ask two groups to act the story, everyone else will help decide which group is the best in terms of acting and creativity", 2. T asks for volunteers to act the story (if no-one volunteers T chooses the groups). T should have a prize ready for both groups if necessary to motivate Ss. Ss's are allowed to read if they need to 3. T encourages future performance by praising both groups 4. T collects all the scripts to check and give back the following day. T will check the scripts and evaluate content and language **Aims** 1. To practice students' ability of retelling the story 2. To engage the class 3. To encourage Ss' creativity **Rationale** Allwright [22] points out that group work creates a productive and inspiring atmosphere and brings people together. Group work can help to improve enthusiasm, which is beneficial to second language learning	PPT slides 19–20 Worksheet 4	Ss

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	Activities/stage aim and rationale	Resources	Interactions
Closing Revision homework feedback	**Activity** Revise contents covered, set the homework **Procedure** 1. Teacher answers John's question as a summary T says: "Do you still remember our guest John's question? He was asking why everything is red at Spring Festival" Do we now know why?") 2. Teacher shows all the completed worksheets 1 to the class and summarizes the story and the use of the 3rd person 's' 3. T asks for questions or comments 4. Assign homework: to design a poster of either a Chinese or Western festival's story (PPT 22 has some suggestions). The posters will be displayed next lesson and evaluated by Ss T says: "I have an interesting homework assignment for you. You need to find a Chinese festival's story you like, and think about who–when–where–what happens and make a poster of the story. The poster needs to contain an illustration of the story, and your textual description. If you want a challenge, you can describe a Western festival instead" 5. Ask Ss to fill in the feedback questionnaire about the class and its contents (worksheet 5) 6. Closing and Thanks T says: "Thank you all for listening and participating in the class, see you next time." **Aims** 1. To encourage Ss to apply the knowledge they learnt in the class to introduce a festival story independently 2. To encourage Ss to broaden their horizons by searching for information about different festivals **Rationale** When a second language teacher helps students "learn to think about what happens during the language learning process," students can build up learning skills, autonomy and self–regulation." [23, p. 1]. Doing homework after class can help students rethink what happens in the learning process, which can help students develop learning skills, autonomy and self-regulation	PPT slides 21–22 Worksheet 5	T–Ss

Comments

This lesson plan is designed to help young students consolidate the use of the third person in the present tense. The topic is Chinese New Year, which is usually related to positive emotions. The lesson plan aims to cover quite a number of activities, this might not be feasible with all groups. One possibility would be to leave the practice part for a second session, giving students more time to prepare the role-play and to perform it.

1. Students are given the story and asked to role-play its contents to demonstrate their understanding of events. As one of the objectives is to consolidate the use of the third person *-s*, both actors and audience could also be asked to make it salient by producing an *S* shaped gesture every time it is used or heard, marking the 3rd person of the present tense (the gesture could be replaced by an *s* sound or a movement of another part of the body). This will give the teacher an indication of students' awareness of the use of the *-s*.
2. If students are familiar with The Story of Nian (as many might) the teacher could elicit the story from the students, instead of presenting it to them. This might not be feasible with a group of 40 but could be tried with smaller groups where the whole class contributes to develop the story (without dialogues, this would be done as part of the role-play).
3. In order to develop the affective side even more students could be asked to bring items related to the festival before the lesson and decorate the room with them. The role-play could be a much larger part of the lesson where students are given enough time to develop the dialogue, practice and dress up according to their characters.

10.4 Lesson Plan III: Metaphors

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Zhang Haoqi; Bian Tao; He Jiali; Zhou Quan.

Introduction

This is a writing lesson for students to deepen their understanding of the concept of metaphor and improve students' writing skills.

Context

Location and class level	Students are from Zhuhai, a developing southern city in Guangdong province, China. Students have a writing class every week. The number of course-hours spent on speaking and writing are fewer than those spent on listening and reading. Students' receptive skills are better than their productive skills Junior One / Intermediate proficiency level
Age of students	12–13 years old
Size of the group	20 students
L1 of students	Mandarin Chinese
Lesson duration	60 min

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Context	Face-to-face traditional classroom
Topic/theme	Metaphor and emotions
Learning style	Reading and writing preference
Objectives	Main aim(s) 1. To allow students to understand the literary device [see Comments section], metaphors 2. To allow students to express their emotions with metaphors 3. To develop students' creativity and improve their skills in writing poems Subsidiary aim(s) 1. To enhance students' capability to do a fast reading and analyze information
Teacher's aims	• To organize students to discuss in pairs in a controlled manner • To try different correction techniques (e.g. immediate correction and delayed correction)
Anticipated problems	• Some students may still have difficulty in distinguish metaphor from other literary devices. (e.g. simile) • Some students may have difficulties in composing a poem
Solutions	• The teacher should monitor closely during practice and drafting • The teacher can guide students to refer to the examples
Assumptions	• Students have evaluated each other's writings before, so they don't need additional instructions during the "Evaluation and Revise" and "Publication" stage • Students have already learnt the words related to emotion, including ten words mentioned in the warm-up stage • Students have already learnt some literary devices (e.g. simile, allusion, and euphemism) • Students know how to self-evaluate
Resources needed	Worksheets, whiteboard, Blu-tac, A4 size paper (one per student)

Resources (Available Online)

- Worksheets (1–4).

Lesson Overview

1. **Opening (5 min—suggested time)**
   - Introduction
   - Warm-up
2. **Task (49 min)**
   - Introduction and Presentation
   - Practice
   - Production
   - Feedback
3. **Closing (6 min)**
   - Presentation and evaluation
   - Homework
   - Conclusion and Self-evaluation.

Lesson Plan

	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Opening Introduction warm-up	**Activity** Introduce the topic and engage students (Ss) **Procedure** 1. Teacher (T) introduces the lesson topic to students and gives a brief description as to what they will learn: a literary device to express feelings. T asks volunteers to tell the class how they are feeling 2. T asks Ss to write on the board 'emotional' words they have previously learnt with their Mandarin translations (e.g. pleasant, sorrowful, confident, angry, miserable, surprised, cheerful, anxious, optimistic, relaxed) 3. T asks students to write by each word anything they associate with that emotion. Ss are encourage to think about color, objects, weather, songs, animals, scenes, etc. (This content will be used later—do not delete the board) *e.g. I think of the **sun** when I am happy* *Sad is related to the color **blue*** 4. Ss explain any non-obvious associations. 5. T briefly explains that we can connect emotional words with other objects/events, which is the essence of metaphor. **Aim** 1. Raise students' interest in learning 2. Explain the topic of metaphor 3. Prepare for the following stages **Rationale** According to [24], teachers need to generate students' positive attitudes toward learning. He also claims that the key issue in generating interest is to arouse the students' curiosity and attention and to create an attractive image in relation to the class/content so that they will get more involved. This will enhance the learning process		Teacher (T)–student (S)

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task introduction and presentation	**Activity** Introduction to metaphor **Procedure** 1. T writes down the word "metaphor" on the blackboard and points out that it is a figure of speech we commonly use in our language and writing 2. T gives students the handout (worksheet 1) which includes the concept of metaphors and sentences with illustrations as examples 3. In pairs Ss discuss the meaning of the worksheet metaphors **Procedure** 1. T distributes to Ss the second worksheet which is based on a poem about happiness by Pauline Oliver 2. T asks Ss to skim through the poem first and then asks three volunteers to read different stanzas 3. T writes down the term "emotion" on the board 4. T asks Ss to find out what emotion is expressed in the poem, to identify related metaphors and to work out their meaning (T can assign the metaphors. This activity could be done in pairs or groups of 3–4) 5. T deconstructs one of the stanzas in the poem from worksheet 2  6. T asks Ss to go back to their metaphors and deconstruct them in a similar manner (identifying the concrete object the emotion is mapped onto, what that object does, how it does it or its effect) 7. T asks Ss to present their answers around the word on the board (T has been walking around the class during the activity and has been giving feedback and correcting the output of the groups) **Aim** 1. To help students understand the concept of metaphors and the associations they can be based on 2. To improve students' reading skills and enhance their ability to rapidly analyze a text and extract relevant information **Rationale** The teacher presents previously selected content with examples of the input to be taught and a formal explanation of its use. The teacher's role is that of an informant [25]	Worksheet 1–2	T–Ss S–S S
Practice 1	**Procedure** 1. T instructs Ss to finish the true—false exercise in worksheet 3 2. Ss write the answers on the board 3. T asks Ss to evaluate if the answers are correct or not and offers explanations from incorrect answers	Worksheet 3	T–Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Practice 2	**Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to write sentences with a metaphor to express a specific emotion (Practice 2 – worksheet 3 to be done individually or in pairs) 2. Ss share their answers **Aim** 1. To identify and produce metaphors **Rationale** During the learning stage, students benefit from controlled and semi-controlled exercises. Drills are designed to help memorize the new input. The teacher manages the exercises and students' participation. [25]	Worksheet 3	T–Ss
Production Task	**Activity** To write a poem about an emotion **Procedure** 1. T instructs Ss to work in pairs and select one emotion and write the first draft of a poem about that emotion using metaphors. Steps: • Go back to the activity in the Introduction and select one emotion and the items that were associated with it (e.g. sad—blue) • Establish the relationship between them following the pattern of the poem (and the deconstruction in Practice 1) • Write at least three stanzas 3. T walks around helping and giving ideas while Ss work **Aim** Ss to write a first draft following the example **Rationale** 1. It is helpful for students to have a sample text to see and the sample will be viewed as a model [26] 2. The pair work helps students get a clearer idea and better results before the final draft [26] 3. This activity follows the Teaching and Learning cycle: deconstruction, joint construction, Ss construct independently [27]	Paper	T–Ss Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Post-task Feedback	**Activity** To provide peer feedback **Procedure** 1. T instructs Ss to work in groups of 4 to evaluate and improve each other's drafts 2. Teacher monitors and provides feedback at the same time **Aim** 1. To develop providing peer feedback capabilities 2. To build Ss' confidence via group work **Rationale** 1. The reviewers can also benefit by developing the skills of recognizing the good and bad elements of others' work and delivering the revising feedback in a helpful and positive way [28]	N/A	Ss–Ss T-Ss
Closing Presentations and evaluation	**Activity** Present and evaluate the poems **Procedure** 1. T collects the poems and sticks them on the whiteboard 2. Teacher instructs all Ss to: (1) walk around, read the poems and evaluate by giving 1, 2 or 3 stars (provided by T) (2) evaluation based on: creative use of metaphors; logical connection emotion-object of metaphor; language correctness 3. Teacher concludes with further feedback and assessment of the students' performances and announces the best poem with a prize for the authors **Aim** To allow students to give and get feedback from their classmates and the teacher **Rationale** 1. The task of evaluating others' poems allows extrovert students to discuss with each other and introvert students to focus on reading without feeling embarrassed [29] 2. Efficient and measured feedback of good and bad points from the teacher can show a teacher's interest in and attention to a student's performance and thus may lead to sustained motivation. [30]	Blu-tac	T–Ss Ss–Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Closing Revision, homework and self-evaluation	**Activity** To wrap up the lesson **Procedure** 1. T reviews what has been covered in the class 2. T sets homework: Ss to add a stanza or two to their poem (individually) to be handed in before next class (T will evaluate the poems and provide feedback) 3. T asks Ss to complete the feedback survey (worksheet 4) **Aim** 1. To allow students to recall what has been covered 2. To consolidate the work done in the classroom **Rationale** Self-evaluation can help increase students' learner autonomy since they are encouraged to reflect upon their learning [30]	Worksheet 4	T–Ss Ss

Comments

The objectives of this lesson plan were "To allow students to understand the literary device, metaphor"; and "To allow students to express their emotions with metaphor". From a CL approach the main change would be, firstly to present metaphors not as literary devices but as daily-use expressions, found in formal and informal written and oral contexts and, secondly, to use them as tools to present new concepts, not only vocabulary but also grammatical points. In this lesson plan, the topic "Metaphor and emotions" is a most appropriate one. When expressing our emotions, we often use metaphorical language, and much of it idiomatic: I am going to explode; She is over the moon; He flipped his lid.

The one hour allocated for this lesson feels too short. Studies carried out with students of the same age group suggest that they engage with embodied activities, enjoying them but benefiting from time to fully conceptualize the new ideas.[2] For this lesson plan, two one-hour sessions will allow for a more in-depth exploration of the origins of the metaphors and their underlying conceptualizations.

1. Instead of working on a range of emotions the teacher might want to limit these to be able to give more generalized feedback that will relate to the work of all the students. One suggestion would be to focus on sadness and happiness, two well explored emotions from a metaphorical perspective.
2. This lesson plan presents the concept of metaphor by giving students a series of examples, none of which relate to emotions. To provide cohesion, the metaphors presented ought to stay within the topic of emotions. Zoltán Kövecses is an excellent source of these:

Metaphors for sadness[3]

- *My heart **overflows** with sadness.*
- *Yesterday my heart was **full** of sadness.*
- *He is in a **dark mood** .*
- *I was feeling **blue** last night.*

Metaphors for happiness[4]

- *He **radiates** joy.*
- *Her face was **bright** with happiness.*
- *She could not **contain** her joy any longer.*
- *He was **overflowing** with joy.*

The above examples should be given randomly, presented to all students. If time allows, an alternative would be to give students children's books, and ask them to identify metaphors in these texts.[5] Students could be asked to draw or enact the

[2] Falck [31].

[3] Kövecses [32].

[4] Kövecses [33].

[5] See Melissa Taylor's blog for ideas on book titles: https://imaginationsoup.net/picture-books-similes-metaphors/.

sentences (of the given or found metaphors), focusing on the metaphors. Once the drawings are done, students can be asked to group together related concepts.

3. In the examples above, two types of categorizations are likely to emerge: by emotion (sad/happy) and by conceptual metaphor (lightness-darkness and liquids in containers). From here the teachers can explain, or can ask students to explain, the physical qualities of those two concepts and equate them to those of sadness and happiness. Eventually it should be possible to conclude how concrete concepts can be mapped onto more abstract ones and even identify some of the basic conceptual mappings, such as the body being a container of emotions.
4. If the lesson is divided into two sessions, for homework, students can be asked to find other metaphors related to happiness/sadness and identify the concrete and abstract concepts.
5. A second session could then introduce the poem the teachers suggested. Now that students are familiar with metaphors and how they work they could be asked to identify them in the poem, their elements and the concepts that link the abstract and concrete parts. With this poem, students might be asked whether they agree with the poet's vision of happiness. Their homework could then be to create new stanzas for the poem, following the pattern of the existing ones (as suggested by the lesson plan).

10.5 Lesson Plan IV: Festivals

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Fu Fuling, Liao Zhe, Lui Si Ming, Zhan Lirong.

Introduction

In this interactive grammar lesson, students will discuss their favourite festivals and share their cultural experiences while practising the use of the passive voice in English. Using the PPP teaching approach, this lesson plan includes activities to enrich students' cultural and grammatical knowledge. This lesson begins with warm-up activities that introduce the topic of festivals. At the production stage, students are required to use the passive voice to present their favorite festivals.

Context

Location and class level	Students are from a senior high school in Jiaozuo county in Henan Province in Mainland China. Senior high school students (Grade 1)
Age	15–16
English level	Level 6 (about 450 h—in primary school 40 min/week and in junior high school 200 min/week)—Compulsory Education English Curriculum Standard 2011 framework. Students do not have many opportunities to communicate with English speakers, most of their teachers are locals whose first language is Mandarin Chinese
Size of the class	40

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Target language	English		
L2 of the students	Mandarin Chinese		
Learning styles	Visual, auditory, kinesthetic and multimodal learning		
	Learning objectives	Language competence	• Understand the form, use and meaning of the passive voice; • Be capable of describing celebrations and festivals in the passive voice based on students' personal experience and existing language knowledge
		Cultural consciousness	• Enrich students' cultural identity by asking them to think about Chinese traditional festivals; • Encourage appreciation of diversity and different cultures around the world by including videos and activities that introduce Western festivals and values
		Learning strategies	• Strengthen students' cooperative abilities during group collaborating tasks; • Encourage student engagement and proactive learning in speaking activities
	Expected issues	Students cannot use passive voice structures correctly because the disparity between Chinese and English passive voice structures [70]	
Textbook	Wang Q. (Ed.). (2005) *Senior High English* 1. Beijing Normal University Press. This lesson plan accompanies chapter 3 *Celebrations* The textbook presents three texts, introducing three traditional Chinese festivals: the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Lantern Festival		
Lesson duration	80 min		
Teaching method	Face-to-face		
Classroom settings	Modular desks (desks are put together to form groups)		
Teaching aids	Blackboard and projector, textbook (not necessary), worksheets, cultural items (from students), A2 paper, marking pens		
Assumptions	• As students have taken a reading lesson in advance of this grammar lesson, they are familiar with the text used in this lesson • Students are able to recognize the passive voice in previous readings and practice, though it has not been systematically taught • As students have a Chinese background, they are familiar with Chinese festivals. Even though some students might not have experienced celebrating Western festivals, they have some basic knowledge regarding those festivals e.g. the name and origin of the festival • Students are required to keep a class diary for this class and teacher keeps a teaching journal		

Resources (Available Online)

- Worksheets.
- Suggested videos:
- Video 1: Chinese New Year (video length: 1:15 min): 春节相关的英语学习 中国年 Chinese New Year 英语单词学习Retrieved from https://www.ixigua.com/i6652998422452240908/?logTag=5FcqgTFO9_bm1x1nglhHg
- Video 2: Christmas (Christmas dinner) (video length: 16 secs): 圣诞节来临前 节日气氛超级浓厚
- Retrieved from https://v.douyin.com/J1aGYSo/
- Video 3: Christmas (Santa Claus) (video length: 16 secs): Santa Claus Riding Reindeer Sleigh on Sky Crossing Moon. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=43eFaqX-pSo
- Newspaper article relating to Chinese New Year to practice passive voices.

A suggestion (it might need to be adapted to the level of the students) could be: Tan, Y. (2021 January 28). Chinese New Year: Clamping down on going home for the holidays. BBC. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-55791858

Lesson Overview

1. Opening (10 min—suggested time)
    - Warm-up
    - Lead in
2. Task (55 min)
    - Presentation
    - Practice
    - Production
3. Closing (15 min)
    - Summary and Q&A session
    - Homework.

Lesson Plan

	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
Pre-lesson preparation	**Activity** Students (Ss) to prepare items to bring to class **Procedure** The day before this lesson, the teacher (T) asks Ss to think of their favorite festivals (e.g. Christmas, Easter, Chinese New Year etc.) and prepare related items (or photos) such as lanterns, costumes, Easter eggs to bring to the next class **Aim** Establishing the topic for the next lesson and create a sense of expectation **Rationale** The sense of expectation should intrigue students and increase learning motivation [34]		Teacher (T) gives the instruction and students (Ss) are expected to do the preparation
Opening Warm-up	**Activity** Warm-up and introduction **Procedure** 1. T greets Ss and introduces the topic and the objectives for the lesson 2. T groups students into groups of 5 3. T asks Ss to show the items they brought to their groupmates; 4. T invites several volunteers to talk about their preferred festivals and the items they brought **Aim** Identify Ss existing knowledge of festivals **Rationale** Starting the lesson with a fun interactive warm-up activity can reduce anxiety and create a harmonious learning atmosphere [34]	T should bring some additional festival related items in case Ss forget	T Ss–Ss

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	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
Lead-in	**Activity** This lead-in session introduces Western and Chinese festivals by playing videos about Christmas and Chinese New Year's traditions **Procedure** 1. Before playing the videos, T tells Ss they are going to learn more about some of those festivals by watching three videos. T provides a few guiding questions and ask students to pay attention and take notes about the celebrations and traditions in the videos. Guiding questions: – When you are watching the videos, pay attention to the cultural items shown in the videos. Have you seen them during those festivals? (video 1, Chinese New Year: shows red packets, festival couplets, new year cakes etc.) – Do you enjoy having Christmas dinners with your family and friends? (video 2, Christmas dinner: shows a group of family and friends having Christmas dinner) – Do you believe in Santa Claus? (video 3: Santa Claus: shows Santa Claus in his sleight pulled by reindeer) 2. After watching the videos, T asks volunteers to share their responses to the guiding questions and any interesting things they have noticed from the videos **Aim** Introduce the topic of festivals **Rationale**: This engaging lead-in activity arouses students' curiosity and allows students to use their different senses to absorb new information [71]	Videos 1–3	T

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	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task presentation	**Activity** Present Chinese New Year (a.k.a. Spring Festival) and the passive voice **Procedure** 1. Show video 1 again 2. T asks Ss to think about the activities the people in the video were seen doing during Chinese New Year and to also think about the things they do 3. Ask volunteers to write down their answers as full sentences on the board (e.g. *I usually visit my grandparents during the Chinese New Year*) 4. When there are at least 3–4 sentences that can be turned into the passive voice, T re-writes them using the passive voice (e.g. *Grandparents are usually visited by their grandchildren during the Chinese New Year*). (T turns the student's response into passive voice using the *be + past participle* structure, writes these side by side the active sentences) **Aims** This stage tests students' grammatical knowledge of the active voice, which is a crucial part in learning passive voice. If students can fully understand the use of active voice, they can notice the differences between active and passive voice **Rationale** Students can refer to their existing knowledge and personal experience in order to respond to the teacher's questions. This allows students to learn from their experiences instead of having the teacher telling them things. [35]	Blackboard	T–Ss

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	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
	Activity: Explain the passive voice and practice it (Practice 1) with controlled exercises **Procedure**: 1. T ask Ss to compare and contrast the two versions of the sentences on the blackboard 2. T writes answers on the board, explains the differences between active and passive and demonstrates how to switch an active sentence into a passive one 3. Ss practice individually to find the correct verb forms (worksheet 1, exercise 1) 4. Ss write the answers on the board and T corrects them 5. Ss practice turning active sentences into passive ones (worksheet 1, exercise 2) 6. Ss read out their answers and T gives feedback 7. T asks students to compare the main *protagonist* in the active and passive sentences and explains the change 8. T presents other types of passive sentences and their uses (e.g. when we want to put the emphasis on the process and the agent can be absent; when the agent is unknown or we deliberately wish to exclude the agent; in formal texts to make writing clearer and easier to read [see Comments] **Aim** To focus on the structure of passive sentence **Rationale** Explicit teaching, in this case of the passive voice, can facilitate students' internalizing the grammatical structure [36]	Blackboard Worksheet 1	T–Ss S
Practice	**Activity** Read a text and identify the passive structures **Procedure** 1. T finds a related article (see suggested newspaper article under resources) and asks Ss to read it and underline all the passive sentences 2. Ss underline a version of the article projected on the board 3. T corrects and gives feedback **Aim** Identify passive structures **Rationale** This stage focuses on drills to reinforce the grammar focus—passive voice [37]	Newspaper article	Ss

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	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
	Activity Practice (2) producing passive sentences **Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to work in pairs and asks them to watch Video 2 again and remember the various actions portrayed in the video 2. Ss are asked to describe the video by producing active sentences, partners turn them into passive ones (Ss to switch roles after every sentence) 3. After four rounds, Ss refer to their cultural items and produce two sentences each in the active voice, the partner switches them to the passive voice 4. Meanwhile, T walks around the classroom, asking each pair to explain how they are making the switch and how the passive voice alters the meaning of the sentence **Aim** Ensure Ss are aware of the differences between the active and passive forms **Rationale** This semi-controlled practice can serve as a mid-lesson evaluation to check whether students have grasped the key points of the passive voice. Assessing students' explicit knowledge is useful in monitoring their language output [38]	Video 2	S–S
	Activity Semi-controlled practice (3) **Procedure** 1. T divides the students into groups of 4 (10 groups in total) 2. Each group is given a set of images relating to one specific festival (Christmas, Halloween, Chinese New Year, Dragon boat Festival or Mid-Autumn Festival) 3. Ss to discuss the images in groups and write as many sentences as they can to describe the images using the passive voice. Ss should try to link the sentences and provide a cohesive paragraph using knowledge already acquired 4. T walks around to see if students have any question 5. When Ss finish the task, the teacher will show the sentences of each of the two groups working on the same festival and asks the groups to read their sentences. T highlights any issues 6. After all the presentations T asks Ss to think about the similarities between the Western and Chinese celebrations and notes them on the board (or asks a S to do so) **Aim** 1. To learn and get ideas from others 2. Raise awareness of Chinese and Western festivals **Rationale** This practice prepares Ss for the Production stage where they will be required to show extensive use of contextualized linguistic and discourse knowledge [39]	Worksheet 2 Images related to 5 festivals (10 copies)	Ss–Ss T–Ss

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	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
Task Production	**Activity** Free production—present your favorite festival **Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to refer to the items they brought to class and prepare a one-minute presentation about the festival related to that item. The presentation has to include at least two sentences using the passive voice 2. Ss prepare their presentations individually 3. When ready (provide a maximum time) Ss share their presentations within their groups (as set for practice 3) 4. The group-members evaluate the presentations (using worksheet 3) and select the best one to represent the group. The evaluations are to be based on a scale of 1to 10 (10 = excellent), and include: content (interesting/novel/creative), correctness of passive sentences, delivery (fluency/voice projection/gaze—items practiced in previous lessons) 5. Selected Ss present to the rest of the class 6. Other Ss are welcomed to ask questions after the presentation if they would like to know more about the festival introduced by the speaker 7. Other Ss evaluate the presentations using worksheet 3 and select the best 8. T confirms the evaluations by providing feedback **Aim** 1. Practice the passive voice 2. Reduce anxiety by allowing students to practice their presentations in their groups before presenting to the class	Evaluation scale (worksheet 3)	S Ss–Ss
Closing Summary	**Activity** Summary of the contents covered **Procedure** 1. T. asks students what they have learned in this lesson (open question) 2. T elaborates on the key points based on Ss' responses 3. T encourages questions from Ss 4. T provides a recap of differences between the active and passive voices		T–Ss

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	Teaching activities rationale and tactics	Resources	Interaction
Homework	**Activity** Set the homework **Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to turn their presentations into a short letter of around 150 words introducing the celebration to a pen-friend who is not familiar with it. At least two passive sentences must be used. The letter to be submitted before next 2. T will evaluate letters and return them to Ss 3. Ss are reminded to add their entry to the Class Diary (in this class, Ss need to keep Class Diary), including answering the following: • What did I learn today? • Is it manageable to handle today's knowledge? If not, which part do I think is difficult? • How well did I perform in activities in the class? • How heavy is the workload? • Any reflection on the content? 4. Class diaries are shared with the T who does not evaluate the entries but takes them into account for future lessons 5. T keeps a Teaching Journal and after this lesson, they reflect on what has been achieved and how it was received, identifying issues that have come up and potential solutions **Aim** 1. Homework and student diaries help students consolidate the knowledge learnt in class and to reflect upon it 2. Teacher journals encourages teachers to reflect on their classes and make improvements **Rationale** 1. Memory weakens with time and swiftly declines from the very beginning. Timely recall via class diaries and teaching journals are effective tools against memory decline [40] 2. Teaching journal—reflective teaching: Through constant evaluation, the teacher can adjust and refine lesson plans in the future in order to bring about more efficient teaching [41]	Homework Class diary Teaching journal	Students complete the homework

Comments

This lesson plan presents the passive voice using a rather traditional approach, focusing on the grammar. The principles of CL could be added by focusing instead on how a passive structure changes the perspective from which an event is viewed. Another point suggested is to consider the use of passive structures via real texts.

The passive voice is quite a complex multi-functional structure that includes utterances without the be + past participle, like: John had him fired. The teacher will have to decide whether it is best to provide a general introduction to the passive voice and its various forms and uses or to focus first on the more general form of be + past participle and how it is used to alter events by focusing on the agent or the patient (see Chap. 9). Although it is not specified in the lesson plan, the exercises require the formation of past passive sentences. Teachers might want to explicitly note that the passive structure could be formed to change tense and aspect.

1. After students watch the video of Chinese New Year and are asked to present the various activities related to this festival, the teacher could further engage them by asking students to imagine they are actors who have to act out the actions described by the sentences on the board (a selection of sentences should be made by the teacher to ensure they all have easy passive equivalents). Students work in groups to re-enact the actions while the audience has to identify who are the main *protagonists* in each scene (these are underlined in the sentences on the board based on the students' answers). Next, the teacher changes the *protagonists* and asks students to repeat the sketch. For the example provided in the lesson plan, the grandchild is the protagonist who could be shown as going to the grandparent's house. When the protagonists become the grandparents, they are seen at home receiving their grandchild. Students could be asked to draw the scenes instead.
2. The text selected for Practice 2 could be simplified if necessary. If not, it would be a very good source of non-general passive structures, to introduce the use of past and progressive passive structures and to highlight the impersonal function of the passive voice.
3. Although the focus of this lesson is to present the form of the more general passive voice, teachers might want to consider presenting real texts where those voices are commonly used, such as academic texts or news articles. The topic of the festivals is an engaging one, and it should lower affective barriers, but at times the use of the passive voice might feel forced. One suggestion would be to ask students to find news articles relating to those festivities and send them to the teacher before the lesson. The teacher could then adapt these for this proficiency level and work with those in the lesson (developing practice questions from them). Instead of asking students to write a letter to a pen-friend about a festival, students could be asked to prepare a news article about an imaginary event that took place during that particular celebration.

10.6 Lesson Plan V: Restaurants

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Chin Yan Wai Jessy, Tong Hoi Ting Janice, Wong Lai Wah Liz, Yiu Hon Yee, Bennis.

Introduction

This lesson focuses on the experience of going to a restaurant as a social event. It conveys the importance of pragmatics such as manner, politeness and formality throughout the conversation with other family members and the waiter and cashier.

Context

Location and class level	Hong Kong primary school Primary 4
Age of students	9–10 years old
Group size	20
L1 of students	Cantonese and Mandarin
Lesson duration	70 min
Classroom	Traditional setting (non-modular furniture)
Textbook	McNeill, A., & Pang, M. (Eds), (2004). *English to Enjoy*. Hong Kong: Education Publishing House. This lesson is integrated within unit 4: *Food and Drinks: At the Food Court*
Prior knowledge and skills	Knowledge and skills acquired in Unit 4: • Name of dishes • Use 'would you like' to make offers • Use 'would like' to express preferences
Main aim(s)	By the end of the lesson, students should be able to: • Create and design a menu • Practice ordering and serving dishes in a polite manner
Subsidiary aim(s)	By the end of the lesson, students should be able to: • Consolidate vocabulary • Consolidate and practice the application of different expressions related to ordering
Anticipated problems	1. Students might not have the personal experience of having been to all four types of restaurants 2. Students might not know that 'I'll have' and 'I'd like' are the abbreviations of 'I will have' and 'I would like' 3. Students might get excited about some of the activities e.g. menu making as they have the chance to decorate their own menu freely, and as a result the lesson might overrun

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Location and class level	Hong Kong primary school Primary 4
Solutions	1. After showing the restaurant pictures, ask students 'Who has not been to (the type of restaurant)?' and have them raise their hands. Then re-arrange seating to make sure everyone is sitting with someone who can help them before moving on 2. Spend a minute explaining the two abbreviations when checking the answers of the pre-task worksheet 3. Set a timer on the computer and put it on screen to remind students of the time limit
Teaching aids	Computer, internet, projector, board, pens, paper

Resources (Available Online)

- Images of local restaurants to be found online, e.g. https://www.openrice.com/en/hongkong
- Video 1: Easy English (2019). *At the Restaurant Conversation.* [Youtube video]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgfdqVmVjfk
- Worksheets.
- Menu samples can be retrieved from:
  - Fast food (select English version): https://www.lucylovestoeat.com/2019/12/A-Full-Guide-to-Hong-Kong-McDonalds.html
  - Western restaurant: https://www.openrice.com/en/hongkong/menu/dan-ryans-chicago-grill-%E5%8F%88%E4%B8%80%E5%9F%8E-m40079/575
  - Chinese Teahouse: https://www.facebook.com/2098194236927701/photos/pcb.3233745490039231/3233745383372575/?type=3&theater
  - Dessert Café (many ideas): https://dspotdessert.com/full-concept.

Lesson Overview

1. **Opening (5 min—suggested time)**
   - Greeting
   - Introduction
2. **Task (50 min)**
   - Pre-task—Presentation
   - Practice—Design a menu
   - Production—Role plays
3. **Closing (5 min)**
   - Evaluation
   - Summary.

Lesson Plan

	Procedure, Aim and Rationale	Resources	Interaction
Opening Greeting	**Activity** Introduce the topic and engage students (Ss) **Procedure** 1. Teacher (T) greets students (Ss) and introduces the topic: Restaurants 2. T shows Ss pictures of different restaurants in their city and asks Ss to name some food items that they can find in these restaurants (use images from the internet) 3. T asks Ss to work in pairs to brainstorm what they say in a restaurant to order food 4. T asks volunteers to answer and writes them down on the board 5. T introduces the goals of the lesson **Aim** To raise the attention and interest of Ss and let them know what they are going to learn **Rationale** Engage students and manage their expectations to ensure a more interactive classroom	Images of restaurants	Teacher (T)–Student (S)

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	Procedure, Aim and Rationale	Resources	Interaction
Introduction	**Activity** Knowledge building via a video with three different scenes at different restaurants **Procedure** 1. T tells Ss they are going to watch a video where people go to different restaurants. T plays the first few seconds of the video and asks: "What type of restaurant do you think this is?" 2. Ss answer and are asked to study the first part of worksheet before T plays the reminder of first part of the video (until minute 1:15) and asks Ss to fill in Part 1 of the worksheet 3. While playing the video, T will go around the classroom to see if Ss are following. T provides support where necessary 4. T checks if it is necessary to play the video again, if not T tells Ss to study Part 2 of the worksheet (ordering at a fast food restaurant) 5. T plays the second scene (second customer ordering min 3:30–3:48) and asks Ss to fill in part 2 of the worksheet 6. T asks volunteers to give the answers, T checks and gives feedback 7. T checks overall understanding by asking: "Can I say: 'I want a (food item) or 'Give me a (food item)? Why?") **Aim** 1. To make students enjoy learning vocabulary through games 2. To consolidate students' knowledge of the vocabulary in the activity 3. to make sure students have a good understanding of the target language and the notion of politeness **Rationale** 1. Multimodal input has been found to enhance learning [42] 2. Using worksheets is one of the most effective evaluative aids in the academic context as it not only provides students opportunities for knowledge construction but also gives teachers opportunities to understand both the process and outcome of students' learning [43]	Video worksheet 1	Ss–Ss

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	Procedure, Aim and Rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task Introduction	**Activity** Watch the first two scenes of the video to identify differences related to the type of restaurant **Procedure** 1. T plays the whole of the two scenes (to minute 3:56) and asks Ss to pay attention to the differences between the two restaurants such as: dress code, environment, service, ordering (waiter vs. cashier) 2. Ss work in pairs to discuss the differences and complete worksheet 2—Part 2 3. T asks Ss to present their findings and writes them on the board 4. T tells Ss to pay attention to the expressions in bold (expressions used when ordering) adds can/could and writes them on a politeness continuum (would—could—can—will) **Aim** To make Ss aware of behavior and language changes based on context **Rationale** Pragmatic features can be successfully learnt via explicit instruction [44]. In this lesson, formality is rather intangible and abstract, using the video and showing the images of the scene on the worksheet helps Ss visualize the differences. And these differences become tools to convey formality	Video worksheet 2	T–Ss S–S

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	Procedure, Aim and Rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task—practice to consolidate vocabulary	**Activity** Students make a menu **Procedure** 1. T divides students into 4 groups (5 people per group) 2. T introduces the 4 types of restaurants chosen for this activity (Fast food restaurant/Chinese teahouse/ Dessert café/Western restaurant) 3. T asks each group to send one representative to draw a card from a box to find out which type of restaurant their group is responsible for 4. T distributes the list of dishes (worksheet 3), menu samples, an A3 sheet of paper and a set of color pens to each group 5. Each group has to pick the correct 5 dishes from the list of dishes provided in worksheet 3 and design the menu for their restaurant. Each group will also be encouraged to add two additional dishes to their menu 6. While Ss are designing their menus, T will go around the classroom and see if students are following. T will provide support if necessary (e.g. give hints to students regarding matching dishes to the types of restaurant) 7. When all groups are finished, T sticks the menus on the board and asks Ss to look at them and stick a star on the menu they like best **Aim** 1. When designing the menu, students also have to refer to existing knowledge (names of dishes) and pick the correct 5 dishes from the list provided. Hence, their vocabulary knowledge on the topic will be consolidated 2. By allowing each group to add additional dishes to their menu, groups working at a faster pace will be kept busy 3. As they will be making the menu as a group, interpersonal communication and cooperation skills will also be involved **Rationale** 1. Games keep students interested and motivated as friendly competition is often involved [74]. Through the use of a game (Menu Making), students will be able to consolidate their vocabulary knowledge on the topic and enjoy the lesson more 2. Motivational practices are important as it is evident that there is a positive correlation between the motivational strategies and students' engagement behaviors. One of the 4 categories of motivational practices is 'activity design' and it highlights the fact that competition (both individual and team) is beneficial to students' participation and performance [44]	Cards with type of restaurant Worksheet 3 Menu samples Sicky stars (one per Ss),	Ss–Ss

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	Procedure, Aim and Rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Task—role play at a restaurant	**Activity** Students role-play going to different types of restaurants **Procedure** 1. T asks students in pairs to quickly discuss how a waiter or waitress greets customers and starts taking customers' orders and how customers express their preferences and pays, then elicits responses from students 2. T summarizes on the board the expressions expected in the 4 types of restaurants (Fast food restaurant/ Chinese teahouse/Dessert café / Western restaurant) for every step (e.g. welcome/taking order/serving/ paying) 3. T divides Ss in groups of 3, each group has to have one waiter and two customers (one group to have just one waiter and one customer). T randomly allocates a type of restaurant to each group and a menu and asks them to role-play arriving/ordering/siting down/paying 4. T walks around helping groups and also giving ideas to more advanced students to develop more complex dialogues 5. T asks for volunteers or calls at least 4 groups (one for each type of restaurant) to present their role plays (if time allows, all groups should be allowed to perform). Ss are encouraged to use props (and other students) to set up the stage and to exaggerate any behavior they want noticed **Aim** To improve students' communication skills and boost their confidence via speaking practice **Rationale** 1. Role playing not only increases students' involvement in class as they become active learners instead of passive recipients during the learning process [45] but also enables students to experience everyday life situations [46]. As a result, students' interpersonal and communication skills will be enhanced 2. It is better to not incorporate long role play in class before both students and teachers are familiar with it [47]. Thus, the role play used in this lesson is relatively short, and the teacher will ensure the right level of difficulty for the task for each group	Menus made by students plus an additional three menus	Ss–Ss

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	Procedure, Aim and Rationale	Resources	Interaction
Closing Summary and evaluation of the lesson	**Activity** To wrap up the lesson **Procedure** 1. Ss evaluate the role-plays (worksheet 4) 2. T asks Ss to identify the most and least polite context (out of the four restaurants) and to highlight the main differences 3. T names dishes and Ss answer with the type of restaurant these are likely to be found **Aim** To consolidate the contents of the lesson **Rationale** Concluding a lesson means to "go over the material covered in class by summarizing the main points of the lesson" [48]. Teachers can do this themselves or by asking student to sum up	Worksheet 4	

Comments

This lesson plan introduces to students the idea of how the context can affect behavior and language (pragmatics, the use of language within a context) with examples of different restaurants. Pragmatics is seldom taught in second language classrooms apart from a handful of speech acts such as requesting information, greetings and rejecting. Although the communicative approach has gone a long way to close this gap, there is still much to be done in this field. This lesson plan provides a much-needed example, although fairly simple—these are, after all, young children—the message is powerful in that it raises students' awareness of different behaviors by context.

When we talk to others we are not just listening to their words, but we are also observing to how these are uttered (prosody), how our interlocutor is moving, how they interact with what is around us. All of these signals allow us interpret what our interlocutor is saying. In addition, the information shared between us is also essential. Speakers who share a cultural context use this shared knowledge in their daily communications without even thinking about it. Language learners usually do not have this knowledge and will not be able to pick it up implicitly in the classroom because the right situation is unlikely to arise (see the restaurant example in Chap. 4). The pragmatist Victoria Escandell-Vidal[6] points out that different nationalities react differently to the same events. Therefore, pragmatics needs to be taught explicitly.

Pragmatics also dictates how we package our message. I am often reminded of this when I get students' emails where modals are misused, or missing altogether (e.g. *Please revise my grade*, rather than *Could you revise my grade?*). Aside from lexical issues, there are cultural differences, not only age-related ones, that have the potential to break down communication due to a perceived impoliteness. It is not only students' emails; recently, I received an email from a lawyer I did not know in person that began: *Hi there.* Our cultural baggage makes us cringe at the informality of addressing anyone in a formal context with anything other than *Dear Mr./Ms.* You need to know your students' needs as well as their cultural beliefs to make them aware of how their communicative acts could be perceived.

Our shared encyclopedic knowledge includes cultural behaviors that make our actions acceptable or not, such as proxemics (how close interlocutors are); eye contact; haptics (physical contact with your interlocutor); and physical appearance: when greeting in Spain you will give two kisses, in Belgium three, in Germany you will shake hands and in Dubai you might touch noses. These behaviors are rooted in societies, independently of the language spoken, in India you might greet with a *Namaste* while in England you will shake hands.

In the classroom, the variety of situations presented tends to be limited, and here is where real texts are essential. Even when teaching at lower levels, context/cultural differences have to be taught. Aside from the context of a restaurant almost every situation has the potential to be misunderstood culturally. For example, when teaching the vocabulary related to houses, my idea of a kitchen (a spacious area with many

[6] Escandell-Vidal [49].

white-goods and a table) might not be that of a Hong Kong student (a small space with only a hot plate and a sink). This might create confusion when I ask where the fridge is. I expect the fridge to be in the kitchen but in Hong Kong it is more likely to be in the living room. Images help in situations like these and, even better, films and TV shows that portray real life in the country of the L2.

10.7 Lesson Plan VI: The Future: *Will*

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Zhi Kexin, Zheng Shanshan, Li Xiangyi, Peng Zhiyi, Lam Kwai Ming.

Introduction

This lesson is about life in the future. Several activities are planned to build up students' lexical, grammatical and pragmatic knowledge to produce spoken language. The focus is the difference between will/be going to.

Context

Location and class level	Secondary school in Mainland China Grade 8 in Junior High School	
Age of students	13–14 years old	
Size of the group	30 students	
L1 of students	Mandarin Chinese	
Topic	The future tense	
Modality	Face-to-face	
Classroom setting	Modular furniture	
Lesson duration	60 min	
Lesson objectives	Language function	• Grammar: Use the simple future tense (will and be going to) to express things happening in the future
		• Vocabulary: future, technology, making plans
	Communicative function	Describe future events
	• Language skills	• Apply vocabulary and grammar rules correctly • Use body language to convey meaning and intention
	Generic skills	• Work collaboratively with others and treat others' ideas positively in order to accomplish tasks • Talk about personal preferences and suggestions • Produce original and imaginative ideas about the topic: Life in the Future
	Values	Develop assertiveness in using English through individual work, pair work and group work as well as independently making judgements, etc

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Teacher's aims	• To use students' names more often when eliciting answers • To avoid echo correction • To reduce teacher talk • To keep timing for each stage
Assumptions	• Students can use relevant vocabulary previously taught • Students have already studied the structure *be going to* and are familiar with *will* to refer to the future
Anticipated problem	Students may be unwilling or too shy to give a short presentation in front of the class in the last stage of the lesson
Possible solutions	• Collaborative learning: pair extroverted students with introverted students for any discussions and ask them to give their short presentations to a group rather than to the whole class • Avoid overcorrection
Teaching aids	Computer, internet, projector, board, pens, paper

Resources (Available Online)

- Worksheets.
- Powerpoint (PPT).
- Definitions of items related to the future.
- Video (cartoon: future innovations): Imagining the Future World (English Dialogue)—Role-play conversation for Kids. Retrieved from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIhNJH4hg4k&list=PLii5rkhsE0LfAiRdCqhWO17bq-2LIWKVU&index=16
- Homework article *What will life be like in 2035?* by Dean Evans (Retrieved from https://www.suncorp.com.au/learn-about/health/what-will-life-be-like-in-2035.html).

Lesson Overview

4. **Opening (9 min—suggested time)**
   - Introduction
   - Warm-up—lead-in activity
5. **Task (38 min)**
   - Presentation
   - Practice
   - Production
6. **Closing (13 min)**
   - Presentation and evaluation
   - Summary
   - Homework.

Lesson Plan

	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Opening Introduction warm-up	**Activity** Introduce the topic and engage students (Ss) **Procedure** 1. Teacher (T) greets students (Ss) 2. T introduces a Science or IT Festival/Fair (for example the World Science Festival, Brisbane 2019) and shows Ss the website for it 3. T asks Ss to think about the innovations they would like to see in such an event 4. T Introduces the contents and the learning goals for the lesson **Aim** To inform students about contents of the day and set up students' learning goals for the lesson **Rationale** The opening stage offers teachers an opportunity to capture students' attention and get them ready to learn [16]		Teacher (T)–Student (S)
Warm-up	**Activity** Lead-in activity based on a video that talks about future innovations **Procedure** 1. T introduces the evaluation system for the group activities, the group with the most points will win a prize 2. T divides Ss into 6 groups, 5 per group 3. T asks Ss each to predict something about the future (in their groups) 4. T asks a volunteer from each group to write their predictions on the board, T corrects any mistakes with the help of other Ss (in most cases Ss will be using *be going to* as this has already been studied). Do not delete these 5. T introduces the video and asks Ss to pay attention to the predictions made 6. T instructs each group to note down as many predictions from the video as they can (e.g. flying cars, humanoid robots, etc.) 7. Each group writes their predictions on the board and points are allocated to each group according to the number of events correctly listed (correct spelling is needed to get a point for the item) 8. Ss are asked to underline items which are already part of the present (T encourages them to go online and check) **Aim** 1. To help Ss realize how innovation is already changing our lives 2. To introduce vocabulary about the future **Rationale** A competitive participation point system can stimulate students' hormones (dopamine and adrenaline) in the brain and thus encourage active participation throughout the lesson to keep them engaged [50]	Video	T–Ss Ss–Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task introduction and presentation	**Activity** Vocabulary learning **Procedure** 1. T projects 15 images on the screen with words on the screen (some known to students, others new) 2. Ss are asked to read the words and identify the ones mentioned in the video (PPT2) 3. T introduces the next activity: Each group is presented with worksheet 1, a grid containing the 15 images (no words) previously presented on the screen 4. T stops projecting PPT2 and instead projects worksheet 1. T reads out 5 definitions/spellings for various words and Ss have to find on the grid the related image and write down the word associated with it (e.g. T says: "Number 1. a creature from a different planet" and Ss identify the second image in the grid and write "alien" below it) 5. Ss give the answers and each group is given points for the number of correct words identified (if correctly written) **Aim** 1. To make learning vocabulary enjoyable 2. To consolidate students' knowledge of vocabulary through the activity **Rationale** 1. Consolidating activities play a significant role in learning vocabulary [16] 2. The merits of learning vocabulary with games is that students can memorize words in a relaxing and fun way; competition in games can motivate students and keep them interested in learning [51]	PPT2 with words/ images and definitions For each group: worksheet 1	Ss–Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task introduction and presentation	**Activity** Introduce *will* and how it differs from *be going to* **Procedure** 1. T directs Ss attention to the original sentences they wrote on the board (when predicting the future) and the structure be going to + verb 2. T shows the video again and asks Ss to pay attention to how the future is marked 3. Ss respond and are asked to change their original sentences using *will* (on the board) 4. T explains how both *will* and *be going to* can be used to predict the future but points out that *will* usually indicates a higher level of certainty (even if not based on current factual data, e.g. *I will be rich*) 5. Individually, Ss are asked to pick two images at a time, from the vocabulary previously learnt, and connect them using *will*, creating new predictions (e.g. *Humans will visit aliens living on far-away planets*). Ss write their answers on worksheet 2a 6. T asks volunteers for their answers and provides feedback 7. T asks Ss to rewrite the sentences using *be going to*, checks them and provides feedback 8. T points out that language is a very efficient tool so why would we have two forms with the same function. T explains that there are differences between *will* and *be going to* and asks Ss to guess where the two expressions might come from (T encourages pair work and internet searching) 9. Based on their answers, T explains the origins of *will* from desire and *be going to* from walk (see Tylor and Jan, 2019) and introduces other examples (see PPT 3–5) 10. T asks Ss to work in pairs and identify the reasons for using will or be going to in the sentences in worksheet 2b 11. When finished T asks for volunteers to give their answers and provides feedback (see PPT 6) 12. Ss are asked to identify sentences on the board where an external force is/could be the trigger for the action **Aim** To make students aware of the difference between will and be going to **Rationale** By thinking about the explicit reasons for when to use which form students internalize the form-meaning relationships [52]	Video PPT 3–6 worksheet 2 for each student	T–Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Task—present your future	**Activity** Students present their plans for the future **Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to imagine their future and to write down in the first column of worksheet 3 (in bullet point format) what they think they will be doing, what they will have, where they will be, and what that future will look like 2. T asks Ss to in columns 2–4, identify the imminence of the predictions, whether the actions are planned or are just anticipated and the level of control they have over the action predicted 3. Ss come together in their groups of 5 again to discuss their plans, selecting the most creative predictions (about 5) 4. The group writes down full sentences for each prediction 5. Each group nominates one speaker who prepares a summary to present to the class 6. Other Ss evaluate the presentations in terms of correct use of *will/be going to* and creativity (worksheet 4) 7. Ss select the best presentations and points are awarded accordingly) **Aim** 1. To use the future with some personalized content 2. To consolidate the use of *will* and *be going to* **Rationale** Working in small groups creates a sense of community [53]	Worksheet 3–4	S
Closing Evaluation of the lesson homework	**Activity** To wrap up the lesson **Procedure** 1. T calculates the points awarded to every group and announces the winners 2. T reviews what has been covered in the class 3. T distributes worksheet 5 and asks Ss to evaluate the lesson 4. T sets homework: Ss are to read two of the sections in the article *What will life be like in 2035? by* Dean Evans and make a mind map of the items predicted. Ss should underline all uses of the future and pay attention to any forms which do not use *will* 5. T will start the following lesson with the homework which will serve as an introduction to present other tenses that refer to the future **Aim** To consolidate the use of *will* **Rationale** Students can develop stronger learning skills, autonomy and self-regulation when second language teachers help them "learn to think about what happens during the language learning process" [23, p. 1]	Copy of article	

Comments

This lesson plan introduces the differences between will and be going to (the original lesson plan also included shall), with a focus on the differences between the two. Students are introduced to be going to much earlier than will and usually display a tendency to use this form even in more advanced levels. Listening to natives speak will give the language learner the impression that there is little difference between the two forms. The difference between shall and will is also subtle (see comments in Chapter 9) and it is more effectively explained from a modality, rather than tense, perspective, all three uses are presented as form-based in traditional grammars (e.g. use shall / will when making promises; use will with if sentences, etc.), in this lesson plan the explanations are grounded on the etymological embodied origin of the expressions. A more detailed treatment of going to and will is given by Andrea Tyler and Hana Jan.[7] Teachers should also note to students that the present tense can be used to indicate future (e.g. The exam is tomorrow).

Additional activities:

1. This lesson plan has a vocabulary part that could be separated and made into a whole lesson. The vocabulary selection was conditioned by the video but could be based on other resources teachers might want to use. The article suggested for the homework could be used as an additional source to present new vocabulary.

If time allows, students could be asked to become more engaged with the vocabulary by investigating the etymology of selected terms and developing syntagmatic networks (see Chap. 8) related to the topic (e.g. spaceship, space invaders, space station, space exploration, space telescope) but also those that are unrelated (e.g. green space, shared space, desk space, etc.).

10.8 Lesson Plan VII: Health Advice

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Gao Xiaomin, Luo Qi, Wu You, Zhao Kaiyue.

Introduction

The topic of this lesson is health advice. In this class, students will revise body-related vocabulary and ailments and then focus on modals to give recommendations and instructions.

[7] Tyler, A., & Jan, H. (2017). Be going to and will: talking about the future using embodied experience. *Language and cognition, 9*(3), 412–445.

Context

Location and class level	City in Southern China (Shenzhen) Grade 7 in Junior High School	
Age	12–13 years old	
L1 of students	Cantonese, Chinese	
Number of students	25	
Topic	Health advice	
Modality	Face to face	
Lesson duration	90 min	
Lesson objectives	Knowledge	• Give advice • Revise vocabulary: body parts / ailments
	Competence	• To understand modal verbs correctly • To express a physical ailment and give health advice
	Values	Strengthen health awareness and develop healthy habits
Teacher aim	• To provide appropriate assistance when students confront problems • To give timely and positive feedback • To ensure teaching activities run smoothly	
Assumptions	• Students are familiar with the vocabulary relating to body parts and ailments • Students are familiar with pair and group work	
Anticipated problem	Some students may have trouble working on their own	
Possible solutions	• In the presentation stage, the teacher should explain the knowledge points as clearly as possible • In the practice stage, the teacher should observe each student's performance, giving timely assistance • In the production stage, if individual students fail to express what they learnt, the teacher should give them encouragement and invite other group members to help	
Teaching aids	Computer, internet, projector, board, pens, paper	

Resources (Available Online)

- Worksheets.
- Text: Hong Kong government health advice for inbound travelers. Retrieved from: https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html (last section: Testing Arrangements for Persons Arriving at Hong Kong). Note: the teacher might need to adapt the text to the level of the class, this ought to be higher but still accessible with good online dictionaries.

Lesson Overview

1. **Opening (5 min—suggested time)**
   - Introduction
2. **Task (80 min)**
   - Pre-task
   - Presentation
   - Practice
   - Production
3. **Closing (5 min)**
   - Evaluation
   - Summary.

Lesson Plan

	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Opening Introduction	**Activity** Introduce the topic and engage students (Ss) **Procedure** 1. Teacher (T) greets students (Ss) and ask them how they are feeling 2. T introduces the topic of the day (health), the learning outcomes, and the type of activities for this lesson (individual, pair and group work) Aim: 1. To start the class with a relaxed atmosphere and to create an environment where Ss can speak freely to reduce students' anxiety level 2. To let Ss know about the goal of the session		Teacher (T)–student (S)

(continued)

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Pre-task introduction	**Activity** Game of charades: 'Symptoms and diseases' (Ss) **Procedure** 1. Recap session: T starts with last lesson's topic 'Symptoms and diseases'. T proposes a mini- 'Charades' game, to revise the last session. There is no need to assign groups; anyone is free to speak during the game: a volunteer picks a card (worksheet 1) with a health-related word on it, mimics it or explains it without mentioning the word itself. Other Ss have to guess the word. T selects volunteers according to time availability 2. A 'secretary' (T can select different 'secretaries' through the lesson) writes down on the board the word and those associated with it (e.g. body parts) 3. After the recap session ends, T introduces the topic for today 'Getting health advice' **Aim** 1. To increase Ss' interest and engagement in the class by working with other Ss using body language 2. To boost Ss' confidence in public speaking 3. To recap Ss' existing knowledge **Rationale** Body language serves an important role in Ss–Ss communication and T–Ss communication. Not only can it express the speakers' intention more accurately and effectively, simplifying teaching instruction, but also can help improve Ss skills. Using body language can stimulate students' interest in the related topic (Tai, 2014)	Worksheet 1 (cards)	Teacher (T)–student (S)

(continued)

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Presentation	**Activity** Bingo: Knowledge building via Ss' existing knowledge, supplemented by T **Procedure** 1. T asks everyone to brainstorm health advice related to the various ailments on the board. T directs the discussion, encourages Ss to find out new terms (with the help of online dictionaries) and helps translate new terms 2. A 'secretary' writes down key-words next to the ailments on the board 3. T distributes worksheet 2 to each Ss and asks them to fill in the bingo card with ailments and health advice (each Ss is free to select 14 items) 4. T asks Ss to exchange the bingo cards (so that no-one has their own) 5. T copies the ailments and health advice on different pieces of paper, puts these in a bag and randomly pulls them out to read. Ss cross out each word they hear until someone calls line/column or bingo (depending on time) 6. A 'secretary' writes the word on the board (or crosses it out from the existing words) 7. T asks Ss to read out the line/column/bingo to others and they confirm if correct 8. T gives a small prize to the winner **Aim** 1. Teach new vocabulary 2. To consolidate students' existing vocabulary **Rationale** 1. This activity is designed to get all the students engaged by creating a good learning atmosphere via games 2. Vocabulary teaching is crucial to foreign language learning as without an extensive vocabulary, Ss will be unable to use the structures and functions they learn [54] 3. Games are beneficial to learning when Ss do not need to worry about failing [55, p. 478]	Worksheet 2 (bingo)	T–Ss

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Presentation and practice	**Activity** Introduce modal verbs to give advice and suggestions **Procedure** 1. T asks Ss to work in pairs and to use body language and illustrations to signal the following forces affecting a person so that: (a) a person has to do something (*must*); (b) a person cannot do something (*can't*); (c) it is highly recommended a person does something (*ought to*); (d) it would be good for the person to do something but they have an option (*should*) (T can use *must* as an example, showing a big arrow pushing a person from behind for the abstract notion and a student doing their homework before an exam for a more concrete situation—see worksheet 3) 2. When done, T asks Ss to place the various actions on a continuum to illustrate a decreasing level of the various forces 3. T walks around to see how Ss place the forces and leads a discussion until consensus is reached 4. T leads a second discussion about the politeness level of each term (if possible, refer to the illustrations or actions the students have used) 5. T asks Ss to select the correct modal verb for each sentence (worksheet 4, exercise 1), then asks for volunteers to give the answers 6. T asks Ss to work in pairs and to note that the modal verbs can be used with or without *not* and to create at least 4 sentences with modal verbs to offer health advice based on the ailments and suggestions used for the Bingo game 7. T walks around checking and helping Ss **Aim** To introduce differences between modal verbs Rationale: Focused practice allows students to think about the rules they have learnt [56]	Worksheet 3–4	T–Ss S–S

(continued)

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Task Task—write a health-advice blog-entry	**Activity** Ss write a social-media entry about health advice **Procedure** 1. T gives Ss a copy of the Hong Kong government health advice for inbound travelers (or directs Ss to the webpage: https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/inbound-travel.html, last section: "Testing Arrangements for Persons Arriving at Hong Kong") 2. T asks Ss to work in groups of 3–4 and underline the modals in the text 3. T projects the text on the board and Ss underline the words on the board 4. Each group tries to work out the meaning of the various instructions and distil the ideas as bullet points 5. T walks around helping when necessary 6. Once Ss understand the text they are asked to rephrase it into a more informal register adequate for a social-media entry to inform travelers of the HK requirements. Ss are encouraged to add 2–3 suggestions to inbound travelers. Ss are asked to make their points in full sentences and the content clear, accurate and friendly 1. T walks around helping groups 2. T asks each group to share with others in a social-media platform (if the classroom does not have one Ss could write them up on paper and post them around the room) **Aim** 1. To enhance students' cooperation by working in groups 2. To give Ss an authentic task that should illustrate clearly how powerful modals can be **Rationale** 1. Students prefer the atmosphere of small-group discussion over whole-group discussion [57] 2. Group discussion can encourage shy students to participate and it can enhance understanding, even when no one in a discussion group knows the correct answer [58]	Copy of the text or internet access worksheet 5	Ss–Ss

(continued)

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	Procedure, aim and rationale	Resources	Interaction
Closing Summary, evaluation of the lesson and homework	**Activity** To wrap up the lesson **Procedure** 1. All groups read others' postings/posters and "like/dislike" them (or no comment) based on the criteria (worksheet 5) 2. T collects the evaluations and gives some feedback on each posting/poster, comparing the modals with those in the web-page 3. T sets homework: to create a vlog with health advice for inbound travelers to Hong Kong based on their classroom work (individual activity). T should stress that the most important aspect will be the prosody (this has been practiced in previous lessons) 4. Ss to send the vlog to the T who will provide feedback **Aim** Consolidate the contents of the lesson **Rationale** Homework consolidates the items covered during the class [16]. In this case it will serve to revise the contents of the lesson and to ask Ss to practice speech production which was not covered during the lesson	Worksheet 5–6	

Comments

This lesson plan consolidates existing vocabulary knowledge about health and it introduces the difference between various modal verbs, specifically: *should, ought to, must* and *can*. Depending on the context, teachers should be aware of differences in health advice and remedies between Western and Chinese traditional medicine. In a context like Hong Kong, students are likely to be familiar with both but might not quite understand the differences between them. This lesson would provide a valuable opportunity to explain those differences and, if possible, look at the health practices of various English-speaking countries around the world. For older audiences, teachers might also want to provide some information about the health system in the L2 country. Other comments include:

1. It is assumed that students are already familiar with the vocabulary relating to body parts and ailments. A quick introduction to the lesson, and one that will get all students involved, is to ask each student to draw (and label) on the board one body part completing a full human figure. Students are usually keen to show-off and find odd body-parts and internal organs that are not always provided in the text-book (e.g. gall-bladder).
2. Next, students can be asked to associate each body part with an ailment, which will also often elicit less commonly taught health issues (e.g. stones).
3. Using the existing vocabulary on the board, students could be asked to brainstorm remedies and health advice for those issues ranking them in order of urgency and necessity (e.g. going to hospital after a stroke would be more urgent/imperative than having an ultrasound for gall-bladder pain).
4. When introducing the modals, this lesson plan does not cover all the modals. For more advanced students, other modals, discussed in Chap. 8, could also be added, including their negative or interrogative forms and their importance in indicating politeness.
5. Depending on the level of students, it might be easier for them to enact a situation to express the forces /distance (politeness) of the modals. Marcello Giovanelli[8] suggests asking students to draw the actions referred to in commonly used sentences like: *You can open the window; You must do your homework; You can't enter*. On the other hand, Andrea Tyler[9] proposes schematic representations of forces and human figures on which those forces act to explain the differences between the modals. This lesson plan proposes a combination of both, where students are encouraged to draw their own interpretation of the sentences with the modal verbs, taking into account the forces involved. For students who have not had much exposure to modal verbs, the teacher might want to set different scenarios and then provide information as to the forces involved.
6. The homework is based on the COVID-related regulations in Hong Kong. Students in this context are likely to be familiar with the requirements so the higher difficulty of the text should not be an issue as the contents are already

[8] Giovanelli [59].

[9] Tyler [60].

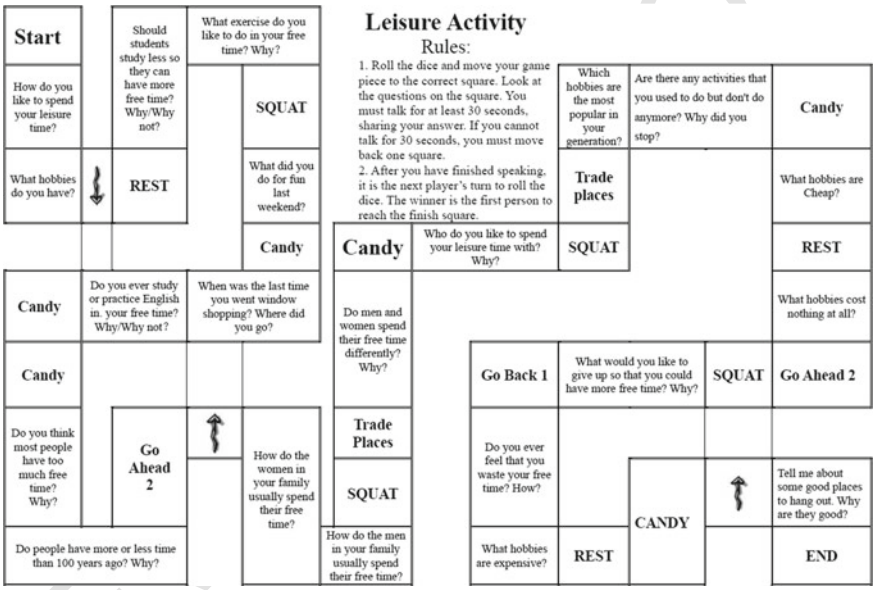
know. However, the teacher might want to adapt the text or, in other contexts, find similar texts relating to other regulations.

Lesson Plan I: Leisure Inactivities—Or How to Relax and Do Nothing

Adapted from the lesson plan by: ZHANG Xin and Liang Qiangmei.

Resources

Worksheet 1: Board Game: Leisure Activities



Worksheet 2: Listen and Match

Work in pairs. Listen to the audio and match the terms with their definitions.

1. Couch potato	A. Boredom and restlessness people experience if they spend too much time inside their homes
2. Mouse potato	B. Parents whose children leave the home, often to study
3. Cabin fever	C. Someone who enjoys watching a lot of television, while doing nothing else

4. Nesting or cocooning	D. Someone who enjoys working on a computer, usually young people
5. Empty nester	E. The way that some people enjoy spending a lot of time in their homes to make them nice places to live

Answers 1C; 2D; 3A; 4E; 5B

Worksheet 3: Definitions Race

Identify 5 key-words in the text and find their definitions (do not copy them!). You will have to present some of them. When you do, remember to use academic language that introduces a definition, such as: That is …; X means…; in other words …; X, or…; by X I mean…; X is the term for…

No.	Term	Definition
(Example)	Couch Potato	Someone who enjoys watching a lot of television, while doing nothing else.
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Worksheet 4: Critical and Creative Thinking (Celebrities and Leisure Activities)

Work in groups of 4 students. Using your imagination, match the celebrities with certain leisure activity. Please provide convincing reasons why they would be interested in that leisure activity.

Steve Jobs	Jackie Chan (Cheng Long)	Jack Ma (Ma Yun)	David Beckham
Michael Jordan	Donald Trump	Taylor Swift	Yao Ming
Kim Kardashian	Miranda Kerr	Gao Xiaosong	Gong Li
Li Ning	Prince William	Theresa May	Stephen Chow (Zhou Xingchi)

Baking	Camping	Window shopping	Having massage
Watching television	Surfing the internet	Knitting	Boxing
Gardening	Eating live octopus	Painting	Learning Tai Ji
Playing video games	Playing basketball	Playing golf	Playing Erhu (a Chinese instrument)

Worksheet 5—Homework

Write 6–10 sentences about one of your leisure activities. Then, consolidate all the sentences into one paragraph. Identify unnecessary repeated words and join the sentences to achieve cohesion by using the tools learnt in this lesson.

Your Answer:

Sample Answer

I enjoy snorkeling in the sea when the weather is good.
I can snorkel for hours when the weather is good.
Snorkeling is good exercise.
I do a lot of swimming when snorkeling.
You use most of your muscles when swimming.
If the water is very murky it is difficult to see anything and then snorkeling is not much fun.
If I can't snorkel I prefer to go to the swimming pool swim for 30 min.
I enjoy snorkeling in the sea for hours when the weather is good. It is good exercise **as** you use most of your muscles when swimming. **However**, sometimes the water is very murky and it is difficult to see anything. **Then**, I prefer to go to the swimming pool and do 30 min of breaststroke.

Lesson Plan II: The Story of Nian (Additional Documents)

Adapted from the lesson plan by: CAI Shangmin, MA Yiwen, YANG Xinrong and XIN Zhou.

Resources

Worksheet 1—Who-When-Where-What Table

Answers Given in Italics for the First Part.

Who	When	Where	What happened
Nian (a monster)	*At the end of every year*	*He lives in the hills*	*He goes into the village and eats people*

Worksheet 2—True or False Exercise

Mark if these sentences are True (T) or False (F)

( ) 1. Nian comes down from the mountains on the last day of the year.
( ) 2. Nian sees red paper on the doors and windows. He also sees red firecrackers.
( ) 3. Nian is not afraid of red things.
( ) 4. Nian feels afraid and runs back into the hills.

Worksheet 3: Card for the Word Passing Game

Add one word and pass it to the next student.
Your goal is to form a correct sentence related to the story of Nian.

Nian _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

Worksheet 4: Acting Responsibilities

Role	Narrator 1	Narrator 2	Nian	Old man	Village people
Group members					

Worksheet 5—Student Feedback Questionnaire

1. I like the class

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

2. I like the teacher today

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

3. I like the role play

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

4. I can understand what the teacher says in class

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

5. The class was not boring

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ Neutral ☐ Agree ☐ Strongly agree

Lesson Plan III: Metaphors

Adapted from the lesson plan by: ZHANG Haoqi; BIAN Tao; HE Jiali; ZHOU Quan.

Resources

Worksheet 1: Metaphor and Poem Writing

What is a Metaphor?

It is a figure of speech that illustrates an object or action in a way that isn't literally true, but helps express a thought or make a comparison.

Examples

1. The world is a stage.
2. Her bedroom is a disaster area.
3. Books are the mirrors of the soul.
4. The doctor is a walking dictionary.

5. The sun is a golden ball.

In pairs, discuss the meaning of the examples above.

Worksheet 2: A Metaphor Poem on Happiness

A Metaphor Poem on Happiness by Pauline Oliver

Happiness is a beacon
Shining in the distance
It flashes and then is gone
Enticing…yet elusive
And earnestly you wait
To glimpse its light once more
In hope and anticipation
You will safely reach that shore

Happiness is a seed
You can hold it in your hand
And plant it in the earth.
To nurture, nourish…tend
To nurture, nourish…tend
Then you need not wait in earnest
For it is within your care
Reap the harvest as you choose
As little… or as much as you dare

Happiness is a thought
You hold it in your mind
Your imagination gives it substance
A dance, a song, a sculpture
Beauty intensified by motion
Or a static panorama
A landscape of desire
A play, a film…a drama

1. Identify the emotion expressed in the poem.
2. Identify the metaphors related to that emotion.
3. Teacher will assign you one metaphor, discuss its meaning and how it is formed.

Worksheet 3

Practice 1: True or False

Are these metaphors? (If the sentence uses metaphor, write True; otherwise, write False)

1. Life is like a canyon between two eternities. (False)
2. Life is a canyon between two eternities. ( )
3. Happiness is like sunshine; it is made up of very like beams. ( )
4. The sunshine of life is made up of very little beams. ( )
5. She saw the light at the end of the tunnel. ( )
6. He's a loose cannon. ( )
7. Her tears fall like a waterfall. ( )
8. Her tears are diamonds. ( )
9. Girl's tears are equal to a river. ( )
10. Happiness is an emotion. ( )

Answers

2. True; 3. False; 4. True; 5. True; 6. True; 7. False; 8. True; 9. False; 10. False.

Practice 2: Create a metaphor for each given emotion (possible answers in italics)

Happy: *(Example: Billy is a ray of sunshine)*
Anxious: *(Example: Billy is a bundle of nerves)*
Sad: *(Example: Billy feels blue)*
Angry: *(Example: Billy is incandescent)*
Depressed: *(Billy is down)*

Teachers should check whether the metaphors suggested by students are also used in a Western context.

Worksheet 4: Self Evaluation

Draw a "smiling face" (☺) in the pane that shows your choice for each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I have understood the meaning of "metaphor".					
2. I can write a poem with a metaphor to express my emotions					
3. This class helped me develop my awareness of metaphor.					
4. I will use metaphors in my future writing.					
5. I enjoyed working with my partner when doing the pair work.					
6. I enjoyed the activity of evaluating others' poems by walking around the classroom.					

Lesson Plan IV: Festivals

Adapted from the lesson plan by: FU Fuling, LIAO Zhe, LUI Si Ming, ZHAN Lirong.

Resources

Worksheet 1—How to celebrate festivals? (Practice 1)

1. **Fill in the blanks**
    1. Every year in September or October, the Mid-Autumn Festival _____ _____ (celebrate) by the Chinese people all over the world. On that day, the moon _____ (say) to be its biggest and brightest.
    2. Traditional moon cakes _____ usually _____ (make) with bean paste, but nowadays, there are many different kinds of moon cakes including fruit, coffee, chocolate and even ice-cream moon cakes.
    3. In the past, lanterns _____ (light) by candles and _____ _____ (decorate) with pictures of birds, animals and flowers, etc.
    4. Nowadays, most lanterns _____ (make) with light bulbs and batteries, and they come in many shapes and sizes.
    5. Sweet dumplings _____ (boil) and _____ (serve) in hot water.
    6. In the old days, dragon boat races _____ (organize) only by Chinese people.
    7. There is a special food for the festival. It _____ (call) zongzi, which is sticky rice in fresh bamboo leaves.
2. **Transfer the following active voice sentences into passive ones**

1. Every Chinese family values the Spring Festival.
2. People clean their house from top to bottom.
3. People put the Chinese character Fu upside down to welcome happiness.
4. Chinese set off fireworks across the sky.
5. People who are away from home have to book train tickets and flights as early as possible.

Sample Answers

Exercise 1

1. is celebrated; is said
2. are … made
3. were lit; decorated
4. are made
5. are boiled; served
6. were organized
7. is called.

Exercise 2

1. Spring festival is valued by every Chinese family.
2. The houses are cleaned from top to bottom.
3. The "Fu" character is put upside down to welcome happiness.
4. Fireworks are let off across the sky.
5. Train tickets or flights have to be booked as early as possible by those who live far away from home.

Worksheet 2—Images for Practice Activity 3

(Images by Abellona Lei for the author. For more of her work see: https://abellonahy.wixsite.com/portfolio-abellona/portfolio).

1. **Christmas**
   - Christmas cards
   - Christmas trees
   - Santa Clause and the gift
   - Christmas food

2. **Halloween**

- Food and decorations
- Pumpkins
- Party
- Trick or treat

3. **Chinese New Year**

- Food (steamed fish, boiled chicken etc.)
- Reunion dinner
- Dragon dance
- Spring couplets

4. **Dragon Boat Festival**

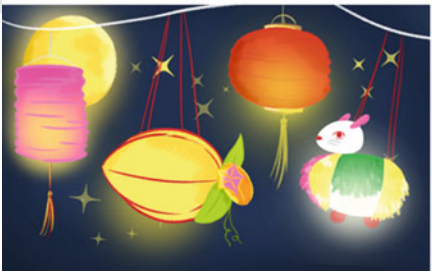
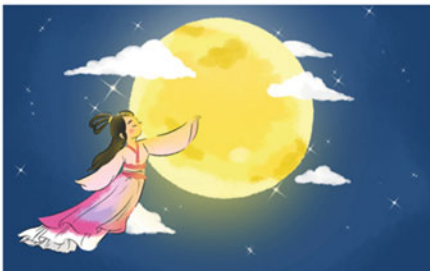
- Dragon boat race
- Food (Zongzi)
- King



5. **Mid-autumn Festival**

- Reunion dinner
- Mooncakes
- Lanterns
- The legend of Chang E and Hou Yi.



Worksheet 3—Evaluation Scales

Evaluate each presentation. Think about:

Content (interesting/novel/creative)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Correctness of passive sentences

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Delivery (fluency/voice projection/gaze)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Write down the total score next to the name of each presenter to select the best presentation

Name	Total Score	Name	Total Score
Ex. John	7		

Lesson Plan V Restaurants

Adapted from the lesson plan by: CHIN Yan Wai Jessy, TONG Hoi Ting Janice, WONG Lai Wah Liz, YIU Hon Yee, Bennis.

Resources

Worksheet 1—Script from the Video

Part I: Watch the video and complete the dialogues using the letters from the right

Ordering in a western restaurant	
Ordering food	
1. Waiter: Are you ready to order?	
2. Dad: Yes, we are. **I'll have**_____ _____	A. a starter
3. Waiter: **Would you like**_____, sir?	B. the chicken soup and a lasagna
4. Dad: Yes, **I'd like**_____	C. the grilled chicken and a salad
5. Mom: For starter, **I'd like** the vegetable soup. For the main course, **I'd like**_____	D. the chicken soup, the grilled chicken and some salad
6. Girl: **I'll have**_____ _	E. the vegetable soup
7. Boy: **I'll have**_____ _	F. the grilled fish

Answers: 2 C; 3 A; 4 E, 5 F; 6 B; 7 D

Part I: Watch the video and complete the dialogues using the letters from the right

Ordering in a fast food restaurant	
Ordering Food **Customer 2** 1. Cashier: Hi, ____? 2. Customer 2: Hi! **I'll have**_____, please. Cashier: Would you like your cheeseburger to _____? Customer 2: No ____ please 3. Cashier: **Would you like** ____? Customer 2: Yes,_____, please. Cashier: Is that it? 4. Customer 2: Yes, that's it	A. onions B. a bottle of mineral water C. anything to drink D. a double cheeseburger with fries E. **what will** you have F. have anything on it

Answers: 1E, 2D, F, A; 3 C, B

Worksheet 2—How we behave in different contexts

Part II—Spot the differences: What differences do you notice between the two restaurants? Which one is more formal? Discuss with your partner and circle the correct answers	
Add screenshot from the video—Western restaurant	*Add screenshot from the video—Fast food restaurant*

(continued)

(continued)

Western restaurant	**Fast food restaurant**
1. Dress code: Formal/Informal	1. Dress code: Formal/Informal
2. Finding a table: Arranged/Self-service	2. Finding a table: Arranged/Self-service
3. Sit down first/Order first	3. Sit down first/Order first
4. Order taken by: A waiter/A cashier	4. Order taken by: A waiter/A cashier
5. Eat first/Pay first	5. Eat first/Pay first
6. Sitting with strangers: Yes/No	6. Sitting with strangers: Yes/No

Worksheet 3—List of dishes

List of dishes			
No.	Dishes	No	Dishes
1	Seafood pasta	11	Banana muffin
2	Cheese burger	12	Hot dog
3	Strawberry ice cream	13	Chicken feet
4	Spring rolls	14	Salad
5	Coke	15	Steak
6	Chocolate cookie	16	Congee
7	Grilled chicken	17	Cheesecake
8	Tiramisu	18	Shrimp dumplings
9	Chicken nuggets	19	French fries
10	Egg tarts	20	Tomato soup

Answers

List of dishes			
1. **Fast food Restaurant** • Cheese burger • French fries • Hot dog • Chicken nuggets • Coke	2. **Chinese Teahouse** • Spring rolls • Shrimp dumplings • Chicken feet • Egg tarts • Congee	3. **Dessert Cafe** • Strawberry ice cream • Tiramisu • Cheesecake • Chocolate cookie • Banana muffin	4. **Western Restaurant** • Tomato soup • Salad • Seafood pasta • Steak • Grilled chicken

Worksheet 4

Draw a or a ☹ for each question for each group and an example of the things the waiter and the customers said

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5	Group 6	Group 7
This waiter did a good job							
He/She said:							
These customers did a good job							
They said:							
This role play was fun							
The role play I liked best (select one):							

Cards for groups to select a restaurant type (x2)

Card 1	Card 2
Fast Food Shop	Chinese Teahouse
Card 3	Card 4
Dessert Cafe	Western Restaurant

Lesson Plan VI: The future—*will*

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Zhi Kexin, Zheng Shanshan, Li Xiangyi, Peng Zhiyi, Lam Kwai Ming.

Resources

Worksheet 1: Vocabulary from the video

Images by Abellona Lei

Drone: © Nevit Dilmen. Retrieved from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DJI_Phantom_1_1530564a.jpg

Wind-power: 林 慕尧 / Chris Lim. Retrieved from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wind_power_plants_in_Xinjiang,_China.jpg

Worksheet 2a: *will* and *be going to*

1. Pick two of the images above and, in the first column, create a prediction using *will*.

will	be going to
Aliens **will** invade Earth	Aliens **are going to** invade Earth

2. Go back to your sentences and, in the second column, change them using *be going to*.

Worksheet 2b: Why do we use *will* / *be going to* in these 2entences?

	Examples	Explanation
1	*If I eat anything else I will be sick.*	*I can control if I eat more or not*
2	Watch out! I am going to be sick.	
3	Mum, we have no milk. I'll go and get it later.	
4	Mum, we have no milk. I know, your brother told me. I'm going to buy some later.	
5	All right, I'll do it.	
6	I promise I'll get it back to you.	
7	We are going to the cinema tomorrow.	
8	I have no money, how am I going to get home?	
9	I have no money, how will I get home?	
10	I think it is going to rain.	
11	I think it will rain.	

Worksheet 3: Your future

Imagine your future and write down (in bullet point format) what you think you will be doing, what you will have, where you will be, what that future will look like (see examples).

Action	How immediate is the action?	Is planning required?	How much control do you have over the action?	Write a full sentence
Go to university	Very	Yes	Depends on my grades	I am going to go to university.
Be a millionaire	Future	It is a prediction (no planning)	It is a prediction (not based on facts)	I will be a millionaire.

Worksheet 4—The best future

Evaluate the presentations you are about to hear.

How creative is this presentation (rate 1–10). Not at all = 0, Very creative = 10

Group Number	Correct use of will / be going to (Yes/No) Not sure (write down the sentence)	Creativity score
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

Worksheet 5: Self Evaluation Form

How well did you do in this lesson? Select the right face!

1. I can understand the vocabulary about future and technology.			
2. I can use the future tense correctly.			
3. I can talk about my ideas about life in the future using the future tense.			
4. I can work with my classmates in groups.			
5. I can express myself clearly.			
6. I feel happy in today's lesson.			

Homework

1. Read the article and make a mind map of the items predicted.
2. Underline all uses of the future and pay attention to any forms which do not use *will*.

Copy of online article *What will life be like in 2035?*

Evans, D. (2022, March 1). What will life be like in 2035? [online article] Retrieved from https://www.suncorp.com.au/learn-about/health/what-will-life-be-like-in-2035.html

Definitions for Worksheet 1 activity:

Source: *Oxford Learners Dictionaries* (online). Retrieved from https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/

- Alien
  - pronunciación: /ˈeɪ.li.ən/
  - definition: a creature from a different planet; e.g. an alien spaceship
- Superpower
  - pronunciation: /ˈsuː.pəˌpaʊər/
  - definition: a country with great international power and influence; e.g. a superpower country
- Spaceship
  - pronunciation: /ˈspeɪs.ʃɪp/
  - definition: a vehicle used for travel in space; e.g. a manned spaceship
- Transportation
  - pronunciation: /ˌtræn.spɔːˈteɪ.ʃən/
  - definition: the act of carrying or moving something; e.g. water transportation spelling: transportation
- Drone
  - pronunciation: / drəʊn/
  - definition: an aircraft that does not have a pilot but is controlled by someone on the ground
- Technology
  - pronunciation: /tekˈnɒl.ə.dʒi/
  - definition: use of scientific discoveries; e.g. computer technology
- Time-travel machine

  - pronunciation: /ˈtaɪm,træv.əl/ /məˈʃiːn/
  - definition: a device with a system of travelling into the past or the future spelling: time-travel machine

- Electronic
  - pronunciation: /ˌel.ekˈtrɒn.ɪk/
  - definition: using, based on, or used in a system of operation that involves the control of electric current by various devices

- Clean fuel
  - pronunciation: /kliːn/ /ˈfjuː.əl/
  - definition: clean energy, e.g. electricity spelling:

- Millionaire
  - pronunciation: /ˌmɪl.jəˈneər/
  - definition: a person whose money amount to at least a million dollars.

- Astronaut
  - pronunciation: /ˈæs.trə.nɔːt/
  - definition: a person trained to take part in space flight.

- Wind-power
  - pronunciation: /wɪndˈpaʊə/
  - definition: power obtained by harnessing the energy of the wind.

- Planet
  - pronunciation: /ˈplæn.ɪt/
  - definition: a large body in outer space that circles around the sun or another star.

- Robot
  - pronunciation: /ˈrəʊ.bɒt/
  - definition: a machine that can perform some of the same tasks as a human being.

- The future looks bright.
  - definition: We say that someone's future looks bright if we think they have a promising future ahead of them.

Lesson Plan VII: Health Advice

Adapted from the lesson plan by: Gao Xiaomin, Luo Qi, Wu You, Zhao Kaiyue.

Resources

Worksheet 1—Words for Charade game

Headache	Fever	Red itchy eyes
Toothache	Sore throat	Stomach ache
Cough	Running nose	A bloody cut

Worksheet 2—Bingo

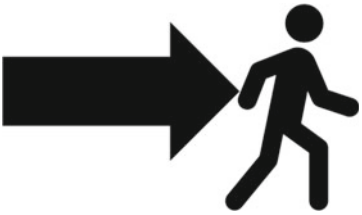
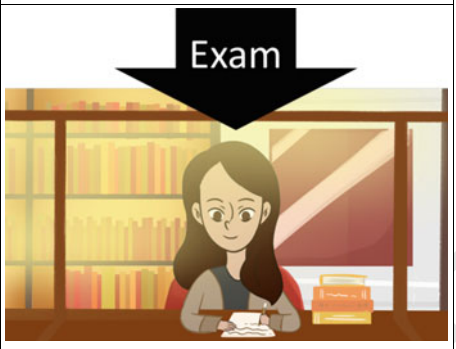
Write down one ailment or one health advice in each square

	Bonus point	

Examples of health advice: take an aspirin; go to the doctor; drink chamomile tea; put some eye drops in; take antihistamines; go to the dentist; drink some fizzy water; stop smoking; avoid smokers; wear a mask; wash it; disinfect it; have stitches, etc.

Worksheet 3—Forces

Draw or mimic these modal verbs indicating the size of the force in each case:

Must (a person has to do something)	**Irene must study to pass her exam.**
	
should (it would be good for the person to do something but they have an option)	**Write a sentence with *should* and draw it**
can't (a person cannot do something)	**Write a sentence with *can't* and draw it**

ought to (that it is highly recommended a person does something)	**Write a sentence with *ought to* and draw it**

Worksheet 4—Suggestions and advice

1. Select the best modal verb for each situation (answers in italics):
   - The doctor told me I _____ finish the full course of antibiotics, otherwise they will be useless next time I have an infection. (*must*)
   - You _____ wash your mask every couple of days. (*should*)
   - If you think you have a problem with your tooth you _____go to the dentist. (*ought to*)
   - My dad has high cholesterol, he _____ eat eggs. (*can't*)
2. These modal verbs can be used with 'not' as well. Work with your partner to create some at least 4 suggestions based on the recommendations and ailments you had in the Bingo game.

Worksheet 5—Evaluation of group presentations

Evaluate other groups like  /dislike  or "no comment" Based on:

- How clear are they instructions and suggestions?
- How accurate are they? (based on the government's guidelines)
- How friendly are their instructions/guidelines?

Group Number	Clear	Accurate	Friendly
1			
2			
3			
4			

Worksheet 5—Lesson Evaluation

What did you think of this lesson? Draw the right face for each question!
Give this to your teacher when finished.

	
I can understand the vocabulary	
I understand the difference between the must, ought to, can't, should	
I can talk about health advice with the right vocabulary and verbs	
I can work well individually	
I can work well in a pair	
I can work well in a group	
I enjoyed the class	

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Key Points, Conclusions and Further Reading

This book is intended as a theoretical and practical resource for both new and experienced teachers of a second language. It integrates some of the ideas from cognitive linguistics into existing classroom approaches for teaching English as a second language through a series of lesson plans developed by teachers of English from Mainland China and Hong Kong. The lesson plans are not meant to be CL lesson plans, they just pick some of its ideas. Although the main audience is English teachers, the theoretical principles covered are applicable to teachers of any foreign language and the practical examples, provided in the lesson plans, can be easily modified to teach other languages as well. Similarly, it is not just for teachers working in Chinese contexts but for anyone interested in embodied cognition as a teaching approach. I intend these pages to serve as a companion for teachers to reflect on their existing practices, to provide new ideas and to make them aware of the many factors affecting learning.

Key Points

The book is divided into three sections: Teaching World English as a Second Language, Cognitive Linguistics Approach, and Lesson Plans. The first section begins with a brief overview of language teaching and learning methods and how general cognition abilities support language learning. Chapter 2 provides a brief history of second language teaching approaches to remind readers that we have been learning languages for millennia but we are still to find an approach that works for all.

As teachers, we sometimes blame ourselves for learners' failures, forgetting the many individual factors that affect learning, Chap. 3 presents these. Factors include brain development, affective states, cultural traits, and personality. Increasingly, researchers are linking learners' motivational factors with teachers' behaviors.

R. Lopez-Ozieblo, *Theory and Practice from a Cognitive Perspective*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-3921-3

Successful teachers are those that can create safe mental spaces where students feel comfortable making mistakes, trying new things, being challenged, and interacting with others.

An ongoing discussion in language teaching is whether to implement implicit or explicit approaches and Chap. 4 covers this topic. In the East Asian context there is a preference for explicit instruction but it is worth noting that the two approaches differ in their benefits to learners of different ages. The constraints imposed by teaching institutions and external bodies often mean that an L2 is taught not to communicate with others but to pass exams. Teachers have the almost impossible task of balancing the two objectives. Cognitive approaches address the first objective, language as a dynamic tool that develops with use for the purposes of a community of speakers. But they can also address the second objective by investigating the origins of rule-based practices, thus combining implicit and explicit approaches. An introduction to how this can be done is provided in Chap. 5.

Chapters 6 to 8 detail how *embodiment*, *usage-based language* and *construal*, the principles of CL, are all interconnected and how they can be used to teach a second language in a more intuitive and meaningful way. Chapter 6 is centered on the concept of *embodiment*. The chapter discusses how the body plays a role in learning and how educators can incorporate embodied practices into their teaching. I focus on the use of hand gestures as a teaching resource. Despite their clear benefits to thinking and communicating, gestures are seldom taught in language classrooms. I often ask my students to explain things with gestures but, even in my classes, this is not always easy for them, as students are not used to thinking with their hands! I encourage readers to integrate pedagogical gestures into their teaching, from providing explanations illustrated with gestures, to encouraging students to copy teachers' gestures when speaking, this will strengthen the memory trace related to new input.

Usage-based language is another key concept in cognitive linguistics that emphasizes the importance of associations. I develop this idea in Chap. 7, together with the concepts of metaphor and metonymy. We learn by making associations, of how things look, what their function might be, where we might find them, all of these associations help us remember new ideas. But we also construct language through associations, often using concrete concepts to refer to abstract ones. Sometimes we forget that students do not share our experiences, thus they cannot make associations that come naturally to an L1 speaker. Thus, it might not be enough to re-create an experience in the classroom, it might be necessary to explicitly point out how language evolved from it.

Internal and external forces, where we stand in the world and how we see it, constrain our language choices and shape the way we use it; *construal* is explored in Chap. 8. As I write this, I am thinking that many of our language 'choices' are not such things! I could not say *wrote* instead of *write* because I want to tell you that the action is in progress, close in time to the *thinking;* I could not use *that* instead of *this* because of the proximity of the words to both of us. Multimodal representations, such as drawings or re-enacted actions, can be used to help students *feel* the language, such as the effects of internal and external forces that *compel* us or *push* us to move

forward. Correlating physical experiences with the language used to describe them can help language learners understand and remember new input.

The third section is dedicated to the lesson plans. Chapter 9 provides a comprehensive guide for teachers on how to structure and plan effective language lessons. I have highlighted the importance of understanding all the potential constraints, both external and internal, and having a clear and logical sequence of activities for the lesson, from the general to the specific. I believe that having a detailed lesson plan can help novice teachers to be more relaxed in class, knowing what comes next and having an alternative course of actions, should it be needed. This also allows teachers to pay attention to the affective side of teaching, and gives us time to observe what works and when it works. The lesson plans presented in Chap. 10 bring together the many external factors to consider when teaching. I would not recommend following them to the minute, as every group of students is different, but to use them to reflect on what would work in our classrooms and why.

Conclusions

The reader will note that I have said very little about prosody, phonology or pragmatics, not because I do not recognize their importance but because they deserve more space than we have here. Prosody in particular is seldom taught aside from the implications of a rising intonation. In many contexts, the opportunity for learners to produce speech is minimal and so prosody becomes secondary. And yet, prosody can signal to interlocutors the type of speech-act the speaker intends to communicate (*Yeah* can be used to dismiss, agree, question, all depending on its prosody) or the speakers affective state. Prosody can also help with lexical ambiguities (SUBject/subJECT) and semantic interpretations (Eats shoots and leaves/Eats ^ shoots ^ and leaves), or stress important or new information (Not me YOU). It can also clarify a referent when speakers make mention of previously given information (Richard hit Roger and then BIT him/Richard hit Roger and then HE bit HIM).

Prosody goes hand in hand with pragmatics and how we use the language (something the lesson plans included in this volume have taken into account). Interlocutors make use of their existing encyclopedic knowledge and of the context to predict what is going to be said next and process the information received. Correct interpretations are often more dependent on a sound, shared knowledge of pragmatics than of the lexicon. In our L1, as we hear the beginning of a speech stream a number of lexical options and mental frames become activated. Syntactic knowledge, understanding the position of certain words in a sentence and their relationship with other units, is also essential – gestures are also likely to play an important role in the identification of meaning, although this is yet to be proven. Information gathered earlier in the utterance affects how new sounds are interpreted. Finally, it all comes together due to the context and our world knowledge, which tells us what is to be expected within the context. Language learners struggle with meaning not only for lack of lexicon or syntax but also because they lack L1 pragmatic experience, encyclopedic

knowledge. As teachers, we often forget that in the L2, students do not have access to the same world knowledge we might have and one of the strategies of cognitive linguistic language teaching is to give them access to that world knowledge through experiences. The lesson plans try to incorporate strategy wherever possible.

Living those experiences gives speakers a *feel* for the language that feeds into what is said and how. In the classroom it is not always easy to present those, or similar, experiences to students to allow them to conceptualize the basic ideas from which linguistic expressions have evolved. This is where cognitive linguistics principles help, by relating the language to actions and how we interact with the world around us. These interactions help us to develop mental models that become more complex with more input, resulting in a deeper understanding of new concepts. In the classroom this involves creating experiences for students via tasks that they can relate to, activating existing knowledge. These must challenge them (but not too much), triggering engagement and an emotional response, and need to provide specific real-life objectives that can be achieved, making them motivational.

In addition, if those experiences are linked to physical actions the body will also remember them, strengthening memory traces between items of knowledge. Our bodies and how we use them allow us to experience the world in a specific manner: our eyes are at the front of our heads and our knees bend more easily in one direction, this means that movement is usually forward making the future *ahead of us* and making us *look forward* to things. Our language reflects our physical experiences, it is embodied. It is also efficient, developing to allow us to be succinct and informative, not only through the lexical choices we make but also by how lexical items are organized and made salient through syntax, prosody and gestures. However, the objective of language is to allow us to communicate with others. Without this key element its use, teaching and learning becomes meaningless.

Finally, let me remind the reader that learning is a joint effort by the teacher and the learner. No amount of excellent teaching will dent the shell of an uninterested learner. Individual learning differences impact how each of us perceives information, processes and produces it. One of the recognized factors of cognitive differences is age, from our motivations for learning a language to how we process implicit and explicit knowledge. Motivation, one of the most important factors in long term language learning, will change with external factors (e.g. the need to graduate, get a job, travel) but intrinsic motivation, including the "grit factor",[1] our internal drive to persevere, is likely to be a more constant driver. As teachers, learners' cognitive differences are out of our control, but by being aware of them we might be able to present input in a manner better suited to individual students. It will also allow us to recognize where to draw the line, who to push and who may best be left work things out by themselves.

The lesson plans presented in this book provide many ideas as to how to address the factors teachers need to consider. Each step proposed has been justified so that readers can modify the plans knowing what the objectives are. These vary from content learning to ensuring students are motivated and feel safe. My hope is that

[1] MacIntyre and Khajavy [1].

readers will be able to use the lesson plans to generate their own ideas, selecting and modifying those that will fit their contexts. Most importantly, the aim is to invite readers to think about why they teach the way they do and, based on the theoretical principles provided, feel confident to try new things in the classroom.

Many of us have taught, or teach even now, without a full understanding of most of the concepts described in this book. It would seem that our students learn, even if we are not following a communicative approach, or only teaching implicitly, or teaching just with a grammar-based textbook. However, we can make that learning more enjoyable, longer-lasting and effective for our students if we are able to consider the many learnings from the diverse fields that contribute to a CL teaching approach.

When teaching, we need to remember that our students come to us with their own views of the world, reflecting their experiences within a specific community of speakers. These views often differ from those of the L2 community and it is up to us, the teachers, to identify potential conflicts that might hinder learning. The classroom is a very demanding place and it is not always easy to step back, observe and reflect on what is being learnt. A cognitive teaching approach is also a reflective one that helps us understand what is happening and why.

As neurolinguistics research advances, we are getting closer to understanding why some individuals learn faster than others, but we are still a long way away from developing a teaching method that will make all our students fluent in the L2. Approaches and methods come and go but a meaning-form approach based on the social need to interact with others has, if nothing else, a practical purpose. Following an approach that mirrors how we process information, how we categorize input, connect it to existing information and store it, should ease the learning process and engage students. And, if the input provided can be experienced in a physical manner or explicitly mapped onto physical experiences then its conceptualization will be richer and more likely to be remembered.

As the West's position in the world-order shifts, some might question the demand for English as a foreign language in the Asian region. However, the demand is still there. Hundreds of teachers (and teachers to be) apply every year to do a Master like the one at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University—whose students provided the raw material for this book—to develop their skills in teaching English as a second language. English is still taught as the main foreign language across Asia and how we do it will impact our students' futures and—on an optimistic view of things—the development of positive relationships between countries, cultures and peoples. But our next challenge may well be from artificial intelligence (AI). If future texts are created based on those that already exist, will English continue to evolve new words and metaphors or will it stagnate as algorithms recycle existing expressions over and over? Will our role as teachers of English survive? Will command-based writing become a more desirable skill than fluency? Will cognitive linguistics still be able to provide us with an adequate framework to interact with disembodied language users?

Further Reading

CL is a multi-branch field and interested readers will be able to delve much deeper into any aspect of language, including phonetics and phonology, which I have not really covered in these pages. Readers interested in learning more about the link between mind, body and environment in second language teaching might want to consider the following authors:

Cognition and Emotion

Antonio Damasio—Neuroscientist, a writer of accessible books on the effect of emotions on cognition

Jerome Kagan—Psychologist who spent much of his career working on a longitudinal study on temperament and its effects as people age.

Michael Tomasello—Psycholinguist who established the importance of social cognition.

Michael Ullman—Neurologist studying the link between language, memory and the brain, with a focus on second language learning.

Other Factors Affecting Learning

Zoltán Dörnyei—Psycholinguist focusing on the psychology of the learner, in particular motivation.

Peter MacIntyre—Psychologist studying affect and language anxiety.

Rebecca Oxford—Psychologist who developed the idea of different learning strategies.

Gestures

Adam Kendon—One of the fathers of gesture studies, Kendon began to study gestures from an anthropological perspective.

Marianne Gullberg—Psycholinguist whose recent work has focused on gestures in second language acquisition.

David McNeill—Psycholinguist who focuses on the relationship between gesture, speech and thought. Together with Kendon, the other father of gesture studies.

Cornelia Müller—Linguist focusing on the pragmatic nature of gestures, in particular metaphors in gesture.

Gale Stam—Psycholinguist focusing on gesture in second language speakers.

Teaching Second Languages

Rod Ellis—Linguist and pedagogue, focusing on a Communicative approach and Task Based Language Teaching.

Susan Gass—Linguist focusing on second language acquisition research.

Stephen Krashen—Linguist and pedagogue who formulated a number of theories about second language acquisition.

Michael Long—Psycholinguist who introduced concepts like *focus on form* and in the *Interaction Hypothesis.*

Lourdes Ortega—Linguist and pedagogue integrating applied linguistics into second language teaching.

Peter Robinson—Psycholinguist focusing on Task Based Language Teaching and individual differences such as attention and aptitude.

Cognitive Linguistics

Raymond Gibbs—Psycholinguist who focuses on embodiment, cognition and language.

Mark Johnson—Philosopher focusing on embodiment.

Ronald Langacker—Linguist, one of the fathers of cognitive linguistics and originator of cognitive grammar.

George Lakoff—Linguist and philosopher, father of conceptual metaphors together with Mark Johnson.

CL and Teaching Second Languages

Randal Holme—Pedagogue, proposing practical solutions for bringing CL into the English language classroom.

Jeannette Littlemore—Linguist focusing on metaphors and metonymy.

Andrea Tyler—Linguist researching the impact of CL practices in language learning.

Reference

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1. MacIntyre, P., & Khajavy, G. H. (2021). Grit in second language learning and teaching: Introduction to the special issue. *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning, 3*(2), 1–6.

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