

*Pre-reading; is
there another
way?*



**ELT-Ireland Annual
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Tony Penston

Teacher training courses often concentrate more on method, techniques and materials than on the teacher, yet when students are asked why they prefer a certain class *their answer usually centres on the teacher.*

The skill of empathizing with one's students can and should be taught; how to make the class interesting should be prioritized, and the yardstick of immersion principles should be used as an aid in comprehending and implementing real communicative language teaching.

Pre-reading

(concerning a reading passage)

- How many of us believe that at least some of the new vocabulary should be pre-taught (i.e. taught before Ss read the text)?
- And how should this pre-teaching be done?

Coursebook instructions:

(After “Look at the picture/heading and discuss X in pairs.”)

- pre-reading matching tasks (word + definition)

- post-reading matching tasks

- ask the students to ‘guess’ the meaning

- prompt the student to use a dictionary

- none of the above

- *Click on the word for translation/definition?

- Remember immersion. *We didn't see words on a board or a handout and have to figure out their meaning.*
- **Context is essential in enjoyable learning, and the teacher should provide it.**
- **The easiest and fastest way to do this is to use the (traditional) board, and yourself.**
- Downloading images eats up lesson preparation time.
- Images without coherence may fatigue the learners.

Matching tasks; should they come with a caveat?

Where, in immersion learning were you asked to do a matching task?

Pre-reading matching task, using Irish to simulate somewhat a learning situation.

/eg 'spaf̪toɾaːxt/ ag spaisteoireacht	very nice
/'kasə ˈlʲəm/ casadh liom	my heart
ró-dheas	strolling
gnaoi	appearance
/hɪt meɪ ɪ ŋɾaː/ thit mé i ngrá	troubles of the world
mo chroí	seaside region
/'buːru an tʲeɪl/ buaireamh an tsaoil	I will buy
ceantar na farraige	I met (by chance)
ba chleachtach liom	bird in the hand
/em er an laːv/ éan ar an lámh	I fell in love
ceannóidh mé	of my habit
ag ól	drinking

Using images from the internet. (Time-consuming lesson prep.)



ag spaisteoireacht

/eg 'spastora:xt/

Would you *spaisteoiracht* if
you were late for work?

← Yes/no concept question





casadh

/kasə/



chroí

Tony tells story of meeting Katie Taylor while 'ag spaisteoracht' (mimes and elicits) in Bray. Draws a 'gúna', elicits this and elicits 'gnaoi', 'ro-dheas'. Draws a 'chroí' and draws stickman 'thit mé i ngrá', eliciting and writing on WB. Mimes being punched and elicits/feeds "I'm sorry, 'ba chleachtach liom'".

/slá:n agəs 'banəxt/

Slán agus Beannacht (*Goodbye and blessing*) / **One morning in June**

One morning in June *agus mé ag dul ag spaisteoireacht,*
Casadh liom cailín, ba ró-dheas a gnaoi.

She was so handsome *gur thit mé i ngrá léi*

D'fhága sí arraing i gceartlár mo chroí.

I asked her her name, *nó céard é an ruaig bheannaithe*

that has you in this place love bright

A chas ins an áit thú a ghrá gheal mo chroí?

My heart it will break if you don't come along with me

Slán agus beannacht le buaireamh an tsaoil.

Is cailín beag óg mé ó cheantar na farraige

I was raised properly

Tógadh go cneasta mé i dtosach mo shaoil

I being so airy, ó 'sé siúd ba chleachtach liom

Which made my own parents and me disagree."

"Muise chuisle a stór ach éisteofá liom tamall

I'll tell you a story *ab ait le do chroí*

That I'm a young man who's totally in love with you

Surely my heart is from roguery free."

"Go you bold rogue, sure you're wanting to flatter me

Is fearr éan ar an lámh ná dhá éan ar an gcraoibh

I've neither wheat, potatoes or anything

Not even a bed blanket

Ná fiú an phluid leaba 'bheadh tharrainn san oíche."

"Ceannóidh mé tae agus gléasfad in aice seo

Gúna English cotton *den fhaisean 'tá daor*

So powder your hair, love, and come away along with me

Slán agus beannacht le buaireamh an tsaoil."

There's an alehouse nearby *agus beidhmuid go maidin ann*

If you're satisfied *a ghrá gheal mo chroí*

Early next morning we'll send for a clergyman

Beidhmuidne ceangailte i ngan fhios dhon tsaol

as long as lasts the money

Beidhmuid ag ól fad a mhairfeas an t-airgead

Then we will take the road home with all speed

When the reckoning is paid, who cares for the landlady?

Slán agus beannacht le buaireamh an tsaoil.

Pre-reading with pre-teaching of difficult vocabulary, using ‘concept before word’ principle.

1. Stimulate interest in the usual way (realia, coursebook or other image(s), drawing, mime, interesting question).

2. Present a text (not handout) which is similar/parallel to the lesson text. The same text will do if that's difficult, as long as it can elicit some of the difficult vocabulary. Do this by:

drawing, and elicit while drawing (media images don't engage students as well as the teacher's effort).

4. Use context (story, anecdote) to elicit other (abstract) vocabulary.

5. Have students 'biting' for the word, but don't 'labour' the matter. Progress coherently.

6. Put words on the board as you elicit/feed them. NOT before.

Handout texts. One half of attendees pre-teaches to the other.
Hopefully, drawings of at least a spider for one text and a sleeping bag for the other will be produced.

6 READING

a Do you know of any kinds of treatment for people who have phobias?

(b Read and mark True/False.....
.....)

(post reading:)

c With a partner, guess the meaning of the **highlighted** words and phrases.

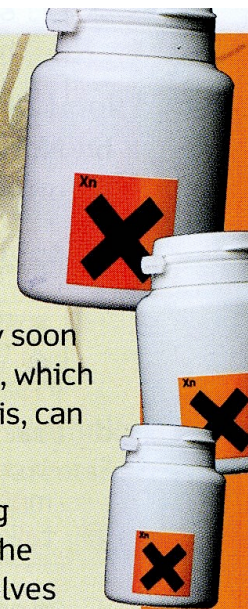
From *English File*, 3rd edn. *Pre-intermediate*.
Latham-Koenig, Oxenden, Seligson. Unit 9.
OUP 2012.

Scared of spiders? Take this pill.

There are many different kinds of phobias and they **affect** at least a quarter of the population. But doctors believe that they may soon have a **cure**. They have discovered that a drug, which is given to patients suffering from tuberculosis, can also help people to **overcome** their phobias.

The normal treatment for people with strong phobias is some kind of **exposure therapy**. The most commonly used exposure therapy involves gradually exposing people to the object or situation that produces the fear. For example, if you have a dentist phobia, you might first sit in the waiting room of a dentist, then talk to the dentist, and then sit in the dentist's chair. These exposures are combined with relaxation techniques.

However, exposure therapy **does not work** for everybody, and doctors think that the new drug, which causes changes to a part of the brain which is used in learning and memory, could be used in the future to make this therapy more **effective**. Michael Davis at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia did a study with 30 acrophobics – people who are scared of heights – and put them in a glass lift that appeared to go up and down. The people who were given the pill felt much less afraid than those who took a **placebo**.



Adapted from a British newspaper

1 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Look at the photo, title and slogan (caption). What happens on a 'Big Sleep Out', do you think?

2 Read the text and check your ideas from exercise 1.

[This is part of a pre-listening stage.]



THE BIG SLEEP OUT

RAISING MONEY FOR PEOPLE WHO SLEEP ROUGH

Nobody knows exactly how many young people in the UK are homeless, but the figure may be as high as 75,000. Many of them are teenagers who don't live with their families. While the majority of homeless people are unemployed, some have jobs but are still unable to afford accommodation, especially in places where rents are very high, like London. The Big Sleep Out is a charity event which raises money to tackle homelessness among young people. Big Sleep Outs happen all over the country. People who are not homeless choose to sleep rough for one night. This raises a lot of money each year and reminds politicians to look for a solution to the problem.

From *Solutions*, 3rd edn. *Intermediate*.
Davies, Falla. Unit 4. OUP 2017.

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Thank you.



*Questions, comments,
suggestions welcome.*

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