

Developing language skills assignment



Throughout this subject, we have also reviewed how the four skills can be used together effectively and this has had a great impact on our views concerning the use of each part of the course books units. We have analyzed that with careful reflection and planning, any teacher can integrate both receptive (listening and reading) and productive skills (writing and speaking) in their classes simultaneously. For this purpose, teachers should have a solid plan for their lessons; think about what might be the best approach, methods and techniques, activities, materials & resources and aims to be achieved; cater their students' needs & interests and evaluate how the different units in a textbook develop equally "the four skills".

The objective of this assignment is to analyze the unit 7 from the course book *Bachelor's Made Easy*, Richmond Publishing and the unit 'Bottle' from English textbooks. All along this assignment, we are going to compare, contrast and understand how each skill is going to fit the student's needs and how they are going to write a short and general introduction for each of them that will also show what we have learned from the reading of the subject material; then we are going to analyze the two units mentioned above and finally, at the end of the assignment, we will write a conclusion which briefs the main ideas of this subject and that also answer which unit we prefer.

Features of the units Approaches Throughout the course (in Methodological Approaches), we have analyzed different approaches, which most of them focus on a particular skill. However, nowadays, there are a number of theories that "have opted for a 'multi-syllabus' approach" (Funnier material; n. D. ; DOLS p. 2) and try to use the well-known four skills' as much

as possible. Regarding the course book *Bachelor's Made Easy* and the unit *Bottle of Ink!*, they both present a strong influence of the Communicative Approach or CLOT that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study. The four "language skills" are catered and they are interrelated within the same topic. But there are other aspects we should take into account and this is what we are going to focus on.

Grammar and the four skills' Most teachers disagree that grammar should be taught separately, not integrated with other skills such as reading and writing but, sometimes it is possible to note a strong sense of divergence between teacher's stated beliefs and actual classroom practices related to grammar teaching as conclude Richards, Gallo and Remanded (2010). In *Bachelor's Made Easy* there is a relation between production and grammar. It is possible to see that grammar is taught inductively and it is integrated with the other four skills. The unit teaches reported speech asking the learners to write sentence, taking into account the way to report what someone has said, after that, in an oral practice is asked. Whereas, in the unit of *Bottle of Ink!*

It's possible to see activities like speaking, listening, writing and reading, but it doesn't have grammar section. The rules of grammar are not presented and it means that it is form-focused instruction. Doughty (1991) has examined the effectiveness of focusing on form and indicated that students with form-focused instruction outperformed those without instruction on the target forms. Teaching Reading since, as Jeremy Harmer (2007; 99) point out, 'it has a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, on their

spelling and on their writing, besides it provides meaningful models for future writing and offers opportunities for language study.

Fortunately, we are exposed to an extensive variety of text-types (Griller, 1981) but we would read them not just for pedagogical purpose but for information and pleasure because this ‘ has a powerful effect on the development of literacy-related aspects of language’ (Crasher, 1995) that is why, we as teachers should motivate our students to read for pleasure and also encourage them to read in a variety of genres; and in order to cater the different students’ preferences and needs, we should choose what is best for them, for instance, looking for the “ authenticity’ of a text more than its “ genuineness”, choosing the appropriate approach (top down or bottom up) and the erect pre -while and post reading activities. Analysis In Bachelor’s Made Easy, the reading section has different types of activities like: understanding text organization; checking comprehension; inferring; dealing with unfamiliar word; linking ideas; reacting to the text; skimming; scanning; writing summaries and reports.

The first activity (warm up) accentuates reading as an active process because the students start guessing, confirming, anticipating, and predicting by agreeing and disagreeing since the very beginning. Regarding authentic/genuine’ aspects, we can observe that in Bachelor’s Made Easy, he text is talking about “ friendship” and this is a very useful, appealing and attractive topic for students of all ages, specially teenagers and it can be used with a communicative function which develop and improve the integrated learning. Not only the authors took good care of “ genuineness” but also “ authenticity’, since they made connection between the reader and

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the passage more understandable to stimulate a good response. Therefore students will be fostered to participate freely and be engaged to the whole lesson. And the unit BottleΓ¶n! Goes reflect the same characteristics. Being both of them genuine texts, and also authenticity they do not present the issue of simplification of texts. Teaching Listening As reading, listening is also a receptive skill and it is outstanding since the more learners hear and understand English spoken, the more they absorb appropriate pitch and intonation, stress and the sounds of both individual words and those which blend together connected speech' (Harmer, 2007; 133). According to Nana (1995: 189) ' listening is probably the major source of comprehensible input the learner is likely to receive' In other words, most of the input our students need is transmitted by this skill.

For this reason, teachers should “ provide listening practice in authentic situations: those that learners are likely to encounter when they use the language outside the classroom. ” (Penny Our: 1996). The Kathleen Sailing's five reasons our engage in social rituals, to exchange information, to exert control, to share feelings and to enjoy themselves. (FUNNIER material, DOLS; p. 29) There are three different types of listening: the first gives comprehensible input that is very important to the students. The second, listeners have to interact with the speakers to achieve understanding and the third helps the learners to focus on new forms of vocabulary and grammar.

Speaking is the most important aspect of the language for communication and the most students like it. Speaking activities are good identification of suggestiveness's and weaknesses. There are three main reasons for getting students to speak in the classroom (Harmer, 2007; 123); one of them is that

speaking activities provide rehearsal opportunities (chances to practice real-life speaking in the classroom), secondly, these activities provide feedback for both teacher and students and last but not least, the fact that students have more opportunities to activate the various elements of language, the more automatic their use of these elements become.

As a result, students gradually become autonomous language users. Scott Thornburg suggests that the teaching of speaking depends on there being a classroom culture of speaking, and that classrooms need to become talking classrooms'. In other words, students will be much more confident speakers if the kind of speaking activation is a regular feature of lessons. As Funnier material (n. D. ; DOLS, p. 73) suggest we should change our point of view regarding the speaking skill, we should move away from ' Let's do some speaking today' to viewing it as a fundamental instrument of our education. The opportunities for oral or written production that the units provide are visible in both units.

In the speaking section of Bachelor's Made Easy, students are asked to use their knowledge on the situations presented. The activities are: question and answers, discussions, dialogues and problem solving. Activities in speaking section of BottleΓ¶n! Are: discussion about the issues, giving opinion and some solution for problems. There is work to be done individually and students have to agree or disagree giving their reasons about the solutions proposed and the last activity is a group discussion where students have to give arguments for and against the problem. In the last section, the written part they have a discussion organizer where they have to take notes and propose solution that they think appropriated for people on the BottleΓ¶n.

Teaching Writing “ It is the capacity of written language to transcend time and space that makes the teaching and learning of writing such an important process” (White and Arrant; 991 : 1) Teaching how to write effectively is one of the most important life-long skills educators impart to their students.

When teaching writing, educators must be sure to select resources and support materials that not only aid them in teaching how to write, but that will also be the most effective in helping their students learn to write.

Bachelor’s Made Easy gives the opportunity that students work in groups, self- access and APP (presentation - practice - production).

In both skills (oral and written) the units tend to be teacher-centered where teachers give the necessary information and lead the activities. Additionally some other activities are student-centered where the students decide what and how and when to say something. In the beginning of speaking practice, the students have to talk about their behavior in some given situations and after that in small groups they have a free discussion about the same topic. And for written exercises the learners were provided with necessary knowledge taught previously. Analyzing the production required is possible to see that Bachelor’s Made Easy has the three main stages: presentation, practice and production.

The use of the APP helps learners to learn efficiently. The presentation stage is controlled by the teacher. In this phase teachers explain what they are going to learn and why. Also it is explained the new language including meaning and form and how to use it correctly. During the practice stage students practice saying or writing the new language and activities like drills, multiple-choice, transformations and others are typical in this stage and also

the correction is very important in order to provide positive feedback.

Production stage is when learners have completely catered the new form and new structure and are able to use it to produce oral and written texts.

Mistakes are not expected in this phase but if this happens, teachers point out after finishing the exercises. In Bachelor's, learners have to write an essay using the steps to create it. They have to decide if using description, narration, exposition or argumentation. In Bootloon the final task (production) is a group take notes of their ideas discussing with other groups and accepting or refusing their arguments and proposing solutions. Different kinds of activities help students to be ore motivated and we can get great results in the classroom. Motivated students are easier to work with and the more different activities we have the more students we can reach. It is known that people learn in a different way.

Ones learn like this, others learn like that and so on, so if we have a variety of activities we can grab all of them. Conclusion Working with the four skills in language classroom is very valuable for students. They give the students support to be creative in contexts where they have to use the new language specially when exchanging information or using it in a real life and also by vying them confidence. Both units provided listening exercises where students could interact with speakers achieving the understanding and the students worked as active listeners not only passive ones. The activities were well prepared helping the students to learn in a very motivated way.

In speaking section the topic was appropriated for teenagers and probably AI was used as it is expected in any LO acquisition process. Activities in topic-

based were well structured and were presented well sequenced. They started is self-assessment as warm -up after that a semi-controlled practice and at the end a freer discussion. Reading was not merely informative. It was also pleasurable and fun. It allowed students to talk about proper things for their ages. They could have a good relationship with the text. The reading skill had the three very important sections: pre – while – and post reading strategies. The writing activities lead the students to a good product of a topic essay.