A TOUCH OF HOLA!

A Holistic Approach
to Language Learning
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PREFACE

This publication results from two years of joint work on the HOLA! Comenius project. It aims to support the teacher in implementing a global approach to English language teaching in Primary Education. Natural learning, active and responsible pupils, learning styles and strategies, second language acquisition principles, authenticity, … these are the ingredients of our holistic approach. Our challenge is to combine efficiency with fun in foreign language learning. The HOLA! teacher is more than an “instructor”. Sometimes he is the encouraging guide who actively listens to the learner; sometimes he is a facilitator or a comforter. He addresses the full potential of the young learner by providing him with cognitive, affective, social and metacognitive strategies. The learner is stimulated so that he can engage his thoughts, emotions, creativity, imagination and genuine curiosity in order to go beyond the cognitive level. He interacts with his classmates sharing the fun of learning and the discovery of the surrounding universe. He approaches the foreign language as a whole, including the cultural aspects. Language is seen as a means for socialisation and as the vehicle of the culture of those who speak that language. Theoretical frames and concrete examples follow each other in order to support you in exploring and understanding the HOLA! universe.

HOLA! stands for a Holistic Approach to Language Learning for Kids. The materials and the theoretical framework originate in a European Cooperation Project in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme. The project partners who contributed to the elaboration of HOLA! are:

- Vzw Nascholing in het Katholiek Onderwijs, VSKO (General Secretariat of Catholic Education in the Flemish Community), Brussels, Belgium, represented by Cécile de Fré, Greet Van Mello and Karine Van Thienen (project coordinator)

- The Fédération de l’Enseignement Fondamental Catholique (FédEFoC) of SéGEC (General Secretariat of Catholic Education in the French Community), Brussels, Belgium, represented by Anne Belien and Bruno Mathelart

- The University of Aarhus, Center for Undervisningsudvikling (Professional Education Center), Aarhus, Denmark, represented by Hanne Leth Andersen and Stacey Cozart
Together we come across different perspectives on elementary education: those of the elementary school, the pedagogical advisor, pre- and in-service training as well as local authorities. Furthermore we can count on two experts. Rosangela Baggio, member of the management team of the Italian school in Madrid, is our didactic expert. She supports us in the portfolio practice: in setting up reflection, self-assessment and process assessment activities which reinforce learning. Our second consultant is Harry Verkoulen, educational advisor in The Netherlands. He brings in his expertise on the well-being of children. Both experts take part in the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

With the support of the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme, Comenius action, we have developed principles and materials to contribute to the implementation of holistic foreign language learning and teaching in Europe, most of all for French and English. From theory to practice and the other way around, we have fine-tuned our pedagogical and didactic options as well as the management of the materials in the classroom to balance fun in learning and efficiency. This way we came to two publications, a French and an English one, to the design of a web site www.holaforkids.be and to the development of a Comenius course which will take place every year in France, in Great Britain and in Cyprus from 2010 onwards.

We thank all those who contributed to the project. First of all we thank the partner institutions, the pre- and in-service training services and our schools. Our joint commitment led to a number of outcomes we are really proud of. We are particularly grateful to vzw Nascholing in het Katholiek Onderwijs, the Regional Directorate of Primary and Secondary Education of Central Macedonia, Greece, the Primary Education Authority of Veroia, the Prefecture of Emathia, the Municipality of Veroia and the Aarhus University which offered us the opportunity to organise training sessions for their school heads, teacher trainers and teachers.
We also want to show appreciation to the teacher education centres that disseminate and integrate our concept in their initial teacher education programmes: the University of Aarhus (Aarhus, Denmark), the University of Alcalá (Madrid, Spain), the Doğuş University (Istanbul, Turkey), the Aristotle University (Thessaloniki, Greece) and the University of Palermo (Palermo, Italy). May the Erasmus exchanges instil in the future teachers the desire to apply HOLA! in their teaching practice.

We are particularly grateful to Marina Matheoudakis from the English Department of the Aristotle University (Thessaloniki, Greece) and to Anastasia Spyropoulou from the ELT-News Journal (Athens, Greece) for their enthusiasm, their support and the interest they took in our project.

Thanks to the schools which opened their doors to the HOLA! practice and to our video cameras. Without the authorisation of the parents to record their children we wouldn’t have managed to create the DVD which serves for reflection in our teacher training activities. This DVD will not be commercialised. It is a precious support to our national and international training sessions, most of all for our Comenius courses.

We have had the opportunity to try-out our materials in the following Primary Schools:

− The 3rd Primary School of Evosmos, Thessaloniki, Experimental School of the English Faculty of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), and more particularly Chryssa Laskarioud, Katarina Kaiktsi and Sissi Georgiadou, as well as Vasilios Virlios, school head, and Marina Matheoudakis, Associate Professor and member of the School Board

− The Primary Schools in Veroia (Greece)

− N. Kochs School in Aarhus (Denmark), and more particularly Bodil Grud Rasmussen, Torben Lovschaal and Martin Kaack Andersen, as well as Stig Madsen, school head

− The Ave Maria School in Vlezembeek (Belgium) and more particularly Clara De Bolle, as well as Viviane De Win, school head.

We express our special thanks to Danielle Droog for the lay-out. We also thank all those who gave us feedback. Thanks to Chryssa Laskarioud, Manuel Megías, Theodoros Skenderis, Anne Belien and Glykeria Trahana for their proofreading.

We also thank Colette Samson, who took the role of external evaluator at the end of our first project year. We thank her for the critical comments and questions inspired by her special expertise in didactics for young learners. She drew our attention to fundamental questions which led us to envisaging new options and to documenting others.
We thank Clara Megías for creating the wonderful HOLA! logo and the illustrations of the learning styles and strategies, Zippo, the Japanese temple tree and the picture on the cover.

We also want to express our gratitude towards the European Commission. They believed in our project and co-financed our work. Beata Guillerm and Jean-Michel Boullier supported and encouraged us in our work. We thank them for the opportunity they gave us to present our project to the new project coordinators in February 2009.

Karine Van Thienen
International Relations, VSKO
Coordinator of the HOLA! project
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With the support of the European Commission
INTRODUCTION

For our young Europeans it is very important to know foreign languages. It enables them to travel, to discover other cultures and habits, to make friends abroad, that is to enrich themselves. The knowledge of foreign languages is one of the priority objectives of Europe. Recent reforms aimed at integrating opportunities for language awareness and language initiation, together with reforms of initial teacher training, are devised to facilitate access to language learning for all youngsters. New ways towards equity, new paths to include learners who have “problems” require a different quality of teaching and learning in order to include them all in education and training projects and curricula. Of course, this all starts in elementary education, where we plant the seeds for the future.

We all have our traditions in language teaching, and we are proud of them. The child who arrives in his first foreign language class is still at a stage of natural learning. He has learned to explore the universe which surrounds him. He takes stock of whatever is meaningful to him according to the culture of the family and the environment he lives in. At school he discovers the school culture, based on well-reflected beliefs. Within this culture he learns things he might not necessarily learn outside school according to methods and approaches which have shown their efficacy, even if some of them are particularly cognitive. HOLA! wants to include both universes, domestic and academic, and have them merged in order to enrich each other in an approach conciliating efficiency and fun in learning.

HOLA! a challenge

The hugest challenge of HOLA! is to work out a holistic approach to language learning for kids. We want to enable the young learner to experience language by using it and to have fun while discovering the foreign language and culture. Therefore our starting point is the universe of the child, his daily reality.

The HOLA! objectives are the following ones.

First of all, we want to act in a positive way on the child’s motivation by associating pleasure and success at learning, by making him aware of his progress through self- and peer assessment and by making him reflect on the impact and the power the command of a foreign language gives him.
Secondly, we want to develop strategies for classroom management which facilitate the implementation of the approach we have developed.

Thirdly, we want to offer immersion opportunities to the teachers who want to improve their language command through Comenius courses.

Finally, we want to support the schools in their implementation efforts by providing them with the means to integrate the HOLA! practice into the daily repertoire of the language teachers and by reflecting together on the conditions required for a large-scale application of our approach.

In order to meet our objectives we have come up with evidence-based didactic and pedagogical principles. They are based on research findings in second language acquisition, in brain research, in the current lifestyle of young people and in the wellbeing of children. These principles are illustrated by means of practical examples which we call “materials”. These materials are presented in two distinctive ways. First, by means of the narrative of what happened in the classroom during a try-out lesson. Secondly, by analysing the classroom experiences and making the underlying HOLA! perspective explicit. A pedagogical file card which we commonly call “the HOLA! template”, gives an overview of the most salient issues of the proposed learning unit for use in the classroom. Some of the lesson try-outs have been recorded in order to exemplify the classroom management. These recordings serve as a basis for reflection during our Comenius courses targeted to all those who are involved in teaching foreign languages in primary education. All our public outcomes are also available on our project website (www.holaforkids.be).

This English publication has a twin sister in French: HOLA! Une approche holistique de l'apprentissage des langues. The French publication contains our theoretical principles as well as other examples of materials tested in French classes. Both serve as appetisers for the attendants on our annual Comenius courses, which will be advertised on our project website.

**HOLA! holistic**

HOLA! is a holistic approach to language learning. This means HOLA! considers the learner, the teacher, the language and the world as wholes. The overall vision is the one of “opportunities for all” in school and combats actively failure and demotivation. HOLA! is positive and optimistic.

An analytic approach to foreign language teaching and learning would consist of dividing language into slices which would be put one on top of the other and reconstitute language in a progression from simple to complex. It relies on the principle of grammar enabling the learner to formulate unique utterances which have not been formulated before. So this would provide freedom for the learner. The production of correct utterances however requires lots of time, patience and effort from the learner. He might give up before having acquired enough words
and rules to say something meaningful to him. An analytic approach is beneficial to a certain category of learners, commonly called those who are “good at languages”.

HOLA! wants to address all learners, not just those who are verbally smart, but also those who are less self-confident, those who are afraid to make “mistakes”, those who have difficulties in memorising the rules, let alone in applying them. The HOLA! learner is accepted as he is, and respected in his personal choices. He is not a “machine that produces correct utterances”. He learns by doing, he draws, he creates, he imagines. His emotions are taken on board. The teacher takes him by the hand, makes him reflect on his learning styles, his gifts, his emotions and his achievements in order to become aware of who he is and to feel safe. The learner chooses, he negotiates, he involves himself. His need for belonging, competence and autonomy is recognised. As a matter of fact he wants to be on good terms with the teacher, he wants to be acknowledged for what he can already do, and he needs some vital space in which he can make some choices. Opportunities for choice and reflection are the first steps towards ownership of learning. By means of the appropriate learning strategies the teacher will help the youngster become who he chooses to be. The teacher will value his talents and his capabilities. He will show him how he progresses and lead him towards learning autonomy.

The HOLA! approach also goes through “formulaic language”, that is through chunks, prefabricated groups of words which can be reinvested in the learner’s own productions. It is called “chunk learning”. Exposed to language by means of nursery rhymes, songs, stories for children, the youngster enters the universe of the target language. He first learns ready-for-use expressions he needs to formulate what is meaningful to him. After a certain period of time, having gathered a stock of a certain amount of language – what is called a corpus – he will start analysing parts of utterances in order to discover some patterns and regularities. Actually, the search for patterns happens unconsciously. It is the stage where the first errors occur, when the learner takes the risk of creating something new from what he has already got and simplifies or generalises target language regularities. The first grammatical rules will show up when the youngster has reached a level of maturity necessary to internalise them.

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The HOLA! universe refers to the environment of our young learner. The language he learns covers the part of the world he feels at ease in and the part he wants to explore. Authenticity is a major value in this universe: it is the children’s world with his interests, his technologies, his media, his needs for communication, exploration and information. By means of “authentic” real life experiences, the child will be able to go beyond the level of the stereotypes and see the target language user as a human being, partly similar, partly different from him.

The HOLA! teacher is fully involved in the teaching and learning process. He takes special care of all pupils in a warm and affective way. From his observations he has a clear view on specific talents and possible contributions of each child to the group. He plans, instructs and structures, he behaves like an ally in the learner’s process of acquiring a foreign language. He facilitates, supports, animates, guides, asks questions, offers variety and choices, observes, encourages awareness and reflection… He reveals himself as a model learner who makes his own learning and problem solving strategies explicit in front of his pupils. He is flexible and at ease in the language he teaches. He provides a rich and safe environment where the learner can progress at his own pace. Before intervening or explaining something, he exploits all the resources the learner and his classmates can bring in. He connects the youngsters with each other so that they can discover and learn from each other’s talents. This way the language class becomes a safe environment where the most diverse talents meet each other and mingle in order to provide a richer cocktail. Discovery and exploration outweigh explanations. In other words:

A holistic approach is an approach to teaching and learning that considers the learner as a whole. A holistic approach to language learning allows the learner to feel safe and happy interacting with real people and real life according to who he or she chooses to be, at a pace that maximises the individual potential. This implies language teaching and learning that allows the learner to discover, think, feel, imagine and practice language which is seen as a vehicle of culture and as a means of socialisation.

*Michael O’Neill, Brussels, October 2007*

**HOLA! assessment and evaluation**

We all have a lot of assessment instruments and tools at our disposal. Instruments to measure performances and others to inform learning. An approach to language teaching and learning needs tools which enable us to assess and evaluate the objectives. The HOLA! assessment is meant to reinforce learning and is therefore assessment for learning. The main goal is to reveal the current situation and to pinpoint the next steps in the learning process.
The HOLA! approach is holistic, so is its assessment. The learner, the language and the universe of the child are considered as wholes. Progress in knowledge, skills and attitudes come together. It’s not just about cognitive processes, the affective and social processes are part of the reflection process as well, including use and awareness of learning styles and strategies. Teacher and learner join their efforts and redefine how to get further in an ongoing way.

**HOLA! portfolio**

All school systems have their particular requirements as to assessment. Some countries have central examination systems. Others leave it to the school to organise them according to more or less strict instructions. In that case there is an inspection system for validating the decisions. The current tendency in Europe goes towards self-evaluation systems. HOLA! doesn’t want to exclude any system. Therefore, we propose a flexible approach by means of a portfolio. In the HOLA! universe, a portfolio means interaction between several parties – learners, teachers, school, parents and other allies – in a culture of openness, inclusion and transparency. The portfolio refers to a way of being and learning together. It is a philosophy in which assessment is respectful and rewarding. The young learner is compared to himself over time. The portfolio aims to make the pupil aware of what he has achieved and how he managed to do so, how he has progressed and what the next step is, who he wants to be helped by and how. The achievements are celebrated and serve as catalysts of motivation.

We think it is crucial to be aware of the outcomes, both the language and the learning process outcomes which are to be reinvested in future learning. The former refers to what the pupil can already do with language, the latter how the learner goes about his learning.

**HOLA! criteria**

We have worked out a number of instruments for evaluation of our approach. We have set a number of criteria and turned them into models, questionnaires, file cards which allow us to measure the holistic value of the materials and classroom practice. Some of the most fundamental criteria of our approach are the following.

First of all, the learner knows from the start what particular end product he is going to achieve by means of a particular task and how this product will enable him to communicate better and to develop as a person. The product is always part of the learner’s universe; it is meaningful to him and makes him a better language user.

A second principle is the focus on the language system as a whole and not on discrete elements from the underlying linguistic system such as isolated vocabulary, morphological, syntactical, phonological items...: these micro-
elements have an instrumental value for performing real life tasks: the pupil learns to order a meal in a restaurant, to organise a birthday party, to play a game, to write a card for Mother’s Day, to welcome someone at the airport. He does so from real life models and with the help of language chunks. After having mobilised previous experiences with the task, he gets on with the activities and he only discovers the linguistic materials when he needs to achieve his challenge, being aware of what he needs to do the task. What drives him is the need to mean. When necessary, he gets involved in the acquisition of knowledge, in order to better communicate in the context of the given task. Actually, the task sets the context for the language use.

When exposing the learner to language, the teacher carefully selects authentic material belonging to the child’s universe and presents them with the necessary gestures, illustrations, movements, signs… to convey the message. The language is presented as in real life: including non-verbal cues. An appropriate choice of songs, nursery rhymes, stories the learner knows in his own language or stories with lots of repetitions is within the range of the young learner. In order to function with the target language in real life it is crucial that the learner is aware he doesn’t need to understand everything; that he needs to be confident, building meaning from the bits and pieces he can understand. So he could, for instance, look at the weather forecast in order to prepare his luggage for a scout’s camp without understanding all the details. By relying on his genuine ability to discover he will go as far as he can.

All material presented on paper can be used in several ways. This publication will gradually guide our reader through the HOLA! approach and invite him to share our philosophy. Our Comenius courses aim at reflecting, together with the participants, on how to adapt their textbook or home made materials and to design new ones. Starting from examples of lessons carried out in real primary classrooms in some of our project countries, we will guide the participants in applying our approach to their home context.

A touch of HOLA! the menu

From our experience in in-service training we know that most of the teachers are not so fond of theory. The same way, pupils are not that fond of grammar exercises. It is because an approach conveyed in an abstract way, through the theoretical shortcut explaining what works and why, requires a constant transfer effort: we try to imagine what it actually means for our classroom practice. Therefore, we have decided to alternate theoretical and practical chapters. The order in which the reader wants to discover them is not important. Each chapter is an entity in itself and has its own style, depending on the content. Even if some of us put pen to paper in order to weave a part of the HOLA! web, all project partners have had their contribution in each of the chapters. It is indeed the result of a joint effort. Going continuously from practice to theory and the other way around, all parts of the publication have benefited from continuous feedback. Besides the combination of the practical and the theoretical perspective, we deliberately opted for relying on both the French and the English
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We also took into account the typical routines of each of the project countries. So our end product has a real European dimension.

All practical documents such as lesson plans, handouts for the pupils, useful web links are available from our website.

Our first chapter leads us into an Italian classroom in Palermo, where children prepare and play the Hunting game together. Maria Giovanna Granata tells us how the children gradually learn to cope with the story and how they act it out. It’s about having fun and learning by doing. A number of follow-up activities enable our youngsters to consolidate their achievements.

The second chapter takes us Behind the scenes in HOLA! Karine Van Thienen introduces the “HOLA! template” which is in addendum of each materials chapter. Manuel Megías has designed and fine-tuned it after each project partner discussion at the meetings. This template describes the main HOLA! features as well as a number of practical issues. In the second section of this chapter, we suggest a number of instruments for evaluating the holistic value of foreign language lessons.

The HOLA! recipe brings us to the first theoretical chapter presenting the underlying theories we go for. Hanne Leth Andersen and Stacey Cozart explain our vision on language learning from several perspectives: the HOLA model, from whole to parts, the environment, authenticity and ICT are the ingredients.

In the fourth chapter, Tiziana Venturella tells us how she creates stories with the Italian pupils of her school. The Fantastic binomial provides a structure for letting the children’s imagination become productive: after having agreed on the final story, the kids are invited to personalise the story and turn it into a rap or a performance.

The fifth chapter brings us to the reason why we believe variation in work formats and in presentation of materials is important. Manuel Megías and Maria José Valiente take us by the hand and lead us to the why, what and how of Learner styles and Multiple Intelligences. In order to take every child on board we need to have a better view on how our youngsters learn best and to provide a variety of activities catering for as many preferences as we can.

How a few words can change one’s life… In the sixth chapter Songül Ömürdağ and Michael O’Neill show how a common story of a Beggar and a painting from Van Gogh inspire kids to work on a project from the “Workstations”. Having been exposed to the story, the children choose from a number of task suggestions what they want to achieve from there. An example of self-directed learning in the primary classroom focusing on teamwork skills.

The seventh chapter, How to become an independent learner, is at the heart of HOLA! learning: how to encompass learning by means of a learning strategies
Manuel Megías and Maria José Valiente take us to the mystery of the black box to address cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategies and show how the HOLA! materials deal with these in an implicit or explicit way. In HOLA! learning strategies are considered to be catalysts of lifelong learning as we believe they gradually lead our young learners to autonomy in foreign language learning.

The HOLA! teacher creates a warm, safe and motivating environment for his pupils. One of the most visible ways in which he does this is the feedback practice. Feedback: a basic ingredient or the cherry on top of the cake? This is the title of the eighth chapter, where Theodoros Skenderis and Chryssa Laskaridou reflect on how to act as a teacher in order to take all children on board by showing understanding, encouragement in a non-directive and non-judgmental way. A cocktail of warm authenticity, integrity and care where theory and practice come together.

Reflection, awareness and sense of self, self-assessment help the learner take responsibility for his own learning. In the ninth chapter Rosangela Baggio guides us through our portfolio philosophy: Personalising learning through the Portfolio. Rather than a neat document in a nice shape, the portfolio is concerned with the way in which the learner can be invited to share his thoughts about learning with the teacher and relevant others. For us the portfolio is a mindset, a philosophy in which reflection and interaction on the individual learning process and products lead to awareness, sense of self and improvement. The European Language Portfolio, the HOLA! portfolio, practical guidelines for the teacher and concrete examples from our HOLA! materials, these are the ingredients.

In the tenth chapter a class of Greek children welcome Zippo, the most famous inhabitant of planet Zi, on planet Earth. A teacher from Earth and a teacher from Zi reflect together on the HOLA! approach. While their pupils learn how to address Zippo and his friends, Chryssa Laskaridou and Theodoros Skenderis tell us how they managed to capture the attention of the learners in creating a wonderful universe with them.

In the eleventh chapter Karine Van Thienen takes us to the HOLA! universe we dream of. Storytelling takes an important place in a holistic approach, so we opted for a home made fairy tale, Once upon a time there was HOLA!, to deploy our vision of HOLA! with all ingredients from the work we enjoyed doing together the past two years.

All nice stories have an end and all publications have a Conclusion. We take advantage of this last part to highlight some crucial points of our approach and our work process. It’s the section of the last good advice before practising HOLA!. Because HOLA! never comes to an end… at least, that’s what we hope.

Karine Van Thienen
HOLA! Project coordinator
Although Ann is a primary school teacher with almost 10 years of experience behind her, she has arrived at that point in her career when she drags herself through daily school routines without enthusiasm and what is worse, with the feeling of not being able to arouse enthusiasm in her pupils any longer. She remembers all the years she has spent as a teacher, how in the past she felt reborn every time she helped her pupils discover their talents and to find new opportunities to use them; how she felt she was several persons performing several duties: coach, psychologist, friend, actor, nurse, substitute parent, story teller… how she enjoyed teaching and how she and her pupils had fun!

Now she seems to have no more interest or stimuli, and mainly relies on textbooks. Seated at her desk, her head in her hands, Ann is fully aware she is going through a professional crisis and is looking for a way to get out of it.

What can she do to bring life back to her lessons again? She needs new ideas. Maybe if she used stories again? Children love listening to stories. Stories can also be very helpful to introduce children into the real world, while at the same time being respectful of their psychological development stage, of their feelings and needs, and of the special way they perceive reality. “With stories children enter the real world through the window, instead of through the door”: this statement by Gianni Rodari inspires Ann to experiment with stories including real context and authentic language use.

So in a brainstorming she writes down some key words for an activity which could liven up her lessons again: storytelling, games, music and movement, a link to some other subjects, a touch of emotions, and… in other words some of the ingredients of a HOLA! activity – that’s when she comes up with “The Hunting game”. But before joining Ann let’s present our school.
1.1 Context

1.1.1 “It is language that makes us equal”

In Italy learners are expected to have a good command of a European language, mainly English, and basic communicative skills in a second foreign language by the end of compulsory education. The main aim is not only to make them able to communicate with people of other countries and to have more chances to get information, but to develop a European consciousness as well, so that they can feel and act as citizens of Europe. Another important aim is to give all young people equal opportunities to study, find a job, develop themselves as persons, without any borders or obstacles limiting their choices and possibilities. Language is a powerful means to pull down the barriers and to reduce differences. Recalling Don Milani: “It is language that makes us equal”.

1.1.2 Language learning at Alcide de Gasperi

The “Alcide De Gasperi” school is located in a residential area in Palermo. It has almost 950 pupils from kindergarten (9 classes) to primary (30 classes). The presence of about 100 children of other nationalities has provided us with the opportunity to focus on a multilingual and multicultural educational project. This project uses the narrative as one of the main means of developing language skills, both in the first and in the foreign languages. French and Spanish are included in the local curriculum, and children can choose to study one of them besides English which is compulsory. CLIL is also used by some teachers in Years 4 and 5 for subjects such as art and environmental education. Teachers are interested in experimenting with new approaches.

1.1.3 Let’s brighten up our lessons!

*The Hunting game* has been tried out with learners of Year 4 who have a basic English language competence. The expected pre-requisites are: names of animals, action verbs, basic vocabulary; being able to understand an oral narrative which includes familiar language; knowledge of geography and environmental education such as parks, woods, lakes and rivers, islands in Sicily; basic collaboration and organisation skills.

The end product of this learning unit is the performance of *The Hunting game*. The learning objectives are:

− to develop listening comprehension, language interaction and narrative skills (whole language)

− to develop cooperation and planning skills, autonomy, language awareness, self and peer assessment skills and to improve relationships (whole learner)
to develop awareness of environmental issues, to promote social skills such as relationships and to respect the environment and rules (whole world).

1.2 The Hunting game

*The Hunting game* is a learning unit composed of various activities over four lessons of 60 minutes each, based on *HOLA!* principles. Before a detailed description of each sequence, a summary is provided as an overview of the whole learning unit.

1 Warm up (30 min.):
   - In the wood
   - “Guided fantasy”: Let’s go into the wood
   - A link with environmental education

2 Sequence 1 (60 min.): The Strange Story of Special Animals Living Happily in a Wood and of a Hunter (storytelling)

3 Sequence 2 (60 min.): Making and animating animals… and the hunter (re-telling the story with language interaction)
   - Warm up: Let’s act and dance as animals!
   - Making and animating animals… and the hunter

4 Sequence 3 (60 min.): The Hunting game (acting out the story)

5 Follow-up activities (30 min.): Let’s play games:
   - What am I doing?
   - Do what I say

6 *Portfolio activity*
1.2.1 **Warm up**

The warm up activity is divided into three sections which aim at creating the context by using poster, flash cards, pictures or shapes of animals, notice cards. The activity also aims at recalling previous knowledge and creating a safe, relaxing, stimulating setting.

In this phase the learners interact using either the target language or their mother tongue. We use the target language, and make ourselves understood by miming, gesturing, showing flash cards or pictures, or any other non verbal cue.

*In the wood*

This scene takes 5 to 10 minutes.

We invite the learners to sit down in a circle on the floor. We show a poster of a wood and ask: "What is it? What can we find in a wood? What animals live in a wood?". They pick up some animal shapes or pictures from a box and stick them on the poster. We ask what animals do in the wood. “Right, rabbits jump. And what do foxes do?”

*“Guided fantasy”: Let’s go into the wood!*

This activity takes 10 to 15 minutes.

We invite the learners to close their eyes. We then tell them they are all going to a special place. We then say: “Now imagine you are in a wood. What can you see? Are there any lakes, rivers or ponds? What animals can you see? What are they doing? Do you hear any sounds or noises? What can you smell? Fresh grass? The scent of flowers? Are you enjoying being in the wood? You still have one minute to stay there”. After few moments of silence we say: “Now you can open your eyes and come back to the classroom”. The learners open their eyes and are asked to talk about their experiences.

*A link with geography and environmental education*

This activity takes 5 to 10 minutes.

We ask the learners if there is something or somebody in the wood the animals have to fear. Then we show a picture of a hunter and ask questions about him – who he is, what he has got in his hand, what he is going to do in the wood with his gun, whether a hunter can go hunting whenever he likes or not. We show a notice with the date and the hour established for the beginning...
of the hunting season. Previous knowledge of geography (parks, woods, lakes, islands, protected areas, etc.), of environmental education and of rules related to hunting is recalled.

1.2.2 Sequence 1: The Strange Story of Special Animals Living Happily in a Wood and of a Hunter

The discovery of the story takes 20 to 30 minutes.

We inform the learners we are going to tell a story, a special one, where animals can speak, and where something magic happens; we invite them to sit in a comfortable way on the floor, as we do. We then start telling the story using paper shapes or pictures of animals. We encourage them to interact in the storytelling.

This sequence aims at developing listening comprehension skills, and at introducing new language and structures in a “real” context, i.e. the story.

We create a safe, relaxing, stimulating environment: relaxed posture, smiles, eye contact, body language, clear and expressive voice. We use pictures, posters, notices to capture their attention and to facilitate comprehension.

The Hunting game story

“We’re in a wood... and in the wood there are lots of animals. There are ... what animals are there in the wood? (The learners answer) And what are they doing? (The learners answer)

But... listen: What’s that noise? Somebody is coming: it’s a hunter, with a gun on his shoulder and a hunting dog beside him! All the animals run away as they see him, as quickly as they can: the squirrels climb up the trees, the rabbits run away to their caves under the ground, the foxes and the wild pigs run to their hidden caves, the ducks run to the lake and swim away, the frogs jump into water, the birds fly away (miming the actions).

But... look at these notices (pointing at some notices hanging on the wall nearby and inviting the learners to read them): “Hunting season starts on 1st September"

1 In the story we refer to the learners as “A” when they play the animals and to the teacher who tells the story as “H” when she plays the role of the hunter. Contextual issues are given in brackets.

Chapter 1: The Hunting game
at 3 o’clock”. What day is it today? (we point at a daily calendar). It is 31st August. The hunting season is not open yet, so, let’s tell the animals to come back.

All the animals come back, they are curious and they ask the hunter: “What are you doing Mr. Hunter?” (we invite the learners to repeat)
A: “What are you doing Mr. Hunter?”
H: “I’m having lunch. Go away!”

The animals go away, but after a while, they come back (we invite the learners playing the animals to ask again)
A: “What are you doing Mr. Hunter?”
H: “I’m cleaning my gun. Don’t annoy me!”

The animals go away but they come back soon...
A: “What are you doing Mr. Hunter?”
H: “I’m going to bed, in my tent; go away”.

The animals go away but they come back early in the morning:
A: “What are you doing Mr. Hunter?”
H (yawning): “I’m sleeping, go away and be quiet!”

A: “What are you doing Mr. Hunter?”
H: “I was sleeping, but I’m awake now, I’m getting up and… (having a look at his watch…) It’s 3 o’clock… I’m going hunting!”
He takes his gun and starts shooting.

All the animals run away as fast as they can: the birds fly away in the sky, the frogs and the ducks jump into the water and swim away, the squirrels climb up the trees… but some are shot out, and… the magic is that… whoever is shot, becomes the hunter”.

As we finish telling the story first we ask the learners if they liked it and then we ask whether they understood it. We ask questions about what made it easy to catch the meaning of the language they didn’t know. The learners refer to the context, the pictures, our miming and gesturing… We ask other questions regarding the comprehension process. Was it helpful to recall some language and knowledge before the story-telling? Was it easy to interact? What facilitated it?

This discussion provides us with feedback and helps the learners to become aware of their learning process: what strategies facilitated the comprehension, the memorization of new language, and language interaction.
1.2.3  Sequence 2: Making and animating animals... and the hunter

Warm up: Let’s act and dance as animals

The warm up takes 5 to 10 minutes.

We start by saying: “Let’s go to the wood again where our animal friends live happily and let’s act and dance with them! Try to follow the rhythm of the music.”

We put on disco-music and give some commands: run, jump, swim, fly, walk, climb, eat, drink, shoot, catch, go hunting, sleep, get up… The learners mime and dance.

This activity aims at recalling some action words included in the story. Learners have to listen to the commands we give, and move according to them while trying to follow the rhythm of disco-music. Body-movement and music are very attractive to learners and facilitate the memorization of new language.

Making and animating animals... and the hunter!

This activity takes about 45 minutes.

We inform the learners we are going to re-tell the story all together using plasticine animals. We ask them which role they would like to play (the hunter or one of the animals). We invite them to make the character they choose with a piece of plasticine. Most of them prefer to play the animals. We divide them into two groups: a small group, who will play the role of the hunter, and a bigger one, who will play the animals.

We re-tell the story, animating the plasticine animals and the hunter. We invite the learners to say what animals do in the wood, to ask the hunter questions or to answer, according to the role they chose. After re-telling the story one or more times we ask the learners if they enjoyed it.

We ask questions about what they learned: what new language; what helped them to better understand the story, to memorize the new language. We take notes of what they say.

This activity aims at improving language production and interaction among the learners. New language and structures are acquired by repetition, which naturally occurs in storytelling, so that the authenticity in language use is guaranteed.

Chapter 1: The Hunting game
Creating plasticine figures is important in this phase to get the learners fully involved and to facilitate the interaction: talking through puppets helps them in expressing themselves in the dialogue without being afraid of making mistakes. The learners are free to make choices according to their personality.

1.2.4 Sequence 3: The Hunting game. Acting out of the story

We tell the learners we are going to play The Hunting game. It is a catch and fly game.

We remind them of the context by referring to the poster of the wood on the wall. We show them a notice, indicating the date and the time the hunting season starts:

```
HUNTING SEASON STARTS
ON 1ST SEPTEMBER
AT 3 O’CLOCK
```

We invite the learners to organize the place so that it may become an imaginary wood, with trees, caves, a lake, a pond or river… The children decide where the hunter’s tent is and where to put the notice. We then show some other notices with the names of parks, woods, lakes, islands,… of the country or region where we live and invite the learners to read them. “You know that some of these places are protected areas. Hunting or fishing is forbidden there” we say.

Using a map we recall previous knowledge about the places which are protected areas. We then point to the folded corner in a notice and tell them that the ones with a red circle are protected areas. We suggest the learners memorize the names of the protected areas because it will be useful when they play the game. We invite them to put all the notices on a desk. Afterwards we explain the game and the rules related to it.

The children first have to choose who will be the hunter and who the animals; we suggest they can choose the hunter by a counting rhyme such as:

“One duck/frog/..., two ducks, three ducks, four five ducks, six ducks, seven ducks, more!”
The game starts with the learners acting as the animal they chose. Every now and then we suggest some actions: birds flying in the sky, squirrels climbing trees, frogs jumping in the pond,...

When the hunter arrives, all the animals fly away. The hunter stops in front of a notice indicating when the hunting season starts. He mimes that he is taking his gun off his shoulders and putting it on the floor. As he does this, all the animals come back. They realize it is not hunting time yet. They go close to the hunter, and ask: “What are you doing, Mr. Hunter?”

The hunter answers: “I’m having dinner, lunch, breakfast.... I’m walking, swimming, going to bed, cleaning my gun....”. He decides when it is time to go hunting. As soon as the hunter says: “I’m going hunting”, all the animals run away after having taken a notice with the name of a park, wood, lake or island...

The hunter throws paper balls at the animals. He can only see the front of the notices. He can’t see the folded corners indicating a protected area. Only the animals holding the notice can see it. Whoever is shot or caught becomes the hunter. But if the “animal” who has been shot or caught has got a notice with the name of a protected area, the hunter goes to prison and stops playing the game for one turn.

After having explained the game we ask the learners to cooperate in organizing the place and decide on their roles in the game.

We play the game two or three times. The first time we guide the learners through the game and then we let them play it on their own. We spend a few minutes on the feedback.

In this sequence of the learning unit the learners practice the acquired language playing the catch and fly game. All the language skills are included: they have to understand what they have to do, to interact and to read notices. Memorizing the names of parks, woods, reserves is not a mere mental exercise: it serves the main purpose of the game, i.e. catch or don’t get caught according to the role they take and know about the protected areas.

1.2.5 Follow-up activities: Let’s play games

The fourth lesson is dedicated to follow-up activities. They take some 30 minutes and are organized in the classroom, a courtyard or a hall.

Peer assessment is the main purpose of these two follow up activities, presented as games, with music and body-movement. The learners check each other’s performance by taking the role of the observer in turn, giving and receiving feedback, and so becoming aware of their language progress. The use of games helps the learners to be spontaneous, to reduce the anxiety of being evaluated, and to feel safe in exposing themselves.
What am I doing?

This game takes 15 minutes.

The class is divided into three groups of six or seven pupils. Each group forms a circle. A member stands in the middle and mimes some actions (2-5) while the music is on. Another one takes on the role of the observer. He gives one point for each action guessed correctly and said in the correct order. All roles are taken in turn.

Do what I say!

This second game also takes some 15 minutes.

All the learners stand in circle. Two children chosen by the counting rhyme observe their friends and point out those who make mistakes. We put music on and one learner gives a command, e.g.: run like a rabbit, run-run-run; climb like a squirrel, climb-climb-climb... All the others mime the actions. In turn, all the learners give commands. Those who mime a wrong action, or give a wrong command such as fly like a fox are out of the game. The winners are those who have acted out all the actions and given the commands correctly.

1.2.6 Portfolio activities

After a short feedback session we ask the learners to fill in a self-assessment sheet they will put in their portfolio. We explain that the questions are about all the sequences of the activity. They are also free to put in the dossier a drawing or picture of the animal or hunter they made.

Assessment has a formative function here and is mainly based on informal observation throughout the activity. A logbook is helpful in evaluating the learning process of the pupils after two or three months. At the end of each section a common reflection session helps the learners become aware of their progression. The activity for the portfolio strengthens this awareness and helps develop self-assessment skills.

1.3 Referring to HOLA!

1.3.1 Whole world

The whole world implies a contextualised activity. The context is given by the story, with the help of imagination. Through a child’s imagination the classroom may become a wood, a park, or any other place. The “Guided fantasy” plays an important role in the warm up activity, placing the learners into the context and
personalizing it. The environment where the children live is recalled throughout the activity, as are habits and rules related to environmental education.

1.3.2 **Whole language**

The whole language stands first of all for authenticity, which is guaranteed here by the situation (storytelling, games) and by the social context where language is used. Morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics are simultaneously present. Language is not explicitly taught. It is acquired through repetition which often occurs both in storytelling and in games.

Whole language is task oriented: in each sequence of the activity language is used for specific tasks: telling a story, playing games.

Language awareness is developed during a briefing after each sequence and in the portfolio activity.

1.3.3 **Whole learner**

The learner is considered as a whole, including his head, heart and hands as well as his intelligences and learning style.

The whole unit is learner centred: his needs and feelings are taken into account. A safe and comfortable environment is created before starting each sequence. Learners have fun in doing the proposed activities as they are varied and multisensorial. Assessment is mainly informal, and as a self and peer assessment, without formal marks or notes from the teacher. They will surely keep their plasticine animal.

Learning strategies are implicit throughout the activity, to facilitate learning and to make the learners aware of their progress.

1.3.4 **Whole teacher**

Being a whole teacher means having a sensitive attitude to learners’ feelings and needs, to their intelligences and learning styles; to stimulate curiosity and motivation and to involve all the learners.

The whole teacher welcomes the learners into a warm and safe environment and leads them towards becoming more aware of their learning process, more autonomous learners. The whole teacher supports the children when they feel insecure and enjoys sharing their experiences.
1.4 As musical instruments in an orchestra…

Ann is seated at her desk, trying to see where she and her pupils stand now. She enjoyed the lessons and the learners had fun! They learned a lot and spoke more fluently, making some errors, yes, but over time they will improve!

The HOLA principles and the various activities which emerged during her first brainstorming at the beginning, fell into place and sound like musical instruments now, each one integrating its own timbre in the harmony of an orchestra… where she is the conductor!

Maria Giovanna Granata

“I have a past that is rich in memories.
I have a present that is challenging, adventurous and fun
because I am allowed to spend my days with the future.
I am a teacher… and I thank God for it every day”

(J.W. Schlatter)
### Chapter 1: The Hunting game

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>4 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objectives

**Whole learner**
- To develop cooperation
- To develop planning skills
- To develop language awareness
- To develop assessment skills

**Whole world**
- To develop awareness of environmental issues
- To develop awareness of the need of rules both in games and in life and of respecting them

**Whole language**
- To develop narrative skills
- To develop language interaction skills

#### Language use

**Listening**
- Listen to understand the story
- Listen to understand specific information

**Speaking**
- Retell a story
- Answer questions

**Interacting**
- Act out a story
- Ask and answer questions

**Reading**
- Read notices to get information

#### Language focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic focus</th>
<th>Discourse focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description</strong>: We are in a wood. What can you see in a wood? There is..., there are...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verb “to be”, Simple present, Present continuous</td>
<td><strong>Narration</strong>: Retell the story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Questions and corresponding answers</strong>: What are you doing? I’m having dinner/ lunch. I ’m going hunting. What do rabbits /ducks do? They climb up the trees/ swim...</td>
</tr>
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<td>How to talk according to the interlocutor and the moment, e.g. “What are you doing?” to find out if the hunter is going to come after them.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reflection on learning**

**Towards learners’ autonomy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning strategies:</th>
<th>Activating background knowledge, Planning, Memorizing, Resourcing, Transfer, Cooperation, Reinforcement, Peer assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning styles:</td>
<td>Concrete, Visual, Verbal, Active, Inductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Intelligences:</td>
<td>Linguistic, Visual/spatial, Kinaesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio:</td>
<td>Self-assessment sheet, Drawing of the favourite character</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment**

- Assessment based on observation
- Peer assessment
- Portfolio

**Materials and resources needed**

Poster of a wood, pictures or shapes of animals, of a hunter, notices, signs, plasticine, paper balls, recorded music

**Sequence of activities**

1. **Warm up:**
   - In the wood
   - Guided fantasy: Let’s go into the wood
   - Act and dance like animals!
2. **Sequence 1:** The Strange Story of Special Animals Living Happily in a Wood and of a Hunter (storytelling)
3. **Sequence 2:** Making and animating animals… and the hunter! (story re-telling with language interaction)
4. **Sequence 3:** The Hunting game (acting out the story)
5. **Follow up activities:** Let’s play games
   - What am I doing?
   - Do what I say
6. **Portfolio activities**
CHAPTER 2

BEHIND THE SCENES IN HOLA!

Did you try the Hunting game? It is a way to learn and play English with children without having to use their mother tongue. The Hunting game ended with a pedagogical file card, our HOLA! template, which brings us behind the scenes in HOLA!. In this chapter we present you our pocket guide before going into the HOLA! recipe in the third chapter. Afterwards, we will suggest a few instruments for measuring the holistic value of our materials.

HOLA! sees the learner, the teacher, the world, i.e. the universe of the child, and the language as a whole. This means that when planning a lesson, a number of issues are taken into account. Others are only visible through the classroom interaction. This is why in the chapters of this publication our materials are presented as narratives telling what happened during classroom try-outs, followed by an analysis. In the annex of each chapter the HOLA! template summarises the main didactic and pedagogical choices which have been taken up during the lesson planning.

2.1 The HOLA! template and its guidelines

The template has gone through continuous discussion and a fine-tuning process throughout the project work. Manuel Megías, lecturer of EFL Didactics at the University of Alcalá, has designed the template and adapted it continuously as an operationalisation of our reflections.

Let’s take a look at the different components of the template separately.

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A first step consists of identifying the material – giving it a title. The language level refers to the Common European Framework of References (CEFR) which describes the level of performance according to three levels: A (beginners), B (intermediate), C (advanced). Here we work at level A1, i.e. with beginners. The duration allows us to measure the efficiency of the time spent on the unit of activities presented.

Chapter 2: Behind the scenes in HOLA!
The objectives are formulated in HOLA! terminology: the learner, the teacher, the world and the language are seen as wholes.

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<th>Objectives</th>
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The template serves as a file card where the materials are presented in terms of HOLA! distinctive features. The most important aspects in planning are shown this way. It offers the opportunity to relate them with the file cards of other units of learning and to help establish a progression. Progression is seen in a holistic perspective as are the objectives.

The previous chapter clearly shows the HOLA! characteristics in an emotional and affective perspective in order to enhance the learner’s self-confidence, his motivation, his willingness to get on with language learning. So the objectives express what the learner is supposed to achieve at the different HOLA! levels.

The learner as a whole is supported in overcoming his fears and doubts in order to open himself up to the foreign culture and language and to engage in the interaction in the target language. This way he enriches himself as a person. He learns according to his learning style and his personal characteristics. He relies on the strategies he uses in real life as well and allows the guidance of the teacher who offers him other strategies when he gets blocked. Social and affective strategies are very important for young beginners because they motivate them to take up the challenge of involving themselves in another language, another culture and universe. Planning strategies are less important for beginners as they can rely on the teacher. The most important issue is to open themselves up to a completely new domain.

The world considered as a whole means the universe of the child, taking his interests into account, his definition of the world around him, his needs or wants to interact in this world, in other words his daily reality. It includes issues on citizenship and environment. This section is meant to highlight what the learner can do with the language in real life and at school from the perspective of the broader world. As a matter of fact, school reality is a meaningful challenge as
well: how to address the classmates, the teacher or others, according to which “school culture”?

We will refer to the language as a whole later on. At the level of the objectives, we stick to what the learner can “do” in real life after a learning unit.

The next frame delimits the language skills the learner is meant to develop during the activity or the task. The Common European Framework of References distinguishes five skills: listening, reading, speaking, interacting and writing. Each one of them begins with a specific intention and ends up in an outcome, resulting from the transaction between the learner and the oral or written text. In the Hunting game, four skills are involved. Of course, one could opt for adding writing at this beginner stage of learning English. It depends on the National Curricula.

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The next section of the template is about the components of the language as a whole. Whole language refers to several language layers which come together in order to result in authentic discourse enabling real life interaction and participation in the real society. The four layers are linguistics, discourse, pragmatics and culture.

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</table>

First there is the central layer of the words, the structures, the morphology and the phonology. These are micro-elements which constitute the language, or at this level the utterance. Without context they are meaningless and they are difficult to deal with.

Therefore we have a second layer, the one of the discourse, which puts the micro-elements in an order which enables the other to get the message together with the communicative intention and the envisaged impact. Written as well as oral texts are structured in a particular way in order to form a specific text type. A poem, a telephone call, an email, a short message on a cell phone or even a dialogue follow a particular scenario. When we talk to someone there is a general opening, a way to introduce the topic or the problem, a negotiation stage, a decision – unless it is postponed for some reason – and an ending. The scenario, this logical sequence of utterances, is what we call the “discourse”. So for instance, the Hunting game (chapter 1) is based on a story for children, so it includes lots of repetition, suspense, moments of fear and it is structured as a story for children is structured, in a given context. In the Fantastic binomial (chapter 4), the children create a story which is based on a particular scenario provided by the teacher. In Zippo on planet Earth (chapter 10), the pupils go to the airport of Thessaloniki to greet their alien friend according to a specific dialogue scenario offered by the teacher… It’s the level of the text type conventions: what to start with, what next… and how to end. How to organise the micro-elements in order to end up with a text.

The third layer of whole language is the one of the pragmatics. Pragmatics deal with how the person talks about himself, puts the other in his text and makes an impact on him. The one who listens or reads looks for particular information he needs or wants, unless it’s just for pleasure. The one who speaks or writes has a certain communication intention. He speaks or writes in order to tell, describe, prescribe, convince… someone in particular. A child will never say: “I broke the glass”. He will rather formulate it as: “The glass is broken”, as if it had happened without his intervention. Pragmatics are about influencing and impacting on others, and how this is phrased in the text.

The fourth layer, the one of the culture, deals with the universe of a group of people: their habits, traditions, opinions, perceptions, behaviour. So “bread” isn’t the translation of “pain”, “pane”, “brood”… because bread is used in another way in the different underlying cultures. It’s just the best equivalent we can come up with. Culture is about expressing a certain way of looking at things, of a practice or behaviour which is common to a community. It’s a way of showing one belongs to a particular group.
The next section of the HOLA! template deals with reflection on learning. It is essential as we want to guide our pupil gradually to autonomous learning in order to enable him to become a lifelong learner. Reflection aims at making the pupil aware of his capabilities as a learner, of the challenges he still has to take up in order to take responsibility for his own learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection on learning</th>
<th>Learning strategies: Activating background knowledge, Planning, Memorizing, Resourcing, Transfer, Cooperation, Reinforcement, Peer assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towards learners’ autonomy</td>
<td>Learning styles: Concrete, Visual, Verbal, Active, Inductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multiple Intelligences: Linguistic, Visual/spatial, Kinaesthetic, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Portfolio: Self-assessment sheet; Drawing of the favourite character</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reflection deals with the way the learner functions regarding a number of issues:

- Learning styles: his preferred way of receiving, processing and manipulating information
- Multiple Intelligences: a parallel way of structuring the learner’s preferences in processing information starting from his specific gifts or talents
- Learning strategies: learning behaviour, procedures or problem solving modes.

All these operate at the level of communication through language as well as at the level of task organisation. Reflection is at the heart of the learning process. The most meaningful will be included in the portfolio. When we talk about portfolio in HOLA!, we talk about the “metacognitive” reflex, rather than about whatever shape it can take. Metacognition refers to all reflection or discourse about learning and ways of learning.

The assessment section explains how progress is valued. As learner progress is at stake, the assessment will not just deal with what has been acquired and how, but also with how to stimulate the pupil to go on with learning and make further progress. Celebrating what has been acquired is a very important part of HOLA!, taking the time to become aware and proud of what has been achieved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment based on observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next part is purely technical: what material and resources we need in order to run the learning unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials and resources needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poster of a wood, pictures/shapes of animals, of a hunter, notices, signs, plasticine, paper balls, recorded music</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 2: Behind the scenes in HOLA!
The last part of the template gives an overview of the different sequences which make the succession of activities a learning unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence of activities</th>
<th>1 Warm up:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− In the wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− Guided fantasy: Let’s go into the wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− Act and dance like animals!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sequence 1: The Strange Story of Special Animals Living Happily in a Wood and of a Hunter (storytelling)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sequence 2: Making and animating animals… and the hunter! (story re-telling with language interaction)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Sequence 3: The Hunting game (acting out the story)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Follow up activities: Let’s play games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− What am I doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− Do what I say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Portfolio activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This template is a way to highlight the different components in managing HOLA! learning and teaching. The only missing element is the “whole teacher”. He becomes visible through his classroom management as it appears in the narrative and the analysis of the experiences reported in the materials chapters. The teacher as a whole is the person who listens to the learner, understands him, encourages and compliments him, invites him to reflect, guides, structures, instructs in a way conducive to real learning. The teacher is flexible and plays it by ear. His first goal is to build, together with his pupils, a safe environment and to maintain the learner’s curiosity, openness and motivation. Therefore he organises the learning process according to a digestible progression. He keeps trusting the learner and making him self-confident. At the same time he supports the learner in meeting the curricular goals.

2.2 The HOLA! criteria

How do we measure the HOLA! value of a lesson? First of all, we want to emphasise that HOLA! is not exclusive. We want to present the approach we worked on during two years without any judgment on any other method or approach. We strongly believe a variation of approaches is beneficial because it enables us to involve different learning styles and Multiple Intelligences. Some learners are analytic as well. Although we are convinced a holistic approach corresponds best to the situation of young beginners, lots of methods have proven their value. They are not part of the challenge we set ourselves.

A grid for evaluating materials can be limited to a few crucial components or it can be more detailed. Without aiming at being exhaustive, at a certain point we reflected on our approach. It resulted in the evaluation grid below.

Our starting point is that we send our children to school in order to have them learn things they would not necessarily learn outside school, because we want them to function in a more intelligent and effective way in real life, i.e. in our
society. Therefore we want to integrate as much evidence-based research findings as we can and include them in our vision of current learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytic</th>
<th>Holistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From part to whole</td>
<td>From whole to part</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrete point approach</td>
<td>System approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(focus on forms)</td>
<td>(focus on form)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School and academic subjects</td>
<td>Real life discovered in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual teachers</td>
<td>School as a learning community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher teams: horizontal and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vertical cohesion. A consistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run by the teacher: a set menu</td>
<td>Run by the teacher in interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with the learner: transparency of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>objectives, opportunity for choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teacher as a manager</td>
<td>The teacher as a facilitator and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>controlling the class:</td>
<td>(language) learning expert:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− The sage on the stage</td>
<td>− The guide at the side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− Good instructor and domain</td>
<td>− Investing in a warm and safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expert</td>
<td>relation with each child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>− The one who knows</td>
<td>− The one who helps and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stimulates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline and control</td>
<td>Distributed leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learner followership</td>
<td>Whole person leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learner as a good and</td>
<td>The learner as a thinking, feeling,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>obedient follower trusting the</td>
<td>creative, sensitive being, accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>for who he is and seen as who he</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>might become with the help of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The learner not distracted by</td>
<td>The learner having fun while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the outside world</td>
<td>learning in a natural and efficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The passive learner</td>
<td>The active learner, learning by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>doing: learning (about) the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>language while using it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortcuts to learning through</td>
<td>Going through the learning process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>theory</td>
<td>and building own theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From lexis and grammar guided</td>
<td>From chunks and corpus discovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>towards the language in a rule-</td>
<td>co-building the world and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>governed delivery mode</td>
<td>language system as a whole in a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovery of texts and checking</td>
<td>problem-solving or creative mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comprehension through display</td>
<td>Discovery of a corpus by exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questions</td>
<td>to authentic language</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 2: Behind the scenes in HOLA!
What matters to us is the right hand column. It summarises the crucial HOLA! beliefs. The column on the left doesn’t describe any specific approach. It describes what could be perceived as opposite to what is presented in the right hand column, just for the sake of better understanding. The teacher who wants to reflect on his convictions and beliefs or who wants to analyse a particular lesson, can put a cross in one of the four columns in the middle in order to describe his position between the two extremes of the continuum. This is aimed at being done without any moral judgment as we have already stated. The teacher can opt for a reflection on the whole of the grid or just focus on one or two particular aspects. Doing this with colleagues or at department meetings in school is a way to become aware of each others beliefs and leads to a better coherence in the language curriculum at school and to better cohesion among the teachers.

The criteria grid has inspired Stacey Cozart and Hanne Leth Andersen, both working at the Aarhus University, to write a questionnaire for the teachers at N. Kochs School. The questionnaire was meant to collect feedback from the teachers who opened up their classroom to the HOLA! partners for try-out lessons.
Feedback form

1. How transparent were the objectives and outcomes of the lesson?
2. Did the lesson move from whole (a context) to parts (e.g., focus on language) or vice versa?
3. Did the learners have any opportunities to make their own choices in the course of the lesson?
4. How relevant was the theme to the children’s world (e.g., school, home, wider world, imagination)?
5. How would you describe the teacher’s role in the classroom?
6. How would you describe the atmosphere in the classroom? If possible, please note any changes you noticed in the course of the lesson or differences among groups of learners.
7. To what extent did the children have opportunities to draw on other competences besides their knowledge of English and skills in English?
8. To what extent did the lesson implicitly or explicitly require the use of learning strategies (such as planning, guessing, collaboration)?
9. To what extent did the lesson allow for different approaches to learning?
10. How would you describe the overall involvement of the learners in the lesson?

Please feel free to comment on any other aspects of the lesson that you found noteworthy (for instance, regarding the materials, the teacher’s role, the children’s interaction, and the teacher-child interaction).

Similar questionnaires have been designed by Theodoros Skenderis and Chryssa Laskaridou for the evaluation of HOLA! materials and try-outs in Greece.

We propose another kind of evaluation grid, a more practical one, developed by Catherine Macquard-Martin, director of Thélème International (Soissons, France). It focuses on six components of our approach: the rich environment, a variety of language activities and domains, a safe environment, autonomy, collaboration and cooperation as well as learning styles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Rich environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The learners have a rich environment at their disposal, i.e. an environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− which is meaningful according to their interests,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− which helps reach a clearly defined outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>− in which the teacher proposes a variety of activities (referring to authentic situations as well as to imaginary ones)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Language activities and domains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The learners engage in different language activities (involving listening, reading, speaking, interacting, writing), establish links with other domains (arts and craft, science, history…).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 2: Behind the scenes in HOLA!
3 **Safe environment**

The learners evolve within a safe environment which empowers them to
- express themselves without fear of making mistakes
- auto- and co-evaluate themselves
- express their feelings
- lean on their previous experiences and knowledge
- progress at their own pace

4 **Autonomy**

The learners develop their autonomy through
- reflection on their learning styles and on the functioning of the language system
- operating choices
- having a “classroom language” in English at their disposal from the start

5 **Collaboration and cooperation**

The learners work in collaboration and cooperation in the classroom but also with social partners outside the classroom

6 **Learning styles**

The learners express themselves and develop according to their own learning styles, thanks to multisensorial activities, presented in a variety of ways and adapted to their work pace

And here we have an alternative from Chryssa Laskaridou and Theodoros Skenderis (State School Advisor’s Office, Veroia, Greece):

We need to look at the learner, the language and the teacher as wholes. A whole is greater and more important than its parts.

**The whole learner**
- All aspects of the learner are actively engaged in the learning process.
- Multiple Intelligences, learning needs and styles, life skills are catered for. Materials and methods are adaptable and differentiated so that individualised learning can take place.
- The learner acquires language in a safe, secure, non-judgmental and warm environment.
- The learner is encouraged to take the lead and the ownership of his learning and development. He is encouraged to discuss the processes of learning, to reflect upon them and to take control of them.

**The whole language**
- Language should be taught/acquired as a whole and as a means towards other ends.
Socially purposeful use of language. Form, meaning and use are inseparable. Language is meaning, culture and communication in a given social context.

− Children learn a language for here and now, not just for future use. Holistic learning is learning by doing.
− Language is acquired and developed by the learner rather than taught by the teacher. Learners take the lead in discovering, negotiating, constructing and reconstructing meaning. They gradually build up their knowledge and views of the language, the culture and the world.
− Acquisition occurs through actual use, through rich, authentic and meaningful input and only when learners are ready.

The whole teacher
− His most important responsibility is his response-ability. He is sensitive to the learners’ feelings, real needs and interests and their various styles. He is a facilitator.
− He is a learner himself.
− The teacher encourages learners to express what they want to convey, to take risks without being afraid of making errors.

This Greek checklist is more exhaustive and gives a more complete vision of our approach. Statements are also made explicit in order to help the user.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter was aimed at revealing the distinctive features of HOLA! These have been approached in different ways: through the project template which is annexed to all our materials chapters and through an evaluation grid. We have also presented a few variants which are less complex, more practical and which also enable us to measure the holistic value of a lesson.

This is the moment we choose to introduce you to the first part of the theoretical contributions. Before initiating you into our view on learning styles (see chapter 5) and strategies (see chapter 7), we go to the “HOLA! recipe”, where we take you through a number of underlying theories.

Karine Van Thienen
CHAPTER 3
THE HOLA! RECIPE

3.1 Our holistic approach to language teaching

As a pedagogical tool, the HOLA! approach is based on a view of language that includes the five skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening, spoken interaction) and the different dimensions of language (grammar and phonology, text and discourse, pragmatics, and culture in language). At the same time, this approach to language learning includes a wide variety of tasks that draw on the various interactional possibilities available, such as one-way and two-way communication and closed and open forms of interaction. In addition, we note the importance in a holistic approach of making a choice regarding the explicitness of grammatical knowledge necessary for a particular task: it may involve no explicit description, a focus on form, a focus on forms or an explicit focus on grammar. Finally, the thematic contents of holistic language teaching materials include topics that are both familiar and interesting, spanning from learner-centred themes, school and home contexts and the broader world to the learner’s imagination.

In order to call an approach to language teaching holistic, we believe that learners should be presented with tasks that cover all the options available in the above dimensions, not all at once in the same task, but rather over a sequence of learning activities. And for some of the parameters it may be necessary for the teacher to take into consideration a progression in the task over a longer period of time. For example, the beginning of a sequence of tasks may contain more precise, one-way, closed exercises to encourage the learners to feel secure when producing language; then the tasks may become two-way and open-ended, and finally they may become more dialogic – for instance, involving improvised role plays.

Often in language teaching situations, the teacher will be inclined to do most of the talking, especially in teaching methods where the teacher plays a dominating role and the learners more or less fill in the gaps (cf. Stolz 2006). As a teacher, it is important to work on the basis of a progression of tasks within a certain semantic field or context and to thus move from more one-way exercises to more free production. Free production can also be stimulated by other methods like task-based learning or project work where the teacher becomes a facilitator or a coach and where the learners are then given the responsibility to both work with

Chapter 3: The HOLA! recipe
the material and produce language. This is the case in the last stage of the Fantastic binomial (see chapter 4), in the second part of How a few words can change one’s life (see chapter 6) and in certain stages of the Zippo experience (see chapter 10).

The explicitness of language description in a series of tasks may also change over time, going from no language description to explicit grammar teaching using deductive activities to get to the grammar description. It is important to structure the patterns necessary for the task according to the maturity and the ability of the learner to learn, as well as to the complexity of the task. In the first stages language in itself is the object, not the description of it. It should be presented by means of the repetition of specific types of utterances, structures, chunks without any linguistic comments. The teacher is aware of the linguistic focus – for example, a specific dialogical structure like “He has got…” (see Zippo on planet Earth, chapter 10) but the learners are not supposed to be made aware of the linguistic side of the task. Later, they may focus on form by, for instance, relating content to structure. Only the older children can actually understand explicit grammar teaching, which is an abstract approach to language.

3.2 From whole to part

A fundamental principle of the HOLA! project is to place what it is the learners are supposed to learn (e.g., structures, speech acts, new vocabulary, collocations, competences) in a broader context in order to create motivation and to improve vocabulary acquisition by relating new vocabulary to the same semantic field or the same scenario. The idea is that if learners are invited to relate to previous knowledge, they will find it easier to accept new forms and words simply
because they are familiar with the context; cognitively, tasks can become too complex for the learners if they have to understand the content/context and the form at the same time. For example, by using pictures and films of scenarios at the beginning of a learning activity, teachers can help the learners better understand new forms, settings, contexts or structures. When learners use the same structures and vocabulary in authentic contexts, they do not have to transfer abstract knowledge to concrete, authentic contexts of use.

The next step is to encourage the learners to notice specific speech acts, functions, words or discourse markers, for instance, and to specifically practice these. It should be emphasized that our approach also includes specific detail-oriented exercises such as one-way interaction and closed forms of interaction; our point is simply that this should always be done after having introduced the context – such as a dialogue, a scenario, a specific theme – and that this is in fact a necessary step before moving on to more open-ended, two-way interaction such as role plays, open dialogues and discussions, and play…

As an example of the movement from whole to part, we could mention The Hunting game where the learners have to activate previous knowledge about the forest, animals in different contexts and experiences with animals before working on the vocabulary and expressions that are the objective of the task. Finally, learners are required to use this knowledge in the broader context of the wood and to produce utterances focusing on information exchange in this context.

Chapter 3: The HOLA! recipe
3.3 Authentic language in authentic language teaching

One of the ideals of the HOLA! approach to language teaching is that the language that is taught should be authentic, relating both to the learners’ imagination and to real-world contexts and building on knowledge about real discourse in authentic contexts. However, school is also a part of real life with its specific functions. The classroom has its own authentic language, closely linked, like all communication, to the roles of the communicating partners, here the teacher and the learners, to the subject and to the goals and objectives. In a classroom there are specific registers and genres linked to the learning situations, exercise types, and exam situations (if they exist) that necessarily influence not only the working forms and the activities, but also the communication in the class.

The language classroom often mirrors life outside. Some approaches work explicitly in order to create a parallel world in the classroom which is not at all related to the classroom and thus distances itself from normal classroom discourse. Yaiche’s “global simulation” method is an example of this. Such approaches can more or less integrate elements from other methods of specific linguistic or cultural input, focus on form, corrections etc. Also the use of theatre, drama, and role playing are ways in which teachers can introduce authentic life, genres or situations.

Authentic spoken language is often frightening because it is considered complex, incorrect, not norm oriented, or even bad language: not “le bon usage”. Written language is often esteemed as better and is thus usually the target language in language classes. This is different in different cultures, national teaching traditions, and teaching traditions linked to particular languages (e.g., the teaching of French, German and English). There was no concrete knowledge about the structure of spoken language prior to the 1970s, and this is of course one of the reasons why there was no focus on spoken language previously.

Real-life communication can be described in situations, scenarios, adjacency pairs, or genres, and this is also true for classroom communication. Authentic language and discourse traditionally associated with the classroom also exists, in accordance with the teaching culture, teacher and learner roles, authority, institutional conditions, marks and exams. Specific pragmatic functions also belong to the classroom: greeting each other at the beginning of a lesson, giving instructions and feedback on a task or an exercise, creating silence, or concluding. Most of these functions belong to the teacher, who is responsible for and in charge of the situation. If a steering function dominates in the classroom, the teacher will do most of the talking and will often initiate new moves. For instance, in task-based teaching, as in project and case-based teaching, the teacher can assume the role of a consultant and give a more active role to the learners.
The teacher’s functions can include motivating, correcting, and giving evaluative feedback. Consequently, a dialogue in real life can look very different from a classroom dialogue:

Example 1: Authentic dialogue

Teacher - What time is it?
Learner - A quarter to three
Teacher - Thanks!

Example 2: Classroom dialogue

Teacher - What time is it?
Learner - A quarter to three
Teacher - Answer with a complete sentence, please.
Learner - It is a quarter three
Teacher - A quarter to three
Learner - A quarter to three
Teacher - Very good!

In the second example, the teacher first corrects and then evaluates the production of the learner. In correcting the learner, the teacher creates a problem to be solved by the learner. It is important to recognize the nature of this problem. When it comes to asking for complete sentences it is not a question of pointing out the learner’s errors, but encouraging the learner to make complete utterances and to use the language as fully as possible. However, if the problem concerns the form, as in this example, the teacher puts a stop to the flow of communication. The correction of the learner in line 5 is not constructive, and might discourage the learner without making him more aware of the language.

Teacher talk can also be close to foreigner talk because it implies talking louder, repeating, and choosing simpler words and syntax. For the different types of communication and interaction in classrooms, see section 3.1: the task orientation axis in our task description tool. In order to make learners participate and produce language, it is important to create a good line of progress. This could be the progression we describe from closed exercises to open communication, from the teacher talking, presenting, asking questions to the whole class or to one learner, to dialogues between teacher and learner, and finally dialogues between learners.

Authenticity includes not only real life in the sense of the real life of children – playing, singing, listening to music, using ICT, using their imagination – but also the production of classroom authenticity: repetitions, explicitness, exaggeration. Whole world in this case focuses on the learners’ world, as well as the context of the classroom as a learning environment. Authenticity can also concern the social environment in and surrounding the classroom, where the children interact outside the actual teaching context. It could also be an exciting possibility to create a link to the children’s interactions on the playground, among friends and so on.
3.4 ICT and the HOLA! approach

ICT in language teaching refers to the use of digital camcorders, cameras, audio recordings, CD-ROMs, webpages, webcams, e-mail, cell phones, software (grammar programs, PowerPoint, drawing programs), chatting and other media and technologies. The use of ICT offers contexts and materials close to the learners’ everyday lives and thus serves as an authentic and increasingly vital part of language teaching. ICT can enhance holistic objectives by motivating learners and promoting learner autonomy, self-confidence and satisfaction. However, because not all schools have access to ICT, it is viewed as an optional tool in HOLA!’s language learning materials. It is not seen as adding a new learning objective; rather it is a tool along the lines of pictures, kinaesthetic activities, songs and rhythms and other tools which help us expose learners to language and encourage them to use language.

*Stacey Cozart and Hanne Leth Andersen*
3.5 References


Do you remember the time your mum used to tell you a story before you went to bed? How could you forget the adventures, the funny and scary moments, the heroes and the happy endings? And how important dreaming about this fantastic world has been for your growth. Since we were children we have learnt about life through storytelling, taking those magic aspects into our real life and experiences, learning wise truth and morals and learning to interact with others. Stories belong to childhood and enrich children’s way of thinking and behaving.

In primary school, learning is not mechanical and repetitious. We deal with a whole person’s needs; emotions, communication, socialization, learning styles and strategies, multiple intelligences, a safe environment... that’s what we focus on.

The technique presented in this learning unit is the Fantastic binomial. It is taken from the Italian writer G. Rodari\(^2\), whose aim is to develop language skills by means of creative processes. We found it very interesting to apply this technique to FL learning and teaching, enriching it with the principles of the HOLA! approach.

4.1 Context

4.1.1 Foreign language in the learner’s universe

English is the European language included in the National Curriculum of primary education in Italy. The curriculum presents foreign language learning mainly as a means to communicate spontaneously and naturally, and not only as an object of study. According to this point of view, English is considered as a vehicle towards contents and topics, which elicits interest and motivation in the learners, mainly through spoken language, and by using a natural learning environment. By the end of primary school the learners are expected to reach the A1 level of the Common European Framework.

English is mainly taught by primary school teachers who attended a specific language course and have a B1 language level at least.

It is compulsory for learners to study English from the Year 1 of primary school at 6 years of age. In some schools they start in kindergarten, though it is not compulsory.

In Year 1 English is studied for 1 hour per week; in Year 2 for 2 hours and in Years 3, 4, 5 for 3 hours. The average class consists of 20 to 25 pupils. English learning may be improved through different projects and workshops. Motivation is also given by the European programmes, mainly the multilateral partnerships, e-twinning projects, and the European Language Label.

4.1.2 Our school’s “multivision”

The multilingual and multicultural background of our school, facilitates learning and teaching within an open-minded vision of the world. As a matter of fact, teachers and learners learn to see reality from different points of view, sharing habits and attitudes of different cultures around them. All special events such as Christmas, Ramadan, Gerdan, Mother’s Day… are a means to spread knowledge of the different realities coexisting in our school. There is also the annual recital at the end of the school year which is always centred on multicultural and multilingual aspects.

In our school, from kindergarten, children experience the English language through the “Narrative format approach”.

In our primary school, English learning is further promoted through:

- an extra English class: 2 hours per week in Year 1, 1 optional hour for CLIL5 in other years
- extracurricular workshops
- European projects
- City camps: full immersion in the language with native speaker tutors, after the end of the school year
- International Certificate of Language Competence, at the end of Year 5 and 6.

6 Content and Language Integrated Learning
A second European language – French or Spanish – is included in the optional curriculum from Year 3 onwards. Italian as a second language is also taught in workshops for foreign pupils.

Most of the teachers use communicative, multisensory or task-based approaches. Some make use of the textbook as the main support and sometimes as a guide.

4.2 Come in...

The *Fantastic binomial* lesson is set for Year 4 (9 years of age). This activity requires pre-knowledge such as: the parts of the body, colours, qualifying adjectives, to have and to be, the present progressive, the simple present and the use of 3rd person singular.

Our purpose is to give the learners the opportunity to use the foreign language in an amusing way, using their imagination.

The end product of the learning unit is the production of a narrative text through the selection of characters, places, events and an ending, as well as playing with the language.

The objectives established for the whole activity are:

− to develop creativity
− to know the structure of a story (beginning, development, ending)
− to promote interaction
− to enrich language.

The *Fantastic binomial* doesn’t require any specific material.

The teacher:

− creates a safe environment and a stimulating teaching atmosphere through a positive attitude and good rapport with the class
− motivates the learners and involves them in the activity arousing their interest and curiosity
− guides the learners into the world of fantasy
− recalls and introduces language through real life experiences
− supports learners with non-verbal language: mime, gesture and eye contact.

*Chapter 4: The Fantastic Binomial*
With stories the atmosphere becomes magical and learners turn into the characters, jumping into the story. The teacher is the facilitator, always attentive and confident. The learners get involved, mainly because the elements and events of the stories often reflect their feelings, hopes and their experiences: their whole world.

The learning activity can be divided into 6 steps (4 lessons):

1. Warm up: Do you like stories? (duration: 15 min)
2. The magic hat: Match the characters and start creating the story (duration: 60 min)
3. The Menu: Choose your favourite garnish (duration: 60 min)
4. Performance corner: Present your performance (duration: 60 min)
5. Feedback on the activities
6. Portfolio: self-assessment

4.2.1 Let’s warm up: Do you like stories?

We are in a Year 4 class in Italy and we are going to create a story according to the Rodari technique.

The setting: Learners sit in a circle to enable whole group involvement.

The lesson is introduced with stimulus questions by asking the learners if they like stories, and, of course, children do!

T: “Hello children, do you like stories?... I like them! I love Cinderella and I don’t like sad stories! Which stories do you like? Do you like those with... ? Would you like to create a story all together? We’re going to do it in a fun way; it is called the Fantastic binomial.”

Learners usually give Yes/No or short sentences answers. We focus on basic functions and discourse: “Do you like...? I like... I don’t like...” and support the learners with clear and simple language, body language and facial expressions. Learners, in turn, continue by saying and repeating “I like... I don’t like...”. and by asking the teacher and other classmates: “Which story do you like?”

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5 In our HOLA! experience, we had the opportunity to try out the Fantastic Binomial in two different countries: Italy and Greece. In the Italian class, there were 25 learners (an average class), in the Greek one, 15. This experience revealed a common background, common needs and other features which tell us that the application of the approach is feasible in different teaching and learning contexts.
With this kind of repetition, the learners discover their friends’ tastes and consolidate language structures as well.

4.2.2 The magic hat

After the warm up we are ready to start creating the story using the Fantastic binomial technique. The rules are explained in L1 if necessary.

− Each learner writes or draws (on a small piece of paper) an English word. This could be a person (famous characters, heroes, friends...), an animal, an object, real or imaginary.

− They fold the paper and put it into the “magic hat”.

− In turns, two learners pick a piece of paper each; they read the words aloud and the first “binomial”, i.e. a pair of words, is written on the board.

− From the list of binomials the learners vote for the most “bizarre” set.

“Monster and Rainbow” is the binomial chosen for our story.

4.2.3 Once upon a time...

Now that the binomial has been decided on we can start by saying “Once upon a time there was... a Monster”.

T: “Well, a monster! Ok, now let’s jump into this story... one... two... three... let’s jump!”

The teacher and the learners jump as if entering a magical dimension. The teacher introduces the context of the story by asking:

T: “Where does the monster live?”. The teacher, if necessary, suggests options: “In a town, by the sea, in a cave?”

L: “In a cave!”

The teacher starts asking for more information about the character: “What’s his name? What is the monster like? Describe the monster”. All the questions are supported by miming and gestures. As the learners describe the character, they all repeat the story so far so that they can consolidate the language.

L: “His name is Ondris... he’s green and red... three eyes... four legs...”

T: “Well well, let’s see: here is the Monster. His name is Ondris. He’s green and red, very tall and big. He has got three eyes, two noses, three horns, four hands, four legs. He lives in a cave, he lives alone...”

The teacher writes key words or sentences on the board. Then she starts asking the learners “Why” questions to elicit information about the story.

T: “Ondris lives alone in a cave. Why? Have you got ideas?”
The learners may predict how the events develop and how the character will behave and act.

L: “Because he have not a family!”

T: “Oh! Poor monster, he hasn’t got a family, and do you think he’s happy or sad?”

L: “Sad!”

Now, the teacher suggests the learners introduce the second element of the binomial, in this case the Rainbow. The appearance of the second element of the binomial is meant to change events: “But one day... what happens to Ondris? He sees....”

L: “Ondris see a Rainbow in the sky”

T: “Yes, Ondris sees a Rainbow in the sky”

There’s no explicit corrective feedback on grammar but the teacher’s repetition in the correct form. The repetition is genuine as not to interfere with interaction.

As we are in the central part of the story, the teacher starts re-telling it while miming, with all learners, so they can recall the whole story so far and consolidate what they have already learned, through complete sentences.

With “What” and “How” questions, the learners go on developing the story:

L: “Ondris wants to take the Rainbow, so he goes up to the mountain, jumps on the Rainbow. They fly to find Ondris’ family”.

As the story is at its final stage, the emotional element is added. Ondris, the Monster, has solved his problem. We have to find an ending.

T: “Well! Ondris has found his family! Is he still sad?”

L: “Nooo. Now Ondris is happy. Ondris and the Rainbow are happy together.”

So far this is the new story we have all created. A short and simple one, as it has to be at this age level. We can write the text on the board and we can read it all together.

4.2.4 The Menu: Choose your favourite garnish

In respect of personal styles, strategies and Multiple Intelligences, we give each learner the opportunity to “manipulate” the text according to his “taste”.

So, they can choose among:

− drawing and writing the story board
− acting out the story
− turning the story into a rap.

We focused mainly on oral skills, but we may ask the learners to take notes and find some key words or short sentences in the written text to use in their performances. According to the learners’ choices, different groups can be formed to work cooperatively.
Two groups choose the rap. This activity addresses kinaesthetic, musical and linguistic pupils as well as active and verbal learning styles.

Two groups choose the acting out. This option addresses kinaesthetic, spatial and linguistic pupils as well as the active and verbal learning styles.

Here is how the rap was developed by one of the two groups.

The learners write down the key words of the story, or at least words they think can be useful to make the Rap:

Rainbow / monster / climb / Ondris / four legs / four hands / family / sky / happy / green and red / three eyes / once upon a time / jump / one / cave / colour / two noses / sad / corns / fly

Creating a rap is not easy. This musical style deals with rhythm and rhymes. It’s important to play with these aspects in L1 first in order to let the learners feel safe. Learners are afraid they are going to make errors and hesitate in experiencing an activity. To help them with rhythm we can choose to use some visual marks to associate with the body movements:

clap clap stomp

The learners associate this rhythm with the song “We will rock you”. They easily reproduce it. Afterwards they play with the rhythm and simple rhymes in L1, linked to their daily attitudes, but also with nonsensical issues. They are now ready to work on their own. The teacher is always attentive and the learners can ask questions for clarification: some ask if they can refer to the textbook for help.

We watch them working on the rap. We see that working cooperatively is not always easy. They sometimes quarrel. There appears to be a leader in the group, someone who mostly wants to decide how to proceed. Working in group is a very important resource, at a personal level as well as for learning. Teachers should always be aware of cooperative aspects in the learning process and always promote them, as these aspects deal with autonomy, thought sharing and respect for other points of view.

The teacher mediates all these aspects by guiding the learners toward setting goals, planning, balancing ideas and roles. “How can you do this? Please reflect, present your proposal, listen to other solutions…”

Chapter 4: The Fantastic Binomial
Once they start creating the rap they get more and more involved and happy. The group is composed of five learners. They assign roles: one is the vocal rapper, the others play the rhythm and dance. They are ready for the final performance!

```
Ondris is / green and red
And he is / very very sad
He hasn’t got / parents, sisters, brothers
He hasn’t uncle / cousin and mother
He dreams to fly / very high
And go round / around the sky
So he hopes the rainbow touch / and his family again catch
```

4.2.5 Hot and cold: Feedback and portfolio

After the main steps related to the story creation and the follow up activity, i.e. the performances, we come to feedback which is what we call the hot moment. This means that learners may express themselves about the activity, referring to the emotional aspect: how they felt about it, if they enjoyed it, if it was hard or boring… Here all these aspects are expressed through visual means. The emoticons or smiley’s are, nowadays, the way young people express their feelings, even in SMS messages. The setting is a round circle, the same as for the warm up.

The teacher draws the smiley’s referring to feelings: happy, sad, confused, bored… on the board or a big sheet and the learners communicate how they feel.

An alternative is a poster sheet where the learners can select whatever means of expression to convey their first impressions: through painting, short sentences, whatever…

```
(free use of colours, painting, signs, symbols… to express their feeling about the activity)
(learners’ spontaneous verbal feedback)
Hard to understand
I liked it
Creativity
Very very very fantastic
```
The portfolio is the cold moment. It deals with metacognition, reflection on personal styles, on language competence... In this particular case, we opted for not doing it straight after the activities. When children have been performing a rap or acting out their story, when they are having fun and are involved in the activity, we let them enjoy these moments.

The portfolio is the final step of this learning unit. As for grammar reflection, for example, during the storytelling, the 3rd person singular “s” omission occurred several times. As there was no explicit grammar teaching or reviewing of errors during the activity, we used the portfolio to focus on form in the language reflection part.

Name: .............................................................................. Year: ...................................
Date: ......................................................................................................................... ......

PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY “The Fantastic binomial”

Choose your emoticon
I liked it because: it was funny ☐ it was easy ☐
I didn’t like it because: it was boring ☐ it was hard ☐

What was easy for me was:
oral understanding ☐ speaking ☐ reading ☐ writing ☐
Why?: ...........................................................

What was difficult for me was:
oral understanding ☐ speaking ☐ reading ☐ writing ☐
Why?: ...........................................................

I was able to:
ask and answers questions ☐ ask questions for clarification ☐
help the others ☐ work with the others ☐

Who/what helped me in doing the activities?:
Cooperation with my classmates ☐ listening to others’ ideas/proposals ☐
using pictures ☐ note taking ☐

Planning: by myself ☐ with others ☐

Find information in:
books ☐ web ☐ ............. ☐

My teacher through:
translation into L1 ☐ mime and gesture ☐ repeating ☐

Other: ...............................................................................................................................

I felt at ease when I worked:
by myself ☐ in pairs ☐ in a group ☐ with the class ☐

I felt involved ☐ I didn’t feel involved ☐
I was good at: ................................................................................................................

I was happy with/gratified by: .......................................................................................

Language reflection:
____________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
4.3 Focus on the HOLA! universe

4.3.1 What about language?

The Fantastic binomial follows the holistic principle of whole language, according to which language learning proceeds from whole to parts to whole: from creating the story to looking for keywords for the rap, and ending with the actual performance.

In the warm up and during the creation of the story, language is used to convey genuine and interesting content for learners: “Do you like stories? I like Cinderella, she’s a good singer, she has got a lot of friends: mice, horses, hens... which story do you like?”

There’s no explicit description of structures, syntax or semantics; repetition is useful to consolidate new language in context.

The focus on linguistic elements comes along the narrative activity through the stimuli of the teacher: “Let’s describe the monster...” The children are invited to add information related to parts of the body, colours, feelings, ... “He’s green and red, very tall and big. He has got three eyes, two noses... He is sad. He hasn’t got a family.” During the creation of the story, linguistic elements come in a natural way through the prompts of the teacher asking the learners to provide descriptions. Language is dealt with as a whole.

Once the learners are used to the language elements of the story, they are asked to re-tell it in a personal way. Therefore they are going to “manipulate” it. The rap, as well as the acting out activities, requires the learners to come up with a personal version of the story within the same language range. It is a genuine way to use language. During the rap activity, communicative awareness and spontaneous use and choice of language are developed.

Language is used to produce meaning in a wider context. Furthermore, the whole group interaction, in building the narrative text, facilitates the coherence and cohesion of the text and enriches it more and more by adding personal meaningful ideas related to the narrative context.
Learners often ask: “How do you say... in English?” On the one hand, speaking fluency is hindered because of a lack of a wide range of vocabulary. On the other hand, learners, through explicit or inferential language description (by means of examples, mime, actions...), are encouraged to produce spontaneous language through dialogue, open answers…

As learners at this age are mostly visual, concrete and kinaesthetic, they benefit from drawing and acting out what they have just experienced, within a global approach.

4.3.2 What about the learners?

Learning by doing is something in which we believe and through which we experienced the HOLA! approach. Recalling psychologists and psychomotoric theories about learning and communicating through body and movement, we want to underline the importance this aspect had in this learning unit. The memory of the body has the same importance and value as the brain.

The whole learner is free to choose how to “manipulate” and re-tell what he creates, by making the story into a rap, acting it out (using his body as an instrument to learn), writing or drawing, because we want learners to feel safe and happy in their learning process, to express themselves through an integrated use of languages, and to perform according to one’s personal intelligence and style.

Abilities, attitudes, attention, concentration and participation are aspects that are never uniform in a class but according to HOLA! each learner is as important as the other.

We deal with different levels of learning abilities, with children with difficulties; giving them the possibility to express and use the different codes. Using alternative languages in a funny environment means let them feel safe and able to participate. In the experience we had in Thessaloniki (Greece), there was a child with dyslexia. This learning disease is related to writing and reading skills and in the Fantastic binomial all skills are involved; “that day, K. seemed to be a little worried when the story was written on the board, but as we used to repeat it orally step by step, he felt involved and participated without fear. He, then, performed through the acting out. His expression turned from worried to happy, and it was a great gratification, when he gave his positive feedback by asking: “Are you coming tomorrow?” (notes from Thessaloniki).


Chapter 4: The Fantastic Binomial
4.3.3 What about the world of HOLA!

Young learners, through creating a story, express the way they are in the world as well as the world around them. The monster they describe, in this short narration, is lonely and sad because he lost his family, and the search for it becomes the central idea of the text. Children just express what is central in their life: affection and love. Sometimes they like introducing obstacles, anger, sadness, but they always come up with a happy ending, for they feel safe and happy.

4.3.4 What about the teacher?

A teacher always experiences what and how learners learn: play with clay, sing songs, dance, create fantastic stories, that’s to say learn through having fun. We have to consider ourselves as learners! Therefore, a whole teacher is aware, first of all, of a child’s world made up of authentic experiences linked to everyday life, family and emotions. A whole teacher pays attention to process and product as well as the class atmosphere. To involve the learners means to provide them with a safe environment in which they feel confident with the teacher, their classmates and the tasks they perform.

4.4 The end… maybe

All is well that ends well! The learners are so proud of their creation and their performances. But magic never ends. One day, the tricky-teacher finds a letter that says: “The poor she-monster was imprisoned by a bad dragon in the black forest; she needs help! Will Ondris be able to save her?” Well, this is another story… to be continued!

Tiziana Venturella
# The HOLA! template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>The Fantastic binomial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>A1. 9-11 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>60 min (1 lesson) + 120 min (2 lessons)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole learner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with teacher and classmates; cooperative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole language</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the learners’ ability to create a narrative text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whole world</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of imagination to create stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the learners’ ability to describe the main narrative sequences: beginning-development-ending with characters, places, time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language use</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop language and interaction with a focus on oral skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrich vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask and answer questions about the story; help, suggest, find solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening comprehension</strong>: General understanding, Specific information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking</strong>: Choosing (was the monster happy or sad?), Describing characters (he was tall, green with three eyes..), Re-telling the story (acting-out, rapping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reading</strong>: Binomials, Text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong>: Key-words, Text</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language focus</th>
<th>Linguistic focus</th>
<th>Discourse focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>Verb to have/to be, Singular / plural, Descriptive adjectives + noun, Questions and answers, Present progressive, Simple present, with focus on 3rd person singular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Most known action verbs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physical characteristics of persons, Animals, Imaginary characters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phonetics and Phonology</strong></td>
<td>Pronunciation, Intonation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The structure of a story and typical discourse features</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Synthesize and extrapolate from a narrative text in short and clear sentences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>From close to more open, from teacher guided to learner-centred</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection on learning</td>
<td>Persuasiveness: impact on the course of the story</td>
<td>The culture of the stories for children and fairy tales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Towards learners’ autonomy</td>
<td>How to put the characters in text</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The effect of repetitions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solving during the creation of the story</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Learning strategies: Develop planning skills, Collect and organize materials by themselves; Recall previous knowledge |
| Learning styles: Varied according to individual learning needs |
| Multiple intelligences: Linguistic, Kinaesthetic, Spatial, Interpersonal |
| Portfolio reflection: Self-assessment (language and learning competences), reflection on language and work |

| Assessment | Feedback at each step through free ways of expression (drawing, emoticons, verbal..). Portfolio (self-assessment and reflection) |

| Materials and resources | Class atmosphere, blackboard, paper, colours |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sequence of activities</th>
<th>1 Warming up</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 The magic hat</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 The menu</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4 The performance corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1 Why learning styles?

For some of us, foreign language teachers or teacher educators today, it is not easy to forget, just to cite a few examples among many others, how in our childhood the Physics and Chemistry teacher made us suffer in his classes when he forced us to memorize meaningless chemical formulas, or when the Maths teacher developed mathematical equations in which we used to get lost. Also when the Geography teacher obliged us to memorize information on cereal production in the various regions of our country or the Philosophy teacher wanted us at all costs to understand syllogisms that were beyond our comprehension. However, we were surprised to see that some of our classmates were able to understand what was happening in the classroom and got good grades in examinations. Certainly, we felt somehow frustrated when compared to those classmates who seemed to be smarter than us.

We may have sometimes wondered what the reason for our lack of understanding and interest in certain school subjects was. Over time we have obtained the answer. All the pupils in a classroom were considered to be one soul by the teacher, though only a few were able to follow his explanations. In those years many teachers ignored their pupils’ different learning styles or intelligences in their daily teaching practice. Today, fortunately, things have changed and most teachers (and publishers) are aware of the fact that not all pupils learn in the same way. There are pupils who need to experience a problem themselves, or work with a partner or in groups. Others need to take notes for later review, and some others learn to do something by watching rather than reading the book or listening to the teachers’ explanations. Learning styles and intelligences that teachers may come across in their classroom are varied.

Let’s now enter a language classroom in any elementary school and see what happens. It is likely that the teacher begins the session by showing a series of drawings representing colours and sticking them on the board at the same time that he names the colour out loud. Children repeat. Once all the pictures are stuck on the blackboard, the teacher removes the flashcards and repeats the process. Then, the teacher asks the children to say the names of the colours in
chorus while he points at them, first in order, then at random. The lesson will continue with activities of this kind until the teacher believes that learners have assimilated the new items (for a whole sequence of this type of lesson see Halliwell 1992). The last step will consist of the learners copying the vocabulary in their notebooks, translating the new items into their L1 or drawing a picture similar to the one presented by the teacher.

Being aware of the fact that we have presented a somewhat simplistic lesson, we can take now one step further and attempt to answer the question “Is it like this that a child learns a language?” Is it enough to say red or green pointing at the flashcards on the board? Colour is one of the characteristics of a particular object and therefore, wouldn’t it be better to say my shirt is red if the teacher is wearing a red shirt and reinforce the statement with Maria’s trousers are also red if a child is wearing trousers of that colour? Why not use real things and real language to illustrate the concepts we want to teach if we can have those objects at hand? Then, after using real examples, we can isolate colours, and work with them. After that we can again make use of objects close to the children’s world to consolidate the language to be learnt.

Hence, for HOLA!, a holistic approach to language learning for kids, the question “Is it like this that a child learns a language?” has a clear answer: there are other procedures that may be more effective. One of this modus operandi constitutes the basic principle of HOLA!: to start with the whole and then go to the parts to continue again with the whole. This is the “movement” that HOLA! seeks to bring to the language classroom and the basic structure of any language lesson within the HOLA! framework. In real life the names of the colours (and language in general) are learned in a similar way and it is precisely this route that makes the name of the colours memorable for the child.

However, in language lessons as well as in Mathematics or Geography, the teacher will find children who represent different learning styles and this is a fact that any approach which regards learning as a whole cannot overlook. Some pupils may learn a language by hearing the words when used in a meaningful context; others will need to see the words written on the board before using them or analyse the different parts of a sentence at a certain point of the lesson. As stated before there are different learning styles and multiple intelligences. According to Johnstone (2005:214), “research evidence suggests that some of the components of styles that would undoubtedly be ‘oppositional’ to an exclusive definition of ‘holism as alternative’ can in fact be of considerable value to language learners. Holism therefore should ‘include’ these rather than oppose them and should accept the contradictions that go with this.”

5.2 Different learning styles taxonomies

In the last 30 years a plethora of learning styles has been identified, at least conceptually, in the literature, and a great variety of learning style taxonomies have been proposed. In this section only some of these categorizations will be (very briefly) described as it is not our intention to get the reader lost in a forest
Skehan (1998) defines learning style as “the preferred way in which individuals process information or approach a task”. The style determines what the learners can learn and how he will actually learn it, so it is essential to take it into account when teaching (Oxford 2001). For the Perceptual approach (Dunn & Dunn, 1978), related to the way individuals prefer to perceive the input to be learned, most learners have a visual style, some preferably use oral-verbal cues and a minority have a kinaesthetic/tactile style (they learn through moving, doing and touching).

David Kolb’s Learning Style model is based on personality factors and how they affect learning styles (Kolb 1984). Along two axes, Kolb describes how learners both perceive and process information. Kolb’s model identifies four “types” of people: Type 1, Accommodator (concrete-active); Type 2, Diverger (concrete-reflective); Type 3, Assimilator (abstract-reflective); Type 4 Converger (abstract-active). For instance, Type 2 (diverger), responds well to explanations of how course material relates to their experience, their interests, and their future careers. In order to maximize its effectiveness, a learning situation should move through these learning styles in a prescribed sequence: from “feeling” (a concrete experience) to “watching” (reflective observation), then to “thinking” (active conceptualization), and finally to “doing” (active experimentation).

Gregorc (1985) also used two axes to describe learning styles. He describes perception along an axis from abstract to concrete and ordering of information along an axis from random to sequential; 1) Concrete Sequential (CS) learners are hardworking, conventional, accurate, stable, dependable, consistent, factual, and organized; 2) Abstract Sequential (AS) learners are analytic, objective, well-informed, thorough, structured, logical, deliberate, and systematic; 3 Abstract Random (AR) learners are sensitive, compassionate, perceptive, imaginative, idealistic, sentimental, spontaneous, and flexible; 4) Concrete Random (CR) learners are quick, intuitive, curious, realistic, creative, innovative, instinctive, adventurous.

More information about learning styles in terms of cognitive features has been facilitated by research done on hemispheric dominance and field independence. Left-brained learners respond better to verbal information and explanations given in a systematic, structured, convergent way. They learn more effectively through tasks that promote visual, analytic, reflective and self-reliant learning. Right-dominant learners prefer demonstrated, illustrated or symbolic instruction as they rely more on images while thinking and remembering. Tasks that envisage auditory, global, impulsive and interactive learning help them to optimise their acquisition of knowledge (Reid 1995, 1998).

Field independency studies focus on pupils’ ability to concentrate and distinguish parts from a whole (field-independent) or their capacity to perceive the whole panorama or “configuration of a problem or idea or event” (Brown 1994:106) instead of seeing the parts (field-dependent). Field–independent

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language learners give attention to form and accuracy; they prefer rules and patterns and are good at dealing with abstract, impersonal and factual material. They excel in classroom learning which involves analysis, attention to details, and mastering of exercises, drills, and other focused activities. **Field-dependent** language learners are sensitive to human relationships and learn more effectively with tasks where a situational context is given. They focus on meaning and fluency and prefer examples and concrete, human, social or artistic material (Fonseca 2005).

### 5.3 Multiple Intelligences

Another important learning styles category (though not everybody would agree on including them in this taxonomy⁷) is Multiple Intelligences (MI), theory developed by Howard Gardner (1983, 1999) at Harvard University. When Gardner studied human intelligence he realised that the traditional two-fold view of intelligence – the logical-mathematical and linguistic types – could not explain many people’s professional and personal achievements in life. He then proposed expanding the number of ways in which human beings are intelligent, identifying at least eight kinds of intelligences which work together so that we all possess a mixture of them.

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⁷ “A learning style is an approach I take when trying to make sense of different kinds of content. So, if I’m a kinaesthetic learner, I will learn best using a hands-on approach no matter what the topic or skill is. In contrast, the intelligences represent potentials or capacities that are geared to a particular content” (Pugliese, 2002)
Arnold and Fonseca have applied Multiple Intelligences theory to the language classroom. They claim that a multiple intelligence perspective in the foreign language classroom is:

"...a framework that can help language teachers to recognise the holistic nature of learners and to address pupil diversity. It enables teachers to organise a variety of contexts that offer learners distinct ways to engage meaning and strengthen memory pathways: it is a teacher-friendly tool for lesson planning that can increase the attractiveness of language learning tasks and therefore create favourable motivational conditions. (Arnold and Fonseca 2004:120)"

It is clear that in the foreign language classroom teachers cannot attend to all learners’ intelligences at the same time. However, as stated before, it is important to be aware of the fact that pupils learn in very different ways and for that reason providing activities according to their preferences and capacities reinforces their learning. As Multiple Intelligence theory suggests, activating different memory pathways through the use of a variety of language activities could be an effective way to facilitate memory ability and output. Teaching English in primary education using models that provide a rich variety of learning activities, which at different moments will call upon the eight different intelligences, will surely make for an interesting, lively, and effective classroom for all pupils. Furthermore, learners will feel more activated and drawn into language learning, something which will enhance their motivation, increase their interest, accentuate their otherwise hidden strengths, and augment their willingness to take risks and try out new thinking processes.

Nevertheless, as Puchta (2006) points out, teachers need to be cautious not to mix up multi-sensory teaching with Multiple Intelligences teaching. In other words, using pictures in the language class is not necessarily about teaching from the visual-spatial intelligence, just as singing a song with your children will not automatically activate their musical-rhythmic intelligence. As Howard Gardner said in an interview on the US radio show Edutopia some time ago:

“I remember seeing a movie about Multiple Intelligences and there were kids crawling on the floor and the legend said ‘bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence’. I said. ‘That's not bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, that's kids crawling on the floor. This is making me crawl up the wall!’ ... to have kids crawl or exercise their vocal cords, that's not intelligence.”

The eight types he distinguishes are the following:

**Intrapersonal intelligence** focuses inward and involves self-knowledge and understanding of our own feelings. It also enables us to reflect on and learn from our experiences. Those people who are strong in this intelligence need to spend time by themselves and suffer when they have to socialize excessively. *When working on this intelligence, you focus on, and functions in term of self-*

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knowledge, self-regulation, self-control. The ability to abstract oneself and daydream is a good evidence of this intelligence at work⁸.

**Interpersonal intelligence** implies the ability to observe and discern among the moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions of other individuals. It enables working with others and listening effectively. Central to this intelligence is the ability to listen to what the other person seems to be saying (…), to be able to get good rapport with another person and to be adept to negotiation and persuasion.

**Logical-Mathematical intelligence** is used in the analytical part of problem-solving, sorting, and analyzing, and in order to discover patterns and to establish connections and relationships between separate pieces of information. This intelligence can be associated with “scientific thinking” (…). Logical-mathematical thinking has to do with the content of sentences.

**Linguistic intelligence** is intimately related to form and has to do with being sensitive to sounds, rhythms, and meanings of words and to language. The linguistic state of mind reveals the relationship between form and content.

**Musical intelligence** entails the ability to perceive, appreciate, and produce rhythm, tone, pitch, volume, intensity, and direction of sound. Fortunately, for us language teachers, many of these features are also properly part of our linguistic realm, though we can choose whether to emphasise them or not.

**Spatial intelligence** is connected to the perception of space, sense of orientation, and visual capacity. It also enables thinking in pictures and seeing things in relation to others. Gardner presents the spatial intelligence as being principally dependent on our ability to see (…). We maintain that perception of space is multisensory, even, if in many people, the visual aspects predominates.

**Bodily-Kinaesthetic intelligence** is characterized by the ability to use the body in highly differentiated and expressive ways. It makes physical expression and playing games possible. Characteristic as well is the ability to work skilfully with objects, both those that involve the fine motor movements of one’s fingers and hands and those that exploit gross motor movements of body.

**Environmental intelligence** refers to the capacity to organize and categorize the natural world. It has to do with being in harmony with the nature in the way that many early people were, and many people still are.

5.4 Which is the best learning style?

Learning style is an overall pattern that provides broad direction to learning and “that make the same teaching method wonderful for some and terrible for others”

⁸ Text in italics within in this taxonomy are quotations from Puchta & Rinvolucri 2005, pages 7-11).
No learning style is the ‘best’ for learning. Sometimes, pupils will inevitably be called upon to deal with problems and challenges that require the use of their less preferred style, and so should regularly be given practice in the use of those modes. By providing a wide range of classroom activities that cater to different learning styles, teachers can help L2 learners develop beyond the comfort zone dictated by the natural styles preferences (Oxford 2003). Furthermore, learners do not belong completely to a specific learning style. They are idealized types, and individuals with one style may switch to another in certain circumstances. No individual can be said to belong to one single category. His learning approach will depend on the situation, the task and other elements. There is no learning style which is the ‘best’ for learning, only a better style in a particular situation for a specific learning task” (Rubio et alt, 2004:117).

A point no educational psychologist would dispute is that pupils learn more when information is presented in a variety of forms than when only a single form is used. Neuroscience research indicates that learning improves when it is meaningful for the learner. When learning styles are taken into account in the language classroom, “teachers are better able to tap into the areas of personal meaningfulness of their pupils since they are recognizing the differences inherent in the pupils and putting individuals with their different ways of learning where they belong, back at the centre of the learning process” (Arnold and Fonseca, 2004:125). Thus, to maximize success, primary teachers should employ an approach which involves passive and active elements, reflective and analytic tasks, pair, group and individual work, inductive and deductive paths, analysis and synthesis, focus-on-form and communicative teaching, etc. Research has shown that when individuals have materials presented which match their own styles they consistently achieve better results (Banner and Ryner 2000).

This is the reason why HOLA!, taking into account Skehan’s definition of learning style, proposes a learning styles taxonomy that includes the different dimensions that approaching a learning task involves.

### 5.5 HOLA! learning style model

Most children can be located somewhere on the continuum for each style dimension proposed in this model as learning styles cannot be considered dichotomies. Learning styles generally operate on a continuum or multiple, intersecting continua. For instance, nobody is likely to be totally concrete without having a bit of abstract as well, and a person might be equally visual and verbal. Few if any people could be classified as having all or nothing in any of the categories proposed (Ehrman, 1996).
HOLA! dimensions may be defined in the following terms\(^9\):

1. The type of information the learner preferentially perceives: concrete/abstract
2. The modality sensory information is most effectively perceived: visual/verbal
3. The way the learner prefers to process information: active/reflective
4. How learners progress towards understanding: analytic/global
5. The organisation of information the learner is most comfortable with: inductive/deductive.

5.5.1 The type of information the learner preferentially perceives

**Concrete** learners prefer to process information inductively and tend to be methodical, they like facts, data, and experimentation. They are patient with detail but do not like complications. They are inclined to rely on memorization as a learning strategy and are more comfortable learning and following rules and standard procedures. Concrete learners are careful but may be slow.

**Abstract** learners are imaginative; they deal better with principles, concepts, and theories. They are bored by detail and welcome complications. They like variety, dislike repetition, and tend to be better equipped than concrete learners to accommodate new concepts and exceptions to rules. Abstract learners are quick but may be careless.

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5.5.2 The modality sensory information is most effectively perceived

**Visual** learners prefer information to be presented visually – in pictures, diagrams, symbols, flow charts, time lines, films, videos and demonstrations – rather than in spoken or written words. They benefit from drawings. They find it useful to learn to do things by observing rather than by reading or listening to explanations. Visual learners rely on visual memory to recall places, people or facts.

**Verbal** learners prefer spoken or written explanations to visual presentations. They prefer to see what they have to learn and rely especially on verbal language. What they find useful is reading instructions instead of listening to them, taking notes of what the teacher says in class, seeing things written on the blackboard, studying in a book instead of listening to a lesson.

5.5.3 The way the learner prefers to process information

**Active** learners are people with more of a natural tendency toward active experimentation than toward reflective observation. Active learners learn well in situations that enable them to do something physical. In general, they like team competitions. What they find useful is experimenting a problem themselves, carrying out a task even without listening or reading instructions, moving while they study, using gestures in conversation, working with a partner or group, experimenting tasks in and outside the school.

**Reflective** learners are people with more of a natural tendency toward reflective observation than toward active experimentation. Reflective learners learn well in situations that provide them with opportunities to think about the information being presented. They like writing and question formulation exercises.

5.5.4 How learners progress towards understanding

**Analytic** learners absorb information and acquire understanding of material in small connected chunks. They can function with incomplete understanding of course material, but they may lack a grasp of the broad context of a body of knowledge and its interrelationships with other subjects and disciplines. They prefer to undertake a problem by separating its diverse parts and considering them one by one. What they find useful is logical reasoning based on concrete facts, observing differences among things, proceeding step by step when working, planning work to be done beforehand, using time effectively, focussing their attention on the task and avoiding other distractions.

**Global learners** prefer to achieve understanding in large holistic leaps. Before global learners can master the details of a subject they need to understand how the material being presented relates to their prior knowledge and experience. A strongly global learner may appear slow and do poorly on homework and tests.
until they grasp the total picture. They find it useful to frequently synthesize what they study, to observe similarities among things, to make decisions intuitively, to carry out more than one task simultaneously, to decide what to do while carrying out a task instead of planning beforehand, to be flexible with time scheduled for study and other activities

5.5.5 The organisation of information the learner is most comfortable with

**Deductive** learners proceed from generalities to particulars, they prefer structured presentations and applying principles. For Felder and Silverman stating the governing principles and working down to the applications is an effective and elegant way to organise and present material that is already understood. Deductive learners learn best by starting at the fundamental principles and then learning the applications of these principles to real life and the problem they encounter.

**Inductive** learners proceed from particulars to generalities, don’t like structure and infer principles. Induction is described by Felder and Silverman as the natural human learning styles. Babies don’t come into life with a set of general principles but rather observe the world around them and draw inferences… Most of what we learn on our own (as opposed to in class) originates in a real situation or problem that needs to be addressed or solved, not in a general principle…” (Felder and Silverman 1988).

5.6 Learning styles and Multiple Intelligences in HOLA! lessons

Two of the key elements of HOLA! are the learner and the teacher. HOLA! considers the learner as a whole, autonomous, collaborative person situated in a rich and safe environment where his learning style and type of intelligence is taken into consideration; a reflective learner aware and self-conscious of language learning strategies and able to self-assess his progress by means of the different tools. A holistic language teacher has a good command of the language he teaches, and is aware of the language learning strategies and learning styles their learners use and/or could use.

Banner and Rayner (2000) suggest that a first step to include learning styles in the daily practice could be an awareness-raising programme which enables teachers and pupils to test the assertion that styles differences can make a positive difference in the classroom, and for that they suggest different techniques for grouping learners and style-led activities. HOLA! does not go that far. We believe that real awareness and inclusion of styles when planning language lessons should guarantee learning opportunities for all the children as well as cater for differentiation. If a teacher designs a lesson without considering learning styles, the materials or mode of presentation will reflect their own
personal style. The lesson, consequently, will probably lack balance, and most certainly be characterised by limited differentiation.

Let’s now have a look at some of the English lessons presented in this book. It is not, of course, an exhaustive analysis of the lessons but just a brief outline aimed at highlighting the different styles and intelligences the activities are intended for.

First, let’s have a quick look at Zippo on planet Earth. Verbal learners are taken into consideration when two options are offered with the listening text. Some of them simply listen (those who tend to be more aural) while those who rely on written language are also offered the opportunity to read the text to facilitate comprehension. Inductive learners will have the opportunity to discover the rules (grammar structures) and reflective learners will also have the chance to think about the information being presented in the written text. Working in groups will facilitate the work for active learners as they have to manipulate the materials and rely on their peers to accomplish some of the tasks. On the other hand, most multiple intelligences have a place in this lesson especially interpersonal intelligence (group work is important throughout the whole lesson), spatial intelligence (manipulating the parts of the body to assemble them), linguistic intelligence (working with rhymes, role-playing, writing a letter...), mathematical (completing a logical sequence), bodily-kinaesthetic (singing a song and at the same time pointing to the different parts of their bodies) and musical intelligence (clapping when following a logical sequence). Finally, not only reflective learners will benefit from the Portfolio work. This type of reflection will benefit all learning styles as it is the best way to start thinking about how one learns and define learning preferences.

The Hunting game starts asking the children to imagine what animals may live in a wood. A poster representing a wood and animal shapes are provided so visual learners will feel very comfortable following the story. This gives both concrete and abstract learners the opportunity to recall the animals they can name, concrete learners being more realistic and abstract learners being more imaginative (perhaps an elephant can also live in this wood). After that, when the teacher has told the story, both global and analytic learners will have lived the experience in different ways. The former will take a global picture of the situation, the latter will have focused on more specific details of the story. All learners will have the opportunity to reflect on the experience by telling the teacher what helped them understand the story. This obviously will help them retell the story, the next step in the sequence of activities.

Retelling the story will be an excellent occasion for spatial and active learners as they will be able to manipulate the material provided (plasticine) and use their imagination. Later on, when playing the game, concrete and analytic learners will be favoured as notices will be provided. They can also take notes so that they can better remember the different steps of the game. Interpersonal and bodily-kinaesthetic intelligences are perhaps the most developed ones as children have to interact continuously amongst themselves. Environmental intelligence is also well supported, something not easy to find in most foreign language lessons.
Linguistic intelligence has a central role throughout the whole lesson as well as spatial intelligence, connected with movement and manipulation of materials.

With the *Fantastic binomial*, both inductive and deductive learners are favoured. The teacher’s objective when introducing the lesson is that they learn “I like, I don’t like”; she gives some examples which children can imitate: “I like happy stories, I don’t like sad stories”. This way deductive learning will have a language model and inductive learners will be able to “induce” the grammar rule: I + like, I + don’t + like. Concrete and abstract learners will produce different binomials and the same will occur along the creation of the story. Concrete learners will be more realistic whilst abstract learner will be more bizarre. Analytic, verbal learners will benefit from the list of cue words the teacher will write on the board and, of course of the final version of the story that the teacher also reproduces on the board. The last step of the activity will favour both active and verbal learners in case they choose creating a rap where also bodily-kinaesthetic, linguistic, interpersonal and musical intelligences will be favoured; verbal learners and linguistic, interpersonal, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligences in case they choose acting out the story and verbal, visual, analytic learners in case children opt for drawing and writing the story board. This latter option will also support linguistic, interpersonal and spatial intelligences.

Finally, in *How a few words can change one’s life*, learners’ understanding of the story is supported with pictures which benefits visual, inductive learners as well as concrete learners when they have to locate the words in the story and match them with the pictures provided. It is interesting to underline the part of the lesson named workstation, perhaps the most appealing and motivating part of the lesson as it offers learners a variety of tasks to undertake. Learners can choose one among the 10 tasks provided that better suit their favourite learning style and intelligence. For example, active learners will feel comfortable when experiencing the story themselves. This happens if they choose to retell the story from the beggar’s point of view and the stranger’s point of view. Reflective learners will also have their opportunity to reflect about the information presented if their choice is writing a dialogue between the beggar and the stranger. Concrete learners will enjoy writing the daily routine of the beggar and visual learners will feel at ease preparing the Venn diagram. As far as Multiple Intelligences are concerned, it can be said that intrapersonal and interpersonal, besides linguistic intelligences are the most supported throughout the whole lesson. The intrapersonal intelligence role is important as it is a story that will make pupils think about a reality different from theirs and in some way, “live” that reality. We can see this aspect from the very beginning when the teacher asks children to think about things that make them sad or happy or what they think the stranger has written on the sign. All the tasks designed by the teacher also underline this introspection. Finally, the linguistic aspect is present in most of the tasks as all of them demand a written product from the learners.
5.7 Conclusion

We have briefly revised literature concerning learning styles and Multiple Intelligences and pointed out that there is not a best or a unique learning style that could characterise a particular learner. We have also provided a taxonomy that could cover the different dimensions that approaching a learning task involves. Finally, we have briefly analysed some lessons to highlight how they included learning styles and multiple intelligences.

Incorporating learning styles and multiple intelligences in our lesson does not mean to adopt the taxonomy proposed and go one by one so that all styles are integrated in an activity. In fact, many of the activities included in a lesson will usually be suitable for more than one style. Nevertheless, teachers could check that most styles are covered during a lesson. HOLA! strongly believes that by considering learning styles in an approach to lesson planning, teachers may offer a greater opportunity for differentiation. A focus on style can result in the learner feeling more involved in the process of learning. Awareness of pupils’ learning styles can also improve behaviour by building levels of motivation and self-confidence within the group. Teachers can use styles to structure lesson activities with the aim of raising pupils’ motivation, interest, and on-task behaviour, but above all, reinforcing their learning process.

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5.8 References


CHAPTER 6
HOW A FEW WORDS CAN CHANGE ONE’S LIFE...

THE BEGGAR AND VAN GOGH

Is it feasible for pupils to work in an autonomous and independent way, benefitting from group work and at the same time being free to choose the activities that better match their learning styles? How can this be done within the classroom reality? *How a few words can change one’s life* proposes the “workstation environment” which promotes, among others, one of the main criteria of Hola!, according to which the learner is the actor in his learning process.

6.1 Learning languages at Doğuş Educational Institution

6.1.1 The importance of the second language and the constructivist approach

Pre-school education in Turkey is growing rapidly and children are being exposed to a foreign language, which is English, at an increasingly early age and for an increasing period of time. Primary education in state schools begins foreign language teaching in Year 4 (10 years of age). However foreign language education in private primary schools starts in Year 1 (6 years of age) with a high number of hours.

The Turkish curriculum places great importance on a constructivist approach across all subjects. Learner choice and preference are taken into account when preparing activities. Whenever possible the pupils are encouraged to take control of their own learning and explore areas of interest they feel particularly attached to. In this sense workstations play a key role in learning: learners are given a choice of tasks which vary in scope and difficulty level, making them differentiated by outcome and design.

6.1.2 Our vision of foreign languages

Doğuş Educational Institution (DEI) is located in central Istanbul on the Asian side and has around 700 pupils. DEI follows the Turkish National Curriculum as
well as an intensive Foreign Languages programme that includes 7 different languages. The ability to work in groups is honed from pre-school, and pupils feel comfortable cooperating in a risk-free environment. Learners feel safe in volunteering answers and acknowledge the importance of their peers’ contributions to the process. In terms of linguistic knowledge, all learners know the role of the foreign language in the class and are encouraged to speak in English at all times. Teachers do not express concern if the pupil doesn’t know the meaning of a particular word as long as whole meaning is conveyed.

6.1.3 The individual within the group: Workstation competences

To be able to participate successfully in a workstation based lesson the children must have at least grounding in certain competences, both in terms of behavioural competences and language knowledge. They are already familiar with language instructions for performing tasks such as “create a dialogue or retell the story”; the activities presented require at least an elementary proficiency in the language: the A2 level.

Working in a group requires patience, negotiation, leadership and organization skills that develop during primary school. At this stage (Year 4; 9 years of age) our pupils have been exposed to individual and pair work and have had some exposure to larger group work. They have brought the skills they needed for pair work and extended them to group participation. Learners who are weak in certain group work competences can be helped and developed by their peers in a non-judgmental way for the benefit of the group rather than focusing on the weaknesses of the individual.

For sure the pupils may find being forced to use a foreign language to accomplish certain basic communicative tasks as unnecessary so an awareness of the reasons for using the foreign language must be achieved with the children over a longer period of time. Thus success in communication becomes of the utmost importance in order to overcome any preconceived effects on learner motivation. At the same time the teacher does not attribute importance to the knowledge of individual specific vocabulary words but rather to the whole meaning being conveyed by the learners. Specifically mistakes are not highlighted and corrected; rather meaning is reinforced and corrected in a passive way:

Pupil: Can I have a orange pencil please?
Teacher: Yes, here is an orange pencil for you.

The learners have to use English all the time and it is common for them to ask each other for help before approaching the teacher with a request or comment.
The general objective of the lesson is for the learner to be able to produce one of a selection of tasks based on the story. Another important aim is that children be aware of a reality different from theirs by getting involved in a story where the character is less fortunate than they are.

The lesson has been designed for use with Year 4 learners (9 years of age) during English classes. The lesson is divided into four stages:

1. **Warm up**
2. **Listen and choose the best title**: pupils are asked to live, feel and imagine the story
3. **Zooming into language specifics**
4. **Workstation projects**: learners are asked to produce meaningful and personal responses to the story. During the final process the learners will interact to find words that they do not know and to plan and manage their tasks

In our HOLA! experience, we had the opportunity to try out this lesson in a Year 4 class in Aarhus, Denmark with 9 year old kids.

The first arrangement for the teacher was to establish the right atmosphere in the classroom to arouse kids’ curiosity and to maintain comfort and peace. We drew the curtains to get less sunshine in, to feel the storytelling time at night and be inspired by the atmosphere.

### 6.2.1 Warm up

As an introductory activity, children are asked to think about stories they know or experiences in which they felt happy or sad. The teacher may provide an example of herself. When the children have given some examples of stories or situations that made them feel sad or happy, the teacher asks them what can change their mood and make them happy when they are sad.

### 6.2.2 Listen and choose the best title

The teacher writes three titles on the board and explains: “Today I am going to tell you a story which has no title because the writer forgot to write it. After the story finishes, would you mind helping me choose a title for the story? The publisher wants to publish the story and asked for our help. I have already thought of three titles but I need your help in choosing the most suitable one”. The teacher shows the titles on the board.
First, the learners are encouraged to share what they think the story will be about with their peers. The teacher then tells the story using flashcards (see p. 89) to provide non-verbal cues to aid pupils understanding of the story. The story is told from start to finish. The teacher attempts to scaffold and support pupil understanding of the whole through pictures and well timed stops, when she can ask them prediction questions such as “What do you think the stranger’s offer will be?” or “What do you think the stranger had written on the sign?”

The story which is taken from an American book is given below:

There was once a man named Joe Lorry. He was an old blind beggar from Brooklyn in the United States. Brooklyn is part of New York City, and it is home to two and a half million people. A bridge called the Brooklyn Bridge joins Brooklyn to Manhattan Island. Joe lived in a neighbourhood near a road that leads to the Brooklyn Bridge.

Joe was poor, and he could not see. He had to earn money by begging on a busy street corner near the Brooklyn Bridge. Everyday he got up, went to the street corner and begged from people walking by. Around his neck he hung a sign that said, ‘I am blind, please help.’ Everyday he stood there in the rain or the cold or the terrible heat of summer. He waited for people to feel sorry for him and drop a few coins in his cup. He never made too much money. Sometimes he went home with only 5 dollars, sometimes 10, and on a very lucky day 20 dollars. Life wasn’t easy for him.

One lovely spring day a stranger came up to Joe and made a strange offer to him. “I have no money to give you,” the stranger said, “but I know how you can get more money. Just let me change the message on your sign, and I promise you will make more money than you can imagine.” Joe thought about it for a moment and then said yes to the stranger’s offer. The stranger turned Joe’s sign over and wrote a new message on the back. Then he wished Joe good luck and said goodbye. A few minutes after he left, Joe heard the sound of coins falling into his cup.

It was like that for the rest of the day. Almost every minute somebody put money into Joe’s cup. “People are so generous today,” Joe said to himself “or I am very lucky. I wonder if it is because of what the stranger wrote on my sign”. Finally, Joe grabbed the arm of a man who was putting some coins into his cup. “Excuse me sir,” he apologized, “but what does the message on my sign say?” The man looked at him in surprise. “Don’t you know what your own sign says?” the man asked. Joe explained about the stranger who changed the message on his sign. “Oh, I understand,” said the man. “Well, your stranger is certainly very wise. Your sign says “It is spring and all the trees are blossoming, red, pink, white, yellow, violet – and I cannot see any of them.”
Prediction takes place in the pre and while-listening stages. It increases learner implication in the story and raises the stakes for learner participation and use of the target language.

In the Danish class, when the teacher asked what the stranger wrote on the sign which made the beggar rich, one pupil’s prediction was ‘If you give me money you will have a very lucky day.’

At the end of the story the teacher refers the learners back to the question posed at the beginning of the lesson and asks the learners what they think the best title for the story is and why. Learners are encouraged to give reasons for their choices. For example, a child can think that the best title is “The Power of Words” because the stranger changes the words and the blind man gets more money.

Although the most original title is “The Power of Words” if learners make meaningful links with other titles they can be praised and rewarded. For example, other children may say that the best title is “A lucky day” because Joe is usually unlucky, or “The life of a beggar” because Joe is a beggar.

The main objective of this activity is to immerse the learners in the story and have them react and interact with it as a whole. The teacher can close this stage of the lesson by asking some questions to summarise the story and have it become a part of the learners working memory through reprocess and revisiting it. For example, she can ask questions like “Why do you think the stranger is a wise man?” “Why do you think people are more generous after reading the new sign?”

The setting in the Danish class was suitable for kids’ interaction. There was a corner in the classroom with the shape of a horse shoe which was for storytelling lessons. The right setting makes the atmosphere magic which then turns the kids into the main characters and makes it easy to jump into the story.

When kids were given time to find the best title they were also asked to summarize the story for their peers in Danish to make sure everyone understood the story.

The content of the story has been chosen deliberately. All cultures at a certain level of society are familiar with the concept of beggars or homeless people who make a living by asking for
money on the streets. Society views beggars in different ways depending on individual preconceptions.

6.2.3 Language focus

The teacher shows the painting by Van Gogh “Almond blossom” and immediately makes a link with the story:

“It is spring and all the trees are blossoming… What do you think blossoming means?”

Pupils and teacher read the “Did You Know This?” section together and relate the painting to elements of the story: “Why do people like flowers?” “Because they are colourful”, “When do people buy flowers?” “When they are happy or want to make other people happy”.

DID YOU KNOW THIS?

On January 31st 1890, Theo, Vincent Van Gogh’s brother, wrote to Vincent of the birth of his son. Van Gogh, who was extremely close to his younger brother, immediately made him a painting of his favourite subject: blossoming branches against a blue sky.

The gift was meant to hang in their bedroom. As a symbol of this new life, Vincent chose an almond tree, which blooms early in southern regions and announces the coming of spring as early as February.

The pupils and the teacher look at each of the vocabulary entries. The teacher asks the children to locate the vocabulary within the story they listened to and to relate it to the story: “What was the name of the BEGGAR?”, “What did he have around his NECK?”. In doing so the teacher zooms into what started as a whole and identifies and teaches specific vocabulary that pupils reproduce by answering closed questions.
6.3 Workstation projects

The classroom environment is friendly and purposeful both before and during the lesson. The classroom is rich in English language resources – posters flashcards, examples of pupils work on display, readers, encyclopaedias and dictionaries adorn the classroom. Physically there is a large space at the front of the classroom and the tables are arranged in groups accordingly, allowing for freedom of physical movement and equal access to the teacher.

The learners are given a list of projects to choose from. The necessary materials such as card, paper and crayons are provided beforehand and the teacher provides pupils with time to review and clarify the range of tasks on offer. Pupils’ choice means that pupils can select the type of response to the story they will perform. They take into account their own strengths, weaknesses and learning styles when selecting their task. Certain tasks lend themselves to greater collaboration, or autonomy, than others. Groups of two or three learners are formed according to the project they choose. Although the task sheet seems initially product oriented, the process is equally important as that is when the target language is used.
Workstation Projects

1. **Draw four pictures about this story and retell the story using these pictures**
   
Pupils visualize the story they have heard and select the key plot developments they feel will combine to form the overall story. They are required to discuss the story and make decisions together: “Shall we draw the beggar?” “What will he be wearing?” “He’s a beggar so his clothes may be old”. Learners can investigate all possibilities by analyzing the story and implying details to add to their pictures.

2. **Retell the story from the beggar’s point of view and the stranger’s point of view**
   
In this task pupils will produce a narrative again, selecting details from the story they wish to explore, from another person’s point of view, requiring empathy and engagement with the world around them. They will also be required to use their imagination. Collaboration with members of their group will be essential to reach a consensus on the content of the passage.

3. **Imagine a dialogue between the beggar and the stranger and act it out**
   
The children perform the dialogue in front of their peers and are encouraged to dress up and use props to good effect. This active response to the story requires pupils to reflect on the events and try to deduce how this would affect the characters in terms of their expressions, voice intonation and pitch. The dialogues could also include certain cultural and discursive elements of the language, creating a live and real world rendition of the story.

4. **Write at least five reasons for being a beggar**
   
This activity will involve pupils brainstorming their ideas before selecting their final five reasons. They will have to empathise with character, discuss, note-take and negotiate using the target language. The children will have to personalize the experiences of the beggar in the story in order to select the final five criteria. Use of background knowledge will also be a key factor in the pupils approach.
5 Prepare a Venn diagram showing the similarities and the differences between the beggar and the stranger
The learners transfer the information gained from the story into a different visual form using their cross-curricular experiences. The Venn diagram requires a closer analysis of the characters in the story in a reflective manner on the part of the pupils. Pupils would also need to use grouping strategies here to detect similarities and differences.

6 Imagine that the beggar will earn a lot of money after this event, write an alternative ending
The pupils use their prediction skills here to see how money would change the beggar’s lifestyle. They would use their background knowledge of how money translates into lifestyle changes. They would be required to substitute the concept of being poor with the concept of being rich.

7 Write the daily routine of the beggar. What time does he get up, what does he do every day...
The activity requires an analytical approach to planning a routine for the beggar to follow. It also requires pupils to reflect on how the beggar spends his time when he is not in the story, which requires an element of conjecture and visualization.

8 If we wanted to write a book about this beggar’s life, what could the name of this book be? Prepare a book cover and a book mark for this book and write the summary of it on the back of the book cover
A task most favoured by pupils drawn to visual depictions of events from the story, which also requires them to use their summary skills. Collaboration and having an idea of the “finished product” would be required to be successful.

9 Write a story for a newspaper about the beggar’s life with the heading: “Beggar becomes rich businessman.”

10 Prepare a PowerPoint presentation about Van Gogh’s life and present it to your friends
This would involve retelling the story using a different text format, media. Pupils can investigate the language of newspapers, particularly headlines in summarizing and highlighting the most important aspects of the story.

The teacher’s role during workstations is the one of the facilitator. The pupils can ask questions for clarification and get reinforcement and help from the teacher. Metacognitive strategies on the part of the pupils are embedded in the workstation practice: planning, self-management and self-assessment occur naturally in the group dynamic.

_The Danish class responded to the workstation projects very well. They were all very enthusiastic to work with their partners and to produce on their own, with their choice. They came up with some lovely projects and enjoyed listening to a story and producing some projects about it freely._
Portfolio reinforces the self-assessment aspect of the lesson and provides pupils with time to reflect on their work and the processes they were involved in producing the task. In this particular case, a reflection has been proposed referring to the use of strategies when working on the workstation project.

**PORTFOLIO REFLECTION TOOL**

**WORKSTATION: How a few words can change one’s life**

I have chosen this task: ____________________________________________

I have worked with: ______________________________________________

**TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK I HAVE USED THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES:**

I have…

- planned how to do the project with my partners
- used what I already knew
- imagined the situation I wanted to describe
- got help from my teacher or my friend when I needed it
- used resources available in the classroom
- checked that the activity got on well
- revised the final product

Look at the faces below and colour in the one which you feel reflects how you enjoyed the activity.

😊  😊  😞

The lesson would be even better if

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

Through the portfolio the learner assesses his own performance and achievement and the effectiveness of the lesson for possible use of the teacher at a later stage.
6.4 The HOLA! perspective

6.4.1 Whole learner

In terms of the whole learner, the lesson provides a safe and information rich environment to discover, notice and use the language in order to relate concepts to the whole world. The learner plans, collaborates, interacts with materials and discerns his own knowledge of the subject using deductive and inductive reasoning and imagination. The tasks allow for visual and/or verbal responses to the story that encompass a range of learning styles and strategies.

6.4.2 Whole teacher

In terms of the whole teacher, the lesson is learner friendly providing a safe and challenging learning environment. The role of the whole teacher in this activity is profoundly important. He is there to support pupils who need help as well as to provide active reflection, appraisal and encouragement to learners all in the target language. The activities provide lots of opportunities for inspiring and positive feedback and then the opportunity for pupils to show mastery of the language. The teacher role changes throughout the lesson and his ability to captivate the audience when reading the story is vital to the enthusiastic engagement that the tasks require.

6.4.3 Whole language

In terms of the whole language, learners understand and express meaning in order to progress through the activities with an increasing emphasis on production. The lesson is conducted exclusively in English providing pupils with a whole, rich language input from which they observe, notice and attempt to produce language. Language is not explicitly taught, rather it is implicitly acquired through the use of flash cards and visual stimuli side by side with a rich oral input supported by text at later stages. Pupils collaborate together in English trying to understand each other’s message. As a result the language they produce and are exposed to is unlimited. The tasks allow freedom of expression and a variety of spoken and written language.

6.5 Looking back at our lesson...

Here we have seen a friendly and purposeful atmosphere in class, where the teacher acts as facilitator while the pupils explore and discover language through cooperation and collaboration. Pupils have moved from the rich language of the story into a detailed study of the vocabulary and back out to the language rich environment of workstations, where they have produced valuable and meaningful responses, using a variety of learning styles and strategies.

Songül Ömürdağ and Michael O’Neill

Chapter 6: How a few words can change one’s life
### The HOLA! Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Workstation: How a few words can change one’s life</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>A2. Pupils aged 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>60 + 45 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Objectives

**Whole learner**
- To develop interpersonal skills
- To work cooperatively
- To use previous experiences and background knowledge
- To raise awareness of similarities between cultures and lifestyles
- To develop self-task strategies

**Whole world**
- To learn about lifestyles
- To learn about Van Gogh

**Whole language**
- To develop narrative skills
- To develop descriptive skills
- To use various grammatical structures and patterns according to the discourse type

#### Language use

**Listening**
- Listening for global understanding
- Listening for doing something creative with the story

**Interacting**
- Working in groups to produce workstation projects

**Reading**
- Reading a story for creating a chosen text type

**Writing**
- Various text types (see workstation activities)

#### Language focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic focus</th>
<th>Discourse focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As pupils will be presented a varied set of activities to choose from, each activity will have its own context of grammatical structure and vocabulary</td>
<td>Various text types, according to the workstation project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pragmatic focus</td>
<td>Cultural focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How what one says can impact on someone’s life</td>
<td>Similarities and differences between Turkish and Danish cultures can be elaborated during warm-up session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inherent to the discourse type selected in the workstation activity</td>
<td>Discovering lifestyles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Reflection on learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Towards learners’ autonomy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning strategies</strong>: Activating background knowledge, Analysing, Grouping, Questioning for clarification, Monitoring, Resourcing, Deduction/induction, Personalizing, Setting goals and planning, Selective attention, Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning styles</strong>: Different learning styles are catered for when the children are presented a large variety of tasks to be accomplished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Intelligences</strong>: Visual, Kinaesthetic, Spatial, Linguistic, Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Portfolio</strong>: Workstation reflection sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assessment

- Oral description of their own workstation projects

### Materials and resources needed

- Flashcards, cardboard, A4 paper, vocabulary booklet, a computer and a projector, badges for the pupils, crayons, glue, scissors

### Sequence of activities

1. Warm up
2. Listen and choose the best title: pupils are asked to live, feel and imagine the story
3. Zooming into language specifics
4. Workstation projects: learners are asked to produce meaningful and personal responses to the story. During the final process the learners will interact to find words that they do not know and to plan and manage their tasks
CHAPTER 7

LEARNING STRATEGIES: HOW TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT LEARNER

7.1 Introduction

“I want to know tricks to learn English more easily” was a primary pupil’s reflection when working on a reading text. The idea was to learn new vocabulary through context. In fact, we all learn strategies (tricks) in our daily lives to understand and communicate with others. In this chapter we would like to share our beliefs about language learning strategies as valuable tools. But we also want to help children understand methods of learning, and ways of thinking about language. The purpose is to help children become autonomous learners. This chapter will present an overview of the theories that inform our practices, the procedures we have adopted, and samples of strategies in HOLA! lesson planning. We also offer hints that can help young learners become aware of their potential.

7.2 Why learning strategies?

In many different countries, we observed foreign language lessons in primary schools; we saw teachers use very effective teaching practices and develop learning strategies. However, the teachers didn’t seem aware of how useful the strategies were. For instance, in discussing our observations with the teachers, they were surprised to find out that the children were able to learn the foreign language because of those effective strategies. The following example is an activity which describes the teacher’s and the learners’ interventions.

The purpose of the activity is storytelling. First, the teacher asks the pupils to think about their favourite stories, their heroes, the situations they go through, and what happens at the end of the stories. In short, the teacher activates the children’s background knowledge about stories in general and about the structure of stories in particular. Therefore, the children learn to link new information to previous knowledge so that they can personalize the task. After that, the teacher provides the children with copies of a specific story in the foreign language. Next, the teacher asks the children to read the title and observe the main characters, then to find their names, indicating where they are. He also invites...
them to anticipate what happens by looking at the drawings, by taking notes, etc. Thus, the children will begin thinking about the story in the foreign language.

Children love stories. All of them want to talk about their favorite stories. Some refer back to the time when their mothers or fathers used to tell them their first stories. “When I was little, my mom used to tell me stories before I went to sleep.” “Once, when I was sick, my uncle bought me the collection of Babar.” “I used to listen to the Three Little Pigs, Sleeping Beauty, and Little Red Riding Hood from a CD.” “My favorite hero was Peter Pan and, teacher, “once upon a time” is how the story starts in English.” “The hero of this story is called...” “This is the daddy, this is the mom. They live in a forest.” “Teacher, I have guessed the meaning of the word “forest” because in Spanish you can say “forresta.” “Teacher, I know what “crazy” means because I have a T shirt that says “I am crazy for you.” “Teacher, can I draw a picture of the story? I can remember better if I draw a picture.” And so on.

These examples of children’s interventions during the activity allow us to witness how children express their individuality – and engage in the learning process. In most cases, the teacher introduces learning strategies implicitly but children sometimes make theirs explicit. Some of the children’s interventions demonstrate an awareness of what they do in order to learn. They also reveal different learning processes that could explain why some children learn more easily than others. So learners often use learning strategies consciously without making them explicit in order to internalize and progress in the foreign language. Learning strategies “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990:8).

7.3 Learning to think about the learning process

A metacognitive approach, i.e. gradually introducing learning strategies explicitly in the classroom, can be considered scaffolding that initiates certain learning processes. This approach provides children with the opportunity to transform activities according to their personal learning styles. The main objective of the explicit teaching of strategies is that learners gradually increase their autonomy and their learning control. To achieve this objective it is essential to develop metacognitive awareness at school.

The incorporation of learning strategies to teaching-learning curricula in recent years is the result of a series of assumptions:

− successful learners have a broader range of strategies and use them more often than less successful learners

− strategies of successful learners are more effective because they are more adequate to the task

− metacognitive interventions have positive effects on learners’ performance in listening comprehension.

Moreover, research shows increasing evidence of the fact that learning success depends largely on the learners’ themselves, their self-confidence and their ability to take advantage of learning opportunities. Research also establishes a need to pay greater attention to learning processes and strategies for more effective learning.

According to Nisbet and Shucksmith (1986:36) children begin to develop their metacognitive awareness or knowledge “which could control their strategic activities while they are still in primary school”. Goh and Taib (2006) show that some 11 and 12 year-old pupils are aware of the factors that affect their personal understanding and of some comprehension strategies used during the listening of oral texts.

The Biography section, in the European Language Portfolio, also echoes the value of learning strategies. It introduces those strategies to primary school children as important tools for learning a foreign language. According to Chamot (2005:122) “postponing learning strategy instructions until intermediate or advanced level courses deprive beginners of tools that could enhance language learning and increase motivation for further study”.

We know that we learn what is linked with our personal experiences more easily. Personal involvement, active participation, responsibility for the process, and degree of autonomy are factors that lead us to more effective learning. Certainly, learning strategies are directly related to motivation, to the learner’s emotional world and to learning self-regulation”. Goh (2008: 196) concludes that instruction in learning strategies, at least listening strategies, is beneficial in at least three important aspects:

− it improves listening, helping learners to be more confident, more motivated and less anxious

− it has a positive effect on listening performance

− weak listeners benefit the greatest from it.

To enable learners to take control of their own learning it is necessary that strategies become active knowledge articulated in the interaction between teacher, learners and teaching materials.
7.4 Learning strategies programmes

During the teacher and learner interventions described in 1.1, we detect, on the one hand, conscious, observable, explicit actions and, on the other hand, unconscious, more spontaneous, implicit actions. These actions are part of a large range of strategies which include cognitive and metacognitive as well as socio-affective processes.

In our daily life we use strategies to remember, to express our opinions without hurting the other, to learn more easily, to check if we have understood something, and so on. As foreign language learners we have also used these techniques which, according to O’Malley and Chamot (1990: 1), are “the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information”. As foreign language teachers we can help our pupils develop their learning strategies according to their age, target language level, type of task and so on. Such an approach obviously demands awareness of the diversity of learning strategies when planning our lessons.

The interest in strategies becomes evident when one considers the number of typologies developed during recent years. Here we present a few. The Oxford model (1990) is the basis of SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning). This model proposes a set of guidelines for the teaching of strategies (Oxford 1990: 204):

− identify the needs of pupils and time available
− select relevant strategies
− consider how to integrate instruction on strategies
− take aspects related to motivation into account
− prepare materials and activities
− implement explicit instruction
− evaluate the outcomes of instruction
− review the cycle to make the necessary changes.

We will go through this cycle with the HOLA! material in the following sections.

O’Malley and Chamot (1990) and Cohen (1998) distinguish three major types of learning strategies:

− metacognitive strategies: used for making decisions, planning, taking control and independent learning

HOLA! A Holistic Approach to Language Learning
− cognitive strategies: related to the manipulation of language: to infer, store, summarize, rearrange information, etc.

− socio-affective strategies: related to the pupil's attitude towards the language and culture: talk to natives, collaborate with peers, etc.

This classification is the starting point of CALLA\(^{11}\) created for immigrant learners. CALLA is a strategy-based model that underlines the importance of collaborative learning, learners’ prior knowledge and metacognitive awareness.

From the CALLA model, other models have been developed. Among them we find the NCLR\(^{12}\). This model shows how to introduce metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring, problem solving and assessment) in a recursive way. Some aspects of this model coincide with HOLA!, which offers a different perspective about the teaching/learning of a foreign language. We want to offer primary teachers the opportunity to reflect on their own foreign language learning, to reflect on their everyday teaching, to act in their classes as professionals who explore, plan, solve problems, evaluate, and revise their work. In short, teachers who establish a relationship between their daily practice at school and current research in the field of foreign language education, contributing, at the same time, to the formulation of hypotheses, in a loop of action-research.

### 7.5 Learning strategies in HOLA!

Have you ever wondered about issues related to your personal learning development? Have you done tests to find out what your personal learning style is? Have you ever thought about the strategies you develop in your professional practice? Have you consciously planned them? Have you adapted them to your pupils and teaching activities?

Reflecting on learning strategies and on “their own learning styles would help teachers appreciate individual needs in learning and differentiate their instruction to accommodate these needs” (Metallidou and Platsidou, 2007). The more we know about our own preferred styles and strategies, the better we can implement a procedure to facilitate the development of our pupils’ learning capacities.

The strategy grid that we present in the appendix aims at helping teachers focus on the cognitive, metacognitive, and socio-affective aspects of their pupils. To depict this variety of strategies, we have adopted the three types of strategies suggested by O’Malley and Chamot (1990). We propose 12 cognitive strategies, 5 metacognitive strategies and 4 socio-affective strategies. Inspired by the model of Chamot et al (2006) on learning strategies for higher education, we have

\(^{11}\) Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (O’Malley and Chamot, 1994); (Chamot, Barnhardt, El-Dinary and Robbins, 1999)

\(^{12}\) National Capital Language Resource (Chamot, Keatley, Meloni e.a., 2006)
found that it is more interesting for primary school teachers to adopt a metacognitive framework for designing and planning tasks. Teachers that focus on their own experience as language learners can more easily relate to the problems of their pupils and become more reflective about their own practices. For this reason, for each strategy, we start from questions that we can eventually ask ourselves when we perform certain tasks. Imagine that we have decided to read a text to our pupils, a story, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When we ask ourselves:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What information do I consider important?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This questions leads to the following one:

- What strategies can we use? **Note taking**

This makes us think:

- **What is note taking? How can we use this strategy?** By writing down important words and concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic or numerical form, learners can remember key concepts and note down their own ideas about information in a lesson. Learners can use or create visual representations (such as Venn diagrams, time lines and charts) of important relationships between concepts.

Again, this makes us wonder:

- What can help us retain and work with this strategy? A drawing and a legend: I’m taking notes

Finally, this makes us reflect upon:

- **An example that can help us introduce the strategy to our pupils:** After reading/listening to a tale, the teacher asks the learner to write down the hero/heroine’s feats and also to write down the feats of the hero/heroine they are going to make up.

The starting point of this introspective path is our own experience, our professional reflection on the diversity of styles and intelligences of our learners, our knowledge with regard to learning strategies and the need to adapt them to our pupils so that they can find their own road to personal autonomy. This path leads us to the search for good examples in our professional practices and also helps us observe them carefully in order to introduce them consciously in our lesson planning.
7.6 Learning strategies in lesson planning: some examples

Neuroscientists identify two different but complementary ways of learning: explicit and implicit (Bloom and Lazerson, 1988)\(^\text{13}\). A programme based on learning strategies also implies that the process for the development of strategies should be implemented in response to these two aspects. In the case of the materials proposed in this volume, teachers have focused primarily on introducing strategies implicitly in their lessons, though they have made an explicit introduction of strategies in their lesson planning.

The teacher’s intervention is crucial in order to initiate an awareness of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the foreign language classrooms. The teacher interacts with learners, providing them with opportunities for interaction with their peers and working with materials. He believes that these interactions have an effect on children’s cognition by offering them situations to confront, challenge, anticipate, make plausible hypotheses, and so on; in short, situations to solve cognitive conflicts\(^\text{14}\), and facilitate self-regulation and strategy awareness.

7.6.1 Learning strategies in lesson planning templates

First, as we can see in the lesson planning template at the end of chapters 1, 4, 6 and 10, learning strategies are among the objectives that we would like our learners to achieve. The holistic development of learners has been considered so that children can apprehend the world and language globally.

Second, under the title Reflection on learning: Towards learners’ autonomy, we can see the list of strategies that can be operational in different activities. This heading also includes aspects related to learning styles, multiple intelligences and the Portfolio, all of which are explained in other chapters of this book. Finally, each lesson illustrates the sequence of activities; what step to take and in what order, etc.

The teachers carefully plan their intervention with reference to their pupils’ learning processes. For this, they base their activities on the necessary strategic objectives to allow for diversity; they select relevant strategies moving back and forth between the specific learning situation, the task, the children’s degree of maturation, the type of material, the language learning level, etc. Teachers integrate strategies into the different activities, implement an intervention, and evaluate whether it meets their expectations. If it does not, it can be modified.

\(^{13}\) Cited in Bolino et al (2003)
\(^{14}\) Conflict occurs when the cognitive mental representations do not correspond to the effects observed during the execution of an activity. The reality is therefore in conflict with the representation the child has of it
We can observe the development of learning strategies in the sequence of activities of different lesson plans and teachers’ commentaries. Here are some examples.

Cognitive strategies are present in the Fantastic binomial when as the starting point the teacher activates children’s background knowledge (strategy n° 1 in the appendix) by asking them if they like stories and the kind of stories they like, or in the Hunting game when the teacher invites learners to close their eyes and imagine they are in a wood and she asks them what they can see, what they can smell, and so on. At a more advanced stage of the lesson, the teacher also shows some flash-cards, season notices, panels of different environments, signs, and asks questions intended to recall the learner’s acquired language (name of animals, verbs,...) and knowledge linked with environmental education (parks, woods, lakes, protected areas, hunting/fishing laws,...). Children personalise the experience (strategy n° 7) as every child would imagine their own wood and feel their own sensations. Then children predict (strategy n° 5) what may happen when the teacher asks them what the hunter is going to do in the wood or infer the meaning of the new language through the teachers’ gestures, the pictures, or the context (strategy n° 11).

This also happens in Zippo on planet Earth, when, children predict what the message from planet Zi may say or their friends from planet Zi may look like or when, before singing a song, the teacher tells the pupils that they are going to listen to a song and asks them to guess what the song is about. She specifies in her lesson planning that “implicitly learners should realise that they can guess meaning from the context”. For the teacher, it is enough to be aware of process without necessarily making it explicit to the pupils. Prediction and inference are also part of How a few words can change one’s life when after giving some cues the teachers asks the learners what they think the story is going to be about, how the story is going to continue or when, by means of flashcards, learners may guess the meaning of unknown language. In the different tasks that this lesson provides learners are also invited to use different cognitive strategies: note taking, summarize, and grouping according to what is similar and different (strategies 3, 9 and 2, respectively).

Social-affective strategies can be clearly seen in the use of questioning for clarification (strategy n° 18) that is present throughout the sequence of activities in the Hunting game and the Fantastic binomial. Also, the cooperation (strategy n° 19) in Zippo when the children in groups have to assemble the correct parts of Zippo’s friends bodies while listening to their description. When proposing cooperative work, the teacher seeks to motivate, stimulate, and reduce children’s anxiety as the child learns not only from the teacher but also from interacting with their peers. Knowledge is constructed by the group, and therefore, children must learn to organize their work, to seek consensus, to learn to help the other and learn to accept help. Cooperation is also the basis of the Hunting game, the Fantastic binomial and the workstation procedures. As the teacher noted in relation to group work in How a few words can change one’s life: “learners who
are weak in certain group work competencies can be helped by their peers and develop in a non-judgmental way for the benefit of the group rather than focusing on the weaknesses of the individual.”

Metacognitive strategies as self-assessment (strategy n°17) are also well defined in the Hunting game when pupils self-assess their work through the Portfolio activities or in Zippo on planet Earth when children monitor (strategy n° 16) and evaluate their progress by reflecting how well they have assembled the different parts of their new friends’ bodies. A very important metacognitive strategy to make children more independent is planning (strategy n° 13). Children have this opportunity when in Zippo on planet Earth they are allowed to form groups and decide what presents they can offer their new friends at the airport or how they can introduce themselves. Also in Zippo children have the opportunity to self-assess their learning by filling in a first grid which in an attractive way includes the learning objectives of the lesson or in a second grid in which some suggestions for improvement are provided.

Planning is also the main strategic ingredient of the different tasks provided by How a few words can change one’s life as children make groups and have to plan, monitor and evaluate the different steps to be followed in order to get the final product: a narrative, a dialogue, a Venn diagram, a story for a newspaper, etc. The Fantastic binomial is also a good example of metacognitive strategies in action as children have to decide how they are going to organise the rap writing, draw and write the story board or dramatise the story. Furthermore, the grids provided in the Portfolio section will help children reflect about the whole learning process, i.e. the activities they enjoyed more or what helped them do the activities.

Most learning strategies described above have been introduced implicitly by the teachers. But it would also be interesting to reflect on how to carry out an explicit introduction of strategies to our learners. As Broston (2006:180) says the question is to know how we can implement strategy awareness in the school realm and in our foreign language lessons.

7.6.3 Towards metacognitive awareness: raising children’s awareness in primary education.

A holistic approach promotes situations and activities that are meaningful to the learners. One way to know whether an activity is meaningful for a child is to ask him directly how to proceed in a particular task.

When the teacher asks:

- What are you doing? (i.e. when the child is trying to find the pattern in a series)
− What are you going to do? (when the child is going to plan and organize his work)

− How do you correct what you do? (when the child realises he has misunderstood a word)

− What has helped you understand? (when he child has finished reading a text)

− How did you understand what the song was about? (after listening to a song),

the teacher introduces a discourse which is essential to facilitate the child awareness of learning strategies. By asking the previous questions the teacher is introducing strategies implicitly which, as Jones (2007:569) points out: “making our implicit thoughts explicit through talk is a powerful learning tool for both adults and children”. This type of interactions should be implemented naturally in the foreign language classroom in line between teacher and learner's intentions, actions, attitudes, and motives (Millrood, 2004) when children work individually or in collaboration with their peers. Collaborative work particularly supports this new discourse even when carrying out listening work. As Nathan (2008) points out “the role of collaboration during listening tasks also shows a positive effect on young language learner’s development of metacognitive knowledge about listening”15

However, for children, it is not always easy to put the thought processes that underlie their actions into words. To facilitate this new discourse the teacher can take advantage of the table of strategies, using the different pictures and legends provided (I’m grouping, I am guessing, I’m taking another road, etc.). The teacher can display the pictures representing strategies on the foreign language classroom walls, use flashcards representing the strategies, use gestures (for example the thumb method: use your thumbs and decide how you are getting on) to make children aware that they can use inferencing when trying to understand a new reading text (strategy the child may be more conscious of) or monitoring and self-assessing their work (strategies the child may not be aware of at all). It is enough then to ask questions as the ones suggested above and to point at the corresponding pictures or flashcards to help learners become gradually aware of:

− what they are going to do (“I going to plan my work, I am going to look this word up, we are going to form a team,…”)

− what they do (“I check if I understood correctly, I try to understand the rule…”)

− what they have done (“I have checked if my work had sense”).

15 Cited by Goh, 2008:195

HOLA! A Holistic Approach to Language Learning
Finally, this type of reflection can also be part of the Portfolio in the grids and charts this tool provides. The Portfolio, together with the introduction of explicit strategy training can be the basis of a metacognitive scaffolding that the teacher can develop so that their learners can progressively reach a greater personal autonomy.

### 7.7 Conclusion

The holistic approach considers learners to be active persons who build their world, their language and their personal way of learning in authentic and meaningful contexts and in a safe, cooperative environment. This is an optimal scenario for a metacognitive programme that allows the child to start managing and controlling his own learning, to have positive attitudes towards the foreign language and to become more independent.

Awareness on learning strategies at primary school should be planned as a dynamic and natural process in which the teacher selects and implicitly integrates strategies in materials and activities which are made explicit in their lesson planning. This work must be completed with interactions aimed at the metacognitive domain so that children can discover how they learn and how to improve their learning.

In the same way that teachers “need to be able to analyze language, to apply different strategies for thinking about language (analogizing, contrasting, substituting, etc.) in order to be able to plan lessons, to predict learners’ difficulties, to answer their questions, and to write and evaluate materials” (Bolitho: 2003:255), we also need to adapt our practices to our learners’ capacities, styles and learning strategies so that all of them feel involved and none of them excluded. If there is harmony between learners, methodology and materials, the former will perform better, feel safer and experience less anxiety (Oxford, 2003).

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**Manuel Megías and María José Valiente**

### 7.8 References


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>PICTURE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Resourcing</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="I'm finding out by myself I'm looking it up" /></td>
<td>As learners have to organize a zoo layout, they look for information in the Paris, London or Madrid zoo Web Page and print the zoo map.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What information do I need?</td>
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<td>Where can I get this information?</td>
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<td>By using available reference sources of</td>
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<td>information (dictionaries, textbooks, the</td>
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<td>internet, and other reference materials),</td>
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<td>learners can solve problems and complete</td>
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<tr>
<td>tasks independently. The learners can</td>
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<tr>
<td>also follow a model or ask questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Grouping</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="I’ m grouping." /></td>
<td>The teacher asks the learners which animals live on a farm, in the jungle, in the woods, in the sea, and which ones we can see in the sky. Each learner chooses an animal and he has to place it in its habitat: jungle, wood, sea, sky, farm… After this, children think about how to organize all that information in their notebooks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Which groups can I create?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learners can organize their thoughts to</td>
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<td>remember the items more easily by ordering,</td>
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<td>classifying or labelling material used in</td>
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<td>a language task based on common attributes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Note taking</strong></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="I’m taking notes." /></td>
<td>After reading/listening to a tale, the teacher asks the learner to write down the hero/heroíne’s feats and also to write down the feats of the hero/heroíne they are going to make up.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What information do I consider important?</td>
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<td>By writing down important words and</td>
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<td>concepts in abbreviated verbal, graphic</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>or numerical form, learners can remember</td>
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<tr>
<td>key concepts and note down their own ideas</td>
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<td>about information in a lesson. Learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>can use or create visual representations</td>
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<tr>
<td>(such as Venn diagrams, time lines and</td>
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<td>charts) of important relationships between</td>
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<tr>
<td>concepts</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Deducing, inducing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deduction: Which rules can I apply in this situation? Induction: Which rules can I create in this situation?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consciously applying learned or self-developed rules to produce or understand the target language. Learners can use a rule they already know or create a new rule that helps them learn new information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Predicting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What do I think will happen?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pupils can be encouraged to anticipate what they think might come next in a spoken or written message by anticipating information to come or making logical guesses about what will happen. This strategy can be used whenever learners have enough knowledge to be able to make reasonable predictions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Using background knowledge</td>
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<td></td>
<td>What do I already know about this?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>By using previously acquired knowledge or making associations, learners can see the connection between what they already know and the new information.</td>
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<td>DEFINITION</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Personalising</td>
<td>Learners connect information to their feelings, opinions or personal experiences in order to remember and understand it better. They may associate this information with someone or something in their personal lives. The learner can apply this strategy whenever a word or idea represents something personally important to him/her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Imagery</td>
<td>To remember information learners can create an image. It can be a simple drawing, a mental sequence. This image can be used to recall vocabulary without translating from their mother tongue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Summarising</td>
<td>Making a mental, oral or written summary of the information presented in a task. This strategy helps learners judge their understanding of the task and also learn more from it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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I remember when I …

I imagine …

I am making a summary
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<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>PICTURE</th>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. <strong>Transferring / Using cognates</strong></td>
<td>Recognizing similarities between words or grammar in the target language and their native language or other known languages. Transfer or cognates can be used when words look or sound similar in the two languages or when knowledge of a language system, such as grammar, can help to understand the new language.</td>
<td>While singing/listening to a song, children recognize target language words that are similar to their mother tongue’s.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can my language / other languages help me?</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="picture" /></td>
<td><img src="example1.png" alt="example1" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. <strong>Inferencing</strong></td>
<td>Using available information to guess the meaning of unfamiliar language items related to a language task, to predict outcomes or to fill in missing information. Using context clues such as pictures, headlines, surrounding text, gestures and body language, or other information related to the task, learners can manage to decipher new vocabulary or figure out the meaning of a text.</td>
<td>Learners read a comic. The first cartoons show four friends that are spending the day skiing on the mountains. The last cartoon shows two of the friends only. Each one carries two broken ski sticks. Learners try to find out where the other two friends are and what has happened.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Can I guess what this might mean?</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="picture" /></td>
<td><img src="example2.png" alt="example2" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. <strong>Substituting / paraphrasing</strong></td>
<td>If learners do not know how to say something in the target language, rather than stopping, they can select different words or phrases to say the same thoughts in order to accomplish a language task (paraphrase, circumlocute). Young learners may use simple words or structures instead of more complex ones they do not know yet.</td>
<td>Children describe and mime words (from images). A hammer is a thing that has a “short thick stick and a piece of iron” used for (gesture of nailing), for making a table or hanging a picture on the wall, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Can I say this in another way?</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="picture" /></td>
<td><img src="example3.png" alt="example3" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **13. Setting goals and planning**  
How can I plan for the task? | With the teacher support (or without it), learners set objectives, and plan how to accomplish the task. Learners think about what they need to do and organize their activities in order to tackle a complex task step-by-step. | Children are going to create a hero/heroine. Before starting, they think about how they are going to do it and what they are going to need. They can draw a mindmap indicating what he will look like, where he will be, which problems he will have to face, what he will do to overcome these problems, etc. |
|---|---|---|
| **14. Selective attention**  
Is this information important? | Deciding in advance to concentrate on specific aspects of language input or situational details. By focusing on specific information, structures, key words, phrases or ideas, learners can find important information to complete their task more easily. | Learners can underline words they do not know so they can look them up or ask the teacher later. They can also underline words or sentences so that they can locate the information required for the task more easily. |
| **15. Self-management**  
How can I best accomplish this task? | By determining how you learn best and organizing the conditions that help you learn, children can be aware of and arrange the conditions that help them carry out language tasks. | While doing a dictation, the child does not understand a number of words. After checking the dictation, the child underlines the words that he has not understood and then, at home, he listens to the words aided by an on-line dictionary and repeats them several times. |
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td><strong>Self-monitoring</strong>&lt;br&gt;Does what I’m doing make sense?</td>
<td>Learners have to write, on a map, the names of a number of cities which are being described on a map according to the temperature and the weather conditions (it’s raining, it’s cloudy, etc.) While listening to the explanation the child realises that he can’t follow either piece of information at the same time. He then decides to concentrate only on the temperature as he is able to understand numbers better.</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="I’m checking ..." /></td>
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<td></td>
<td>While working on a task, learners check their progress on the task. They question whether an idea makes sense in order to check the clarity of their understanding or production in the target language. This strategy makes learners aware of how well a task is progressing, furthermore it makes them notice when comprehension breaks down.</td>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="How well did I do" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td><strong>Self-assessment</strong>&lt;br&gt;Have I been able to do it?</td>
<td>Children check the results of a task following a number of given criteria. If something did not work as they expected, they may wonder what and why it hasn’t worked and what they can do to improve next time.</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Please, could you tell me...?" /></td>
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<td></td>
<td>After completing the tasks, learners judge how well they have learnt the material or performed on a task. This way they can identify strengths and weaknesses and decide how well they have applied the strategies and their effectiveness.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td><strong>Questioning for clarification</strong>&lt;br&gt;Which help do I need?</td>
<td>Before starting group work, children make sure that they have correctly understood the teachers’ instructions by revising what they have to do. If they don’t agree, they ask their teacher or their peers.</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Please, could you tell me...?" /></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Asking for an explanation, verification, rephrasing or examples about the material; asking for clarification or verification about the task.</td>
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<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Please, could you tell me...?" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td><strong>Cooperation</strong> &lt;br&gt;Can I work with others to do this?</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="We are a team." /></td>
<td>Children organise the task. They decide which elements to include in the task and divide the work. Some children collect information, others think about illustrations and propose their ideas to the group. Others draw the poster, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td><strong>Self-task</strong> &lt;br&gt;I can do this!</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="It's easy" /></td>
<td>Before starting a complex task, children practise relaxation exercises. They raise and lower their shoulders, move them backwards and forwards, breathe in, move their heads to the right, breath out, etc. After that the teacher tells them to think about tasks already done that they felt satisfied with, how they did them, how they felt when they had finished the tasks, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td><strong>Self-reinforcement</strong> &lt;br&gt;I can motivate myself!</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Well done!" /></td>
<td>The teacher evaluates learners’ work while they are doing a task by using positive gestures. He tells children to do the same when they feel satisfied with their work.</td>
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CHAPTER 8

FEEDBACK: A BASIC INGREDIENT OR THE CHERRY ON TOP OF THE CAKE?

The way we, teachers, talk to learners in general and, more specifically the way we respond to what they have or haven’t said or done affects them both as persons and as learners. Even if we could agree that all teacher feedback is meant well, we could equally well agree that it does not always have the expected effects: learners do not always change, they do not improve, they do not always learn.

How can teacher feedback help towards this direction? How can we make teacher feedback more effective? What kind of feedback can positively affect learners and make them feel safe; help them improve themselves as learners and human beings and make them want to continue?

These are some of the questions we will try to answer in this chapter, as in HOLA!, we believe that feedback is an essential ingredient and a core part of learning (Ford, 1992), and that it must be sweet and motivational and not bitter or de-motivating for the learner.

8.1 Bitter or sweet? How do you usually respond to learners’ outcomes?

Let us start by considering the following exchange from the Zippo on planet Earth lesson, in which the learners were given the task to form Zippo’s body by listening to a message describing it:

Learner: Miss, we can’t make Zippo.
Teacher: You sound worried, let me see…. but you’re almost half way through! Listen to the message once again. Listen for the colours. The colours will help you.
Learner: Thank you, Miss.

We notice that the teacher first acknowledges the feelings of the learner, then describes what the learner has already achieved and guides him in a specific way.

Chapter 8: Feedback: a basic ingredient or the cherry on top of the cake?
The underlying message in the teacher’s words could be “I understand how you feel, you’ve done half of the task by yourself and if you try this way you can finish it”. As for the learner, he realizes that he is appreciated and trusted by the teacher and can interpret his message as “I can do it”.

What would have happened if the teacher had responded in a negative way, for example as below?

Learner: Miss, we can’t make Zippo.
Teacher: Yes, you can! Just stop complaining and start working.
Learner: …

What is the underlying message in the teacher’s words? “You are wrong to feel the way you do. Listen to me instead. The problem is not your inability, but your behaviour”. Even if the teacher means well, in this case she ignores the learners’ feelings, does not even listen to the learners, disorientates them and does not offer them any help or motivation to perform the task.

We realise, then, that as teachers we need to worry a little about what we say to our learners, as it reflects our feelings towards them and also affects their own feelings and therefore their motivation to learn. If we want to be able to teach, or rather help our learners learn, we need to respond to them in more caring ways, so that they are emotionally ready and equipped with the appropriate means to do so. That is why in HOLA! we consider feedback an essential ingredient of learning.

8.2 The ingredient: What is feedback?

It might be useful at this point to look at some interesting definitions. According to CUP dictionary, in general terms, feedback is information that shows that something is successful or liked. In Wikipedia, feedback is referred to as a process of sharing observations, concerns and suggestions between persons with the intention of improving both personal and organizational performance. According to Wajnryb (1992:49), “feedback refers to the responses given by the teacher to what learners produce in the classroom. In its most narrow definition this refers to teacher response to error.” Ramaprasad in Sadler (1989:120) stresses that feedback is information about the gap between the actual level of learner performance and the level that must be reached, information which is used to alter the gap in some way. Finally, according to Hattie and Jaeger (1998:113), feedback is the provision of information about how much and what kind of meaning the learners have constructed from the learning or taught input.
It becomes obvious from the above definitions that feedback is basically any kind of teacher response to learner output and shared information aiming at change and improvement and eventually at learning. As response and shared information it cannot but be a two-way process.

8.2.1 A two-way process

Because teaching and learning are interrelated, teachers and learners are both sources and receivers of feedback. Teachers provide feedback to learners about their learning and they receive feedback from learners about their teaching.

For example, after the completion of the task, the learners may come to the teacher with information on what they gained and what and where the input helped them best, or about the difficulties they encountered. They can also inform the teacher about the quality of his input on what did not go well and on how the teacher’s ideas can be improved in order to be more helpful, resourceful and effective in the future. The teacher can also inform the learners about the quality of their work, the level of their understanding, their strong and weak points and the appropriate learning strategies for improving their output.

Learners through teacher feedback need to establish “what they are working towards, where they stand in relation to the criteria of what is considered quality work and discover ways and ask questions aimed at clarifying how to get there”. (Jones J. and Wiliam, D. 2008: 5). Similarly, teachers need to establish, through learner feedback, the same things in terms of their teaching.

Feedback therefore, aims at helping learners set or adjust learning goals, become aware of their strong and weak points and of the appropriate learning strategies in order to achieve their goals. It also helps teachers match their teaching to the learners’ needs, styles, goals and expectations.

In brief, feedback can refer to learner output and progress, to teacher input, to methods, as well as to opportunities for future improvement of all the above and it could guide and prompt both the learner and the teacher. Feedback is then a powerful tool for empowering the learners in their learning process as well as for supporting the teacher in the teaching process and it is an important instrument to be used for implementing the portfolio reflection which is at the core of learner-centred methodology which Hola! reflects.

8.2.2 An on-going process

As teaching and learning is a continuous transaction so is feedback: a daily, on-going teacher-learner interaction. It is a regular part of any lesson, including all tasks and stages of a lesson or a course. As is generally accepted, feedback can be warm (immediate, spontaneous and unplanned), or cold (delayed and planned). The former is usually oral whereas the latter is written. Examples of
forms for collecting warm learner feedback can be seen in the *Zippo on planet Earth* lesson (smiley faces, post-its).

Depending on the purpose and the intentions of the person who gives it and also on the medium used, feedback according to many authors, can be verbal, non-verbal, motivational, reflective, diagnostic, formative, formal, informal, oral or written. For example, on the website there is a feedback form which was used to receive learner feedback after the try-outs of the *Zippo on planet Earth* lesson. Some teachers used it immediately after the lesson in order to have warm feedback. Others used it in the next lesson as cold feedback. Finally, the same feedback was taken into account by the *Zippo on planet Earth* material designers in order to further improve the lesson.

However, if we want to make good and appropriate use of feedback, the sooner both learners and teachers have access to it the better, so that the teacher intervention and learner action can be planned having well in mind where they started from in order to better establish further steps to be undertaken.

As an on-going process feedback is not restricted to the teacher to learner and learner to teacher modes. It can also be from a teacher to a third party (another teacher, or an observer, for example), or a third party to teacher. A feedback form for collecting feedback from the teachers who used the *Zippo on planet Earth* material in their classes can be found on the website. It should be noted that it appears in two forms, one with Yes/No questions and one with open questions. The teachers were free to use either, or both. This feedback was received by the Zippo material designers and was used for its improvement. The same forms were also used by observers of the *Zippo on planet Earth* lessons.

At this point, we would like to emphasise the importance of class observations and the discussions that followed. They offered opportunities for, suggestions, explanations and ideas which helped the designers further develop and improve the *Zippo on planet Earth* material. It is of major importance for a holistic approach that teachers open up to professional development through observation, feedback and discussion.

### 8.2.3 The recipe: What kind of feedback?

The *only* feedback that is effective is feedback which is *used* (Jones and Wiliam, 2008: 13). This may seem obvious, but unfortunately teachers do not always use learner feedback and they may never ask for it. This is either because they are unaware of the benefits of feedback and therefore think it is a waste of time. This may also occur when they think of themselves as an authority figure or feel that their authority is threatened by learner feedback. Learners also do not use it when their feelings are ignored, or the feedback demeans them and especially when they feel hurt by feedback that always focuses on errors and weaknesses and offers them no way out.
Then, the first and most important prerequisite, then, for feedback to be used is the establishment of a warm and safe environment, a brain-friendly atmosphere and a good teacher-learner and learner-learner relationship. This can only take place firstly when, teachers and learners open up to each other, care about and share each other’s feelings and ideas; secondly, when they demonstrate mutual trust as in the case when the teachers give them responsibilities and assign tasks to the learners. Thirdly, when they both have fun, in other words when they enjoy what they are doing.

In terms of our HOLA! approach, then, not only does feedback best function in a safe environment, but also contributes to it and to learning and teaching as well. Therefore, both the teacher and the learner need to be trained in giving and receiving feedback, but also in interpreting and using it.

The second prerequisite is that feedback must be ‘task-involving’ (Jones and Wiliam, 2008:13). It must focus not only on the person, but on the strengths and weaknesses of the particular learner output, or on the learning objectives and strategies used, emphasising what needs to be done to improve, and ideally how to go about it, in other words engage the learner in some kind of reflection. Otherwise, what psychologists call ‘ego-involving’ feedback, that is feedback which focuses on learners as good or bad achievers, by giving them only marks and ranking them, discourages the low achievers and may make high achievers see tasks as a way to good marks only, not as an opportunity to learn.

Many teachers realize that marks have not really any impact on learning and they try to compromise and combine this school practice of giving marks with comments. However, as Buler (1987) and Dweck (2000) has shown giving both marks and comments has the same effect as giving just marks: the high achievers do not need to read the comments and the low achievers do not want to.

**8.2.4 Bitter made sweet. How can this be achieved?**

As feelings interfere with feedback and therefore with learning, the most important thing in our holistic approach is for the whole teacher and learner to train themselves to deal with feelings.

To do so, the first step is to learn to acknowledge and describe each others feelings. This can be done with a sound or a word (“Oh” “Mmm”, “Uh”, “I see”), or even non-verbally. It is important to note here that for us non-verbal feedback plays a similar role to the verbal one. Eye-contact, facial expression, gestures, body position and distance can convey a lot of messages and depending on culture, they may create a friendly, safe learning environment or a hostile, unsafe one and a relationship between the teacher and the learner.

For example, facial expression and especially eye-contact are important in showing that you are listening to the learners. A single gesture, instead of long explanations, encourages them to think about a problem and figure out what
needs to be done. A nod or “grunt” of understanding can free the learners of their distress and help them focus on their problem and possibly solve it themselves. One idea would be to make a conscious effort to reflect feelings back to each other: “So you seem to feel…, I sense you are…, It sounds like you feel…”

The second step is to avoid hurting each other’s feelings through criticism, accusations, sarcasm, or name calling. This can be achieved by describing the problem, the situation or your feelings. Compare the two following dialogues:

**Dialogue 1**

Teacher: *Who’s the genius who forgot to put his name on the test?*
Learner: *

**Dialogue 2**

Teacher: *I have a test paper without a name.*
Learner: *Oh, that’s mine.*

(Source: Faber, & Mazlish,: 2003)

General responses in the form of exclamations, such as *Super! Wonderful!* are evaluative praise and have their place as instant feedback, especially in oral tasks, but often are not believed by learners and they are not as helpful as descriptive feedback. Compare the two following dialogues:

**Dialogue 1**

Learner: *I’m all done!*
Teacher: *Good boy!*
Learner: *

**Dialogue 2**

Learner: *I’m all done!*
Teacher: *You concentrated on your work and didn’t stop until you were finished.*
Learner: *

(Source: Faber, & Mazlish,: 2003)
The third step, instead of describing what has not been achieved would be to
describe first what has been achieved and what and how it needs to be done, as in
the Zippo example at the beginning of this chapter.

To sum up, feedback and the approach to feedback is an indicator of the teacher-
learner feelings and relationship, of the warmth of the environment, of the
atmosphere in the language learning class. Its role in learning is very essential; it
can create a safe or unsafe learning environment, it can make learners aware of
learning styles and strategies, it can lead to learner motivation and autonomy, it
can guide both the learner and the teacher, and it can also influence the content
and process of a learning course.

8.3 A sweet for all

We have mentioned that good language teaching and learning are closely linked
to effective feedback and that a warm environment, good relationships and
involvement of learners in tasks are vital for feedback to be useful and effective.
However, according to our HOLA! approach we need to move a step further: we
need to involve as many learners as possible in giving feedback and helping
them use it.

Most classroom interactions are of the familiar initiation-response-feedback
(IRF) format identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), according to which the
teacher is the initiator by usually asking a question, followed by the learner’s
answer (response), to be followed by teacher feedback. Consider the example:

Teacher: What is this? (I)
Learner: It’s a hand. (R)
Teacher: No, It’s a head. (F)

For HOLA! it is important that the teacher moves beyond this limiting form of
feedback. One way of doing this is to involve other learners as well, by adding
questions such as “Do you agree?” or “Can someone improve X’s answer?” A
better way is when the teacher uses the ‘all learner response systems’ (Jones and
Wiliam 2008: 11), in which every learner is expected to respond simultaneously
to the teacher’s question “Is this correct?” with a ‘thumbs up’ if the answer is
correct and a ‘thumbs down’ if it is wrong. In this way the teacher can have
warm, non-verbal, diagnostic feedback on the level of understanding from all
learners and either carry on or offer help. In case half thumbs are up and half
down, the teacher can always address some learners with ‘Why do you think it is
(in)correct?’, engaging the learners thus in discourse which requires thinking.

Another example of immediate, non-verbal feedback from all learners to the
teacher would be to use either red and green flashcards in order to check learner
understanding at various stages of the lesson. Clearly, green means “I
understand”, whereas red means “I don’t understand”. Flashcards could also be
in the form of smiley faces, or hearts and Xs (see also www.holaforkids.be).

Chapter 8: Feedback: a basic ingredient or the cherry on top of the cake?
Some more ways of involving the majority of learners in giving feedback are the following:

- The brick wall: learners write their comments, draw their feelings in graffiti-style across the ‘bricks’ of an imaginary wall drawn on a poster.

- The Japanese temple tree: The teacher sticks a branch of a tree in a pot. Learners write their thoughts on long slips of paper, fold the papers and twist them round the branches of the tree, just like temple prayers. They can write their thoughts in terms of wishes. (Source: Woodward, 1991).

- As an alternative to the above, the teacher can have slips of paper on his desk and the learners can, at any time during, or after the lesson, pick one, write their comment on it and put it in the feedback box on the teacher’s desk.

    It is vital, however, that the teacher always collects the papers and after reading them himself comes back to the class, reads them aloud, without mentioning names, and comments on and discusses with the learners their feedback. In this way a constructive dialogue can develop and the teacher is made accountable for using learner feedback.

Involving all learners in giving feedback is important. However, it is more important to make them accountable for using the feedback they receive to improve, to move forward to the next steps in learning. The following are some ways of making learners engage with feedback:

- Instead of simply focusing on what needs to be done, the teacher comments should also initiate thinking and discussion of thoughts with the teacher or peers. For example, instead of “Nice description of Zippo, but you should write more” we could have “Your friend sounds interesting. I’d like to learn more about him. What more information could you give about your friend?”

- The teacher feedback should also encourage reflection. For example, instead of “Now describe another Zi friend” we could give the following feedback: “If you were to write this description again changing the subject to a female, what changes would you have to make?” We notice that while the first comment simply gives the learner a new task, the second asks him to start reflecting on his original work and pushes him to deal with the issue of gender.

- The teacher feedback should also direct learners where to go for help and what to do to improve. For example, comments, such as “Well done! You have used all parts of the body in your description. Now use the textbook, page 11 to check your spelling” or “Good description of your Zi friend. Next time try to use another word (adjective) instead of ‘beautiful’ in order to
make your text more interesting” constitute constructive feedback. They help learners focus on how to improve their work and how to take their learning forward.

− Another way of involving many learners in feedback is peer feedback. It helps learners with taking responsibility of their own learning and supporting each other. Studies have shown that those who give help benefit most because the demand of explaining to someone else forces one to think deeply. A technique for learners to provide feedback to each other is to use post-it notes. However it should be explained to them that they need to make two positive feedback comments and one possible idea for improvement. (The two stars and a wish principle in: Jones and Wiliam, 2008). For example. “You can say what your friend looks like and what his hobby is, but how old is he?”

8.4 The orange sweet

Feedback is a powerful way to engage both teachers and learners actively in the learning and teaching process. It can take place in different forms and at different times and it is an ongoing process which contributes to the development of a safe learning environment. It therefore constitutes an important communicative event. As such, it is inherently fragile and perhaps the most difficult part of a teacher’s job but at the same time the part that may dramatically contribute to the development of the child both as a person and as a learner. Feedback procedures may require some training on the side of teachers and also of the learners, as feedback deals with emotional processes which contribute to the development of self-esteem and sense of responsibility. It can communicate trust and encouragement, promote a positive self-concept and self-confidence and prompt the learner to reflect constructively on areas that need improvement (Ford, 1992). Useful, constructive feedback empowers the learner and provides him with more tools for becoming autonomous. Feedback plays an important role in the portfolio philosophy (see chapter 9) as it offers learners and teachers opportunities for comparisons, mutual understanding and growth and it facilitates goal setting.

Therefore, for HOLA! feedback is a basic learning ingredient and not a cherry on the cake. It can be either bitter like the skin of an orange and therefore thrown away, or sweet, pleasant, positive, giving energy to move on, like the flesh of an orange. The choice is ours.

Theodoros Skenderis and Chryssa Laskaridou
8.5 References

CUP on-line dictionary.
Wikipedia.
CHAPTER 9
PERSONALISING LEARNING THROUGH THE PORTFOLIO

Eight good reasons for not using portfolios

1. Portfolio is time consuming
2. Portfolio is just institutional stuff
3. Portfolio is paper consuming and in my school we are not allowed to make photocopies
4. I have to prepare more activities on top of my daily work
5. It is not useful for marking purposes, so I am not interested in it
6. If it is the property of the learner, there is nothing I can do in it
7. My learners already reflect from time to time and they don’t need a portfolio
8. There are different types of ‘portfolio’ and I don’t know which one I have to use

If you agree with most of the sentences written above, please go on reading!
If you don’t agree with them, just enjoy the reading!

9.1 Introduction

The idea of portfolios in education is a relatively new one. Portfolios have been used in different fields, mainly as a showcase of the best pieces of work in art, photography, modelling and so on. In addition, the main definition taken from the dictionary is clear: “The Portfolio is a set of items that represent someone’s work, especially an artist’s drawings or paintings, and which they use when entering competitions or applying for work”. Portfolios have been used in education as well, as a different way of assessing competences with the perspective of supporting individual learners in their learning processes.
9.2 The function of the portfolio

In education, portfolios have two functions that may be complementary (Mariani et al., 2004):

- a reporting function: it refers mainly to an administrative use – the portfolio may be used as an instrument for implementing alternative forms of assessment. This can co-exist with more traditional forms of assessment or can even be integrated in them

- a pedagogical function: this refers to the classroom uses of portfolios. These “learning portfolios” are not necessarily linked with formal, institutional assessment – rather, they are a collection of items which document how each individual learner grows through the process of achieving certain competences.

9.3 The European Language Portfolio

The first widespread contact with the portfolio concept in education in Europe took place with the implementation of the European Language Portfolio (ELP), developed by the Council of Europe from 1998. As far as the ELP implementation is concerned, the experiences that took place at European level are varied: in some countries the portfolio is commonly used while in other countries it is still in the try-out phase or it has been adopted only in particular contexts. In some cases it has been perceived as an “imposition”, something compulsory, whilst in other contexts it has been used as a file containing information to be collected at relevant moments in the learning process.

The potentiality of this tool has been perceived in different ways. It has even been seen as an extra activity to be done on top of daily work and therefore considered too time consuming. The portfolio concept, however, offers many opportunities for reflection and it is worth trying to understand it deeply, especially when considering the level of flexibility and adaptability of this tool and the boost on learning it provides.

The European Language Portfolio covers both the reporting and the pedagogical functions. It is organized into three parts:

1. the Language Passport, which shows at a glance the level of competences reached in different languages and also provides a summary of the most significant language learning and intercultural experiences

2. the Language Biography, which is an updateable record of growth: how, why and where languages have been learnt. It contains one’s personal language learning history made visible through self-assessment checklists, drawings or reports, description of language learning and intercultural
experiences, questionnaires on learning styles and strategies, plans for future
learning, etc.

3 the Dossier, a collection of documents selected as evidence of personal
competences. This evidence can be anything, from examples of written work
to audio or video cassettes, projects on CD-Rom, reports on tasks,
observation cards, reports on films and books, projects learners have carried
out, letters pupils have written or received, compliments and feedback, etc.

9.4 Portfolio: So what? The road to change in the learning
dialogue

Beyond this apparently “rigid” structure of the ELP, there are several
possibilities which can be explored and exploited by teachers for creating
“personalized” children’s portfolios in which the teachers’ teaching styles can
meet pupils’ learning styles. In some of the portfolios developed in the last years
there is space for analysing and documenting the learning processes, which
means that the concept of the portfolio has also been understood in terms of
insights into personal learning experiences, which is exactly the pedagogical
function of the portfolio.

From the teachers’ point of view the pedagogical function of the portfolio is the
most interesting one, a way of supporting learners in the learning process giving
them the tools and the guidance to learn about themselves. The collection and the
organisation of materials is high stake evidence of the process underneath. Being
aware of one’s personal learning profile is essential for enriching it and setting
up learning goals. From the teachers’ perspective, the most suitable approach for
the use of the portfolio is aimed at enabling learners to become more successful
by offering them the tools and the strategies for learning more effectively. The
end goal is to make the youngster responsible for his own learning, a crucial
means of lifelong learning.

There are different ways to “understand” the added value of the portfolio and all
of them are related to the planning and assessment processes. The most
important aspect is the role of the portfolio as a tool to create a positive mindset
towards the learning process, making pupils’ potentiality and improvements
evident and being more aware of growth and opportunities to grow.

From this perspective, the portfolio notion is more related to a philosophical
concept than to a concrete product. The portfolio “shape” is not important as
portfolios can be folders, boxes, bags, exercise-books and they can be made of a
collection of different materials such as learners’ work, checklists, self-
assessment grids, audiotapes and videotapes, photographs, learning logs, etc.
Therefore, the appearance and the way of organising a portfolio is not the key
issue, the real value of this tool lies in the mindset it instils in pupils and teachers
(Valencia, 1990). “Portfolio activities” then, can be all the reflective activities
that guide the pupils towards active participation in the learning process. This
means, in fact, having in mind the idea of the learners that co-build knowledge
and competences through active participation in the formative process in which

Chapter 9: Personalising learning through the portfolio
they should be involved. The personalization of the learning processes is not a simple educational trend, it is also a social requirement in a moment in which schools have to deal with different groups of learners with different needs and in which traditional assessment procedures cannot always “measure” acquired competences making reference only to common standards (Antonietti, 2005).

As a matter of fact, most of the teachers already adopt some procedures in classroom activities that could be included in a portfolio. For example, we teach pupils how to study, concentrating more on strategies than on content; we invite them to fill in self-assessment grids available in the text books; we organize group and peer activities to facilitate some task completion; we stop and think about a particular point in a particular lesson in order to reflect on its processes. Therefore, some portfolio procedures are not new, what is new is the suggestion of finding a kind of “red thread”, a common denominator, among all the activities that can be carried out in order to settle the portfolio philosophy, i.e. to foster learning.

Antonietti (2005) distinguishes three dimensions that characterize the portfolio typologies. These dimensions are based on:

1. processes: the portfolio can document the generative process of a product, from the planning to the final result, and it can include only the final product or document all the stages
2. reflexivity: the portfolio can foster reflexivity at different levels: from the selection of the product to the reconstruction of the project and self-assessment to learning diaries
3. perspectives: the portfolio can include different perspectives: only one (the learner), a comparison between two points of view (learner and teacher), multiple perspectives (learner, teacher, parents, friends, ..).

From this viewpoint, the portfolio aims are to document the competences acquired, to be aware of the competences in progress (and how to acquire them!) and also to be conscious of future learning targets. One the one hand, the portfolio requires the active participation of the learner who is the main actor of his learning process, the actual owner and the person responsible for its content. On the other hand, it requires the participation of teachers who put their expertise in (language) learning at the disposal of the learner. Besides thinking about their own teaching styles, they ought to provide opportunities for their learners’ reflection and display a variety of learning techniques. As mentioned by Costantino and De Lorenzo (2002), the portfolio offers authentic proof of the teacher’s work and represents a tool for fostering—reflection on the teaching theory and practice.
From the teachers’ viewpoint, what really matters is to perceive the portfolio in the correct perspective, as pointed out by Mariani (www.learningpaths.org):

“The problem for teachers is how to gradually introduce a portfolio into their own teaching practice and how to provide support to the pupils, especially in the early phases. One of the dangers here is to fall into the trap of thinking that working for a portfolio means doing extra things in addition to what is already being done. Such a project would be doomed to failure from the start if teachers and pupils were to do things for the sake of the portfolio. In fact, it is the other way round: we do things and then select those things that lend themselves well to being included in the portfolio.”

9.5 What can we as teachers do?

At shop floor, what are the key questions we can ask pupils, in order to help them become conscious learners? Which are the key questions we can ask ourselves as teachers in order to support pupils’ reflective processes?

One of the main challenges of the teacher is to guide pupils towards autonomy and make pupils aware of the relationship between learning goals, learning strategies and learning outcomes – that is the main aim of the portfolio methodology. The first step towards self-awareness takes place when, in everyday teaching practice, we as teachers ask ourselves (Portfolio Europeo delle Lingue, Teacher’s guide, 2002):

− How is it possible to favour the learners’ awareness of their learning processes?
− How can learners become aware of their strengths and weaknesses?
− How can learners be helped to learn?

In the perspective of facilitating the pupils’ understanding of the learning process, we can approach the portfolio in different ways but we ought to bear in mind that it is not only a set of working sheets or grids to be filled in, it is mainly the way in which we work with those materials. The portfolio activities are about understanding learning and some tools may be then used for recording the experiences, reflecting on processes and for collecting useful information about the learners. For this purpose we can adapt or create a variety of tools such as:

− questionnaires for pupils’ self-perception
− learning styles checklists
− learning strategies activities
− grids or charts for recording progress
− instruments for reflecting on classroom interaction
− qualitative assessment questionnaires.
9.6 Portfolio step by step: Helpful questions for guiding the reflective process

To become aware of the learning process is not an easy task for children. Reflection can be introduced as part of their classroom routine and undertaken gradually. It should be undertaken in small steps, from examples and simple procedures provided by the teacher to a more independent process, moving from a fragmentary learning model to a consistent acting. The reflective process, due to its nature, is facilitated if it takes place in the learner mother tongue, especially with young learners.

So at the initial stages or with very young learners it can simply be a reflection on the popularity rating of some activities. To start with, it may be a wall chart on which, at the end of the lesson and after brainstorming, pupils may stick emoticons, that is faces with feelings, next to the activities they liked more or they can indicate the “temperature” of a certain activity, in other words how well a specific kind of activity makes them feel. So for instance the following example could be used after the Hunting game:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our favourite activity in English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Singing" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Singing | Art and crafts | Drawing | Playing games | Acting out |

Such a kind of straightforward grid provides the teacher with immediate feedback on the favourite class activities and contributes to creating a positive learning climate.

The end of an activity can also be an opportunity to write what the pupils have learnt on the wall chart. From this kind of reflection, monitored by the teacher, the following step could be to ask them to do the same in small groups and then individually.

In order to find out about their preferred ways of learning, learners can be from time to time given the following grid but only after some specifically related lessons:
I learn better if: (I can choose more than one option)

- I listen to the teacher
- I listen to the tape/CD recorder
- I watch a DVD
- I sing a song
- I play a game
- I write a rhyme
- I act
- I use the computer
- I do art and crafts activities
- I work by myself
- I work in pairs
- I work in a group

From the first lessons, it is very important to involve learners emotionally and to maintain the reasons for which learning other languages is important.

The following examples may be useful for drawing young learners’ attention to languages around us, something that they may not be aware of. At the same time it is an opportunity to give value to other cultures and languages spoken in the classroom and to celebrate cultural and language differences.
At the end of a particular project or a unit of work, but also during the whole process, children may be invited to reflect on the linguistic learning goals. The complexity of this kind of reflection increases according to the pupils’ age. For very young learners the reflection should be guided and they should only be asked to colour the “language” they have learnt. Later they could be requested to indicate the degree of competence learners think they have acquired and also to write down the language they have learnt.

After the first lessons, which are very important for establishing motivation and a safe environment, learners may be asked to work on the following grid. It is strongly motivational as it makes learners aware that they can learn and that they are already able to do something with the language since the very beginning. This example may at the same time represent a very first attempt to guide children towards self-assessment, considering that this activity will take place after offering children different opportunities for comparison among peers and after teacher’s feedback.
Chapter 9: Personalising learning through the portfolio

I have already learnt some English! I can:

- Say my name
- Say how old am I
- Say where I live
- Say what I like doing
- Say how many brothers or sisters have I got

Making Chocolate Muffins

Can you explain how to prepare Chocolate Muffins? Colour the language that you have learnt. First check it with a classmate. If you cannot colour all the cook hats in one go, decide by when you want to try again.

- Preheat the oven to 180 degree Celsius
- Grease 12 paper muffin bake cups
- Beat the eggs with sugar, mix with flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, vanilla and milk
- Fold in the melted butter
- Add chocolate chips
- Bake for about 20 minutes at 350 degrees
- When a toothpick inserted in centre comes out clean your muffins are ready
- Enjoy your muffins!
As we already mentioned, with older learners, the request for self-assessment gradually increases in complexity. This way the reflection assignments continue to challenge the learners. Growing older they might not like simple grids because they might perceive them as being too childish.

Self-assessment grids may also have to do with processes, like in the following examples referring to the *Fantastic binomial* described in chapter 4.

### Once upon a time …

You have learnt how to create a story. It is easier if you follow the instructions. In order to create a story by yourself, it may be useful to check this list:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Choose two characters. The story is more interesting if the characters are very different to each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Describe the first character: decide name, age, where he lives, physical characteristics, likes and dislikes, other characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify a problem or an event related to the character that may need a change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Introduce the second character and describe him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Write the development of the story: what happens, what does the second character do, how does the change takes place,…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Find a suitable ending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following example is related to the use of learning strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour the strategies that you used to accomplish your task:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Strategy 1" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Strategy 4" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The example provides a selection of cognitive strategies. At an initial stage learners can work in pairs or in a group. They should already be familiar with the symbols that represent the strategies and which may be displayed in the classroom for references. Learners have to choose the strategies used to accomplishing the task. At a later stage, learners may be asked to reflect on how many times they used a certain strategy and when. With this kind of reflection, strategies that pupils used implicitly become explicit, facilitating the awareness of the processes undertaken for certain actions (see also chapter 7).

When pupils are trained to use the portfolio as a reflective tool, in order to foster the progression in the reflective thinking, some more structured questions to focus their attention on targets and processes can be provided. Some of these questions could be the following (adapted from Antonietti, 2005):

− What can I do?
  − This question involves the development of self-perception related to capability and potentiality. It may be supported by teacher’s feedback, self-assessment grids, checklists, comparisons with peers, self-correction exercises. Furthermore, being aware of the teacher’s assessment criteria plays an important role in the development of pupils’ awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, something very useful to be aware of when developing strategies in order to accomplish a task. “I can do” statements are helpful to self-monitor competences in progress and to be aware of competences acquired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In English I can…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Say my favourite food and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask someone about his favourite food and drink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a shopping list with 10 food items and drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for the price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name 8 types of shops</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

− First check (date) ............................................................................................
− Second check (date) ..........................................................................................
− Third check (date) ............................................................................................
Children may be asked to assess themselves as many times as necessary for learning, by colouring the faces and writing the dates corresponding to new achievements. The idea of growing and improving is in itself motivating for learners. What is important at this point is to give pupils the instruments to get better results, as shown above. An example of this kind of reflection is described in *Zippo on planet Earth* (see chapter 10).

− What are my targets?
  − They can be expressed in terms of objectives, expected results, personal aims, possibly complemented with indicators of future achievement in order to explain the objectives. At this stage it is important to clarify what the aims are, starting at the beginning with reflection on targets set by the teacher to move gradually on to involving pupils in the stage of setting the objectives. As children easily get involved in the activities and take part in them, especially if the activities are genuine and meaningful for them, it should not be taken for granted that they have the activities’ aims in terms of learning and language learning in mind. Teachers could create some suitable materials or use grids available in textbooks or just have a few lines about reflection at the beginning but also at the end of the activities they want to focus on.

− How do I plan to get to the target?
  − To facilitate this stage, pupils could prepare a “to do list”, planning small steps to be undertaken and dividing the action plan into smaller stages. This is not an easy task, especially at the beginning, and minor goals should be established with the help of the teacher or family or peers. Constant feedback on the part of the teacher is extremely helpful as is comparison work among peers.
The following example illustrates a reflective activity that may be proposed after a test.

**After the test**
- What results have you obtained? .................................................................
- Did you expect these results? Why? ..............................................................
- List what you did well ...................................................................................
- Remember what you did to learn them so well ...........................................
- List what you didn’t do so well ....................................................................

What action plan can you think of to improve? List what you can do.
.............................................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................................

Now try to establish personal goals in order to improve and decide by when you want to reach your goals. Ask the teacher, your classmates or your parents if you need help.
what ................................................................. by when .................................
what ................................................................. by when .................................
what ................................................................. by when .................................

The strong point again is not the grid in it itself, it is the reflection underneath. If the reflection takes place at class level, even if pupils are asked to fill it in individually, everyone can benefit from the others’ suggestions.

- How did I get to the target?
  - This is the kind of reflection that may accompany the selection of a learning product and it is related to processes undertaken in order to carry out a concrete activity. Reconstructing the successful contexts of learning is not an easy task but it can be guided using a variety of reflective tools.

The following example, prepared by Ann Belien, can be used both during the activity or when it is finished in order to reconstruct the process. It offers an opportunity to focus on the strategies used to accomplish the task and to underline the importance of cooperative work.
Lesson 1
1. Let's taste...
   - my hypothesis:
     | ------ | ------ | ------ | ------ | ------ |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
   I think...

2. Let's make the list of ingredients
   - my list:
     | ------ | ------ | ------ | ------ | ------ |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |

Lesson 2
□ Let's check if we have everything
1. Let's prepare the recipe
   - Control
     | ------ | ------ | ------ | ------ | ------ |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |
     |        |        |        |        |        |

Is it easy to organise?
2. Let’s taste…

It is 😊 😊 😊

3. My gastronomic critique:

How many stars do I give to my work? I colour them!
My comment:

4. My challenges:

- the teacher has guided me
- thanks to the other pupils for helping me
- it was easier with the pictures
- I could easily understand the text of recipe
- I have liked the team work

References

I have learned:

Synthesis of learned issues

Picture of our achievements

9.7 Conclusion

Throughout the chapter we have tried to answer the eight good reasons for not using portfolios. In the Hola! perspective, the portfolio is a very powerful tool which empowers the learner in the learning process and that, at the same time, offers the teacher opportunities for reflecting on his practice, thus becoming a tool of change also for the teacher.
Portfolio assessment is placed within a positive perspective centred on the learner. It allows the pupil to be aware of his personal learning profile and provides tools for setting up learning goals. It values what the learner can already do and his progress.

We consider the portfolio a philosophy more than a concrete product. Neither its appearance nor the way of organizing it is important. The real value of the portfolio lies in the mindset it creates in teachers and learners. In this context portfolio activities can be all the reflective activities that involve the learner in the learning process.

There are no fixed “rules” on how, when and for how long to use it. What is important is to have in mind its pedagogical function and its role in activating a learning dialogue between the teacher and the pupil.

In this learning dialogue the actors get involved in a new discussion, in which interaction, feedback from teacher and peers and self-assessment take place in a safe environment. Through the use of the portfolio, pupils become aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are “taught” how to learn in a more efficient way.

Rosangela Baggio

9.8 References


MIUR Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per la Lombardia (2002) Guida per l’insegnante, RCS Scuola-La Nuova Italia-OUP.
Zippo on planet Earth is a series of at least three 45-minute lessons during which children can travel and discover a new world through their friends who are from planet Zi. Zippo was originally designed to teach the parts of the body but the possibilities are endless. A teacher can use Zippo as a basis for any lesson. The materials were tried out in pilot schools, feedback was received and adaptations were made.

Zippo was designed according to the four HOLA! axioms and the holistic approach developed in this project. You will find a message from Zippo to teachers, a message to teachers from the children on planet Earth who met Zippo and his friends and you will also have the opportunity to follow a conversation between the teacher from planet Zi and the teacher from planet Earth – the beginning of an ideal trip together in the universe of teaching and learning. The teacher from planet Zi functions as an observer of the lesson.

10.1 A message to teachers from Zippo

Hello! I’m Zippo the Wholey from planet Zi. I am very happy to have experienced a visit to an Earth school. I thought things would be much more different than they actually were. We are similar in many ways although we may look different. Firstly, we all belong to the same universe. I may have a different body, but I’ve got a mind and a heart just like the people of your planet.

I like playing and doing things. I like having fun and that’s how I learn, just like all kids do - by having fun when I am learning how to do things.

I can do and learn lots of things if you only trust and support me. You simply need to show me the way, although I can even find my own way. I like discovering things.
I am, as you are, part of the world of sounds, colours, smells, tastes and shapes and with my whole body, mind and soul I want to discover your beautiful world as a whole.

10.2 A message to teachers from the children who met Zippo

We are very happy to have met Zippo and his friends. It was wonderful when we saw the balloons arrive. When we met them at the airport we realized that we are all different in appearance and often in personality, but deep down we are very similar. There are many things that connect us.

We, as children, also like learning through having fun. It makes school not only interesting but also easy and with your support we were able to do activities that were new for us. We learnt how to collaborate. It was difficult at first because we all wanted to do things our own way but through guidance we learned to share and work together.

In this week’s lessons everything was different! We welcomed our friends from planet Zi, found out about them and their planet. We made drawings of them and their homes. They’re not so different from us. We liked everything in the lesson – the song, the games and the party. We learnt the different parts of the body without even having to study – the song made it so easy!

It was difficult to decide what present to give our new friends when we welcomed them at the airport but when we got to know them better we realized that they liked the same things as us.

Unfortunately we had to say goodbye but we were happy because we had new friends that we could meet again some time in the future.

10.3 A conversation with Zippo’s teacher

10.3.1 Before the trip

Zi teacher: As I’m going to observe your lesson through Zippo’s telescope, I’m curious about the English language teaching situation in Greece. Is English the only foreign language taught?

Greek teacher: No, but English is one of the most widespread means of communication and since 2003, when the new National Curriculum was introduced, it is compulsory for all children from Year 3 (pupils aged 8 in Earth years) to study English for three hours a week. When they reach Year 5 they need to choose either German or French as a second foreign language for two periods per week.

Zi teacher: What are the major changes that the new curriculum has brought?
Greek teacher: Well, it takes a holistic view of the teaching of English, as it does for all other subjects. Its emphasis is on the overall development of learners’ personalities and life long skills, such as learning how to learn and how to collaborate through a global and meaningful educational experience on the one hand and the cross-curricular approach on the other.

Zi teacher: That’s really interesting. We have a similar approach and in particular we try and help learners discover knowledge and form their own conceptions about nature and our world.

Greek teacher: Yes, exactly! We don’t want to provide knowledge in an analytical way at this age. We want them to be given a task and discover by doing. We consider the learner to be a whole person whose cognitive, emotional, physical, educational, social, communicative, and linguistic needs must be catered for through the teaching of a foreign language such as English, as well as all other subjects.

Zi teacher: Of course we also help them to do this. We want them to be autonomous and to become more aware of learning strategies.

Greek teacher: The area of teaching learning strategies is where we as teachers have to improve. I find myself needing guidelines on how to do this which is exactly what you can find in a book a group of teachers from different countries in our world have published after working together for some time. This book has helped us a great deal! It speaks about holistic teaching. I’ll send you a copy so that you can read about all this before we start the lesson.

Zi teacher: That’s exactly what we teachers need. A few ideas on learning styles and multiple intelligences would also help.

Thanks. That section on feedback looks good too. I’m always worried that what I say may produce negative feelings.

Greek teacher: I’ve also prepared feedback activities that may be used at the end of some sequences in the lesson.

Zi teacher: What we just have to keep in mind is the four Hola! axioms: the whole learner, the whole teacher, whole language and the whole world.

10.3.2 The accommodation

Zi teacher: As some children from planet Zi are going to visit your school is there anything we need to know about it?

Greek teacher: Well, you already know when we begin English and how many times a week it is taught. The class you are going to observe has only 15 pupils but this is not the normal size class in Greece. Normally you would find about 25
pupils in each class, many of who are the children of people from another
country that now live in Greece.

Zi teacher: Oh, it must be interesting to have children from different cultural
backgrounds in one class!

Greek teacher: That’s the strong point of the class but its more challenging
aspect is that we have a mixed ability level as some learners also study English
outside of school for a few hours per week.

Zi teacher: Oh, I see. That must make things difficult for teachers. Do you have
a set textbook or are you free to do what you want.

Greek teacher: We do have a set textbook which is provided by the Ministry of
Education, but we are also free to include material of our own choice as long as
we follow the curriculum.

Zi teacher: I’m all for adapting textbooks to suit the needs of my class and also
my own personal teaching style.

Greek teacher: We always try to remember the whole learner but we mustn’t
forget about the whole teacher either!

10.3.3 The preparation

Zi teacher: Is there anything you’d like me to prepare with my learners before
they come to Earth.

Greek teacher: I don’t think so. It would be better if they could discover things
for themselves. They do know the colours and numbers 1-20, don’t they?

Zi teacher: Actually, we recently finished studying the parts of the body using
the verb “have got”.

Greek teacher: That’s great because that’s exactly the lesson we’ll be doing
before your learners arrive. I assume they can answer personal questions about
name, age and hobbies.

Zi teacher: No problem there.

Greek teacher: Well then, we’re all set.

Zi teacher: I just wish I was coming too. It would be great to meet you in
person. I think we have many things in common.

Don’t forget I’ll be watching everything through our telescope and if you need
something just call me on the spacephone!
10.4 Zippo on planet Earth

10.4.1 A trip guide

Who is Zippo and who are his friends? The discovery will start now. Through a variety of activities such as songs, listening activities, drawings, puzzles and so on the children will follow the sequence of activities that are listed below. They have the chance to be creative and use their imagination during this cultural and language trip.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warm up: Song: Head and Shoulders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sequence 1: Message from Zippo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence 2: Before the airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence 3: At the airport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence 4: Farewell party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence 5: A few days later</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.4.2 Off we go!

The song Head and Shoulders is used as a warm up for the lesson.

**Zi teacher:** Hello! It’s me again. The Zi teacher! I’ve been watching the lesson through my telescope and I’m thrilled to see how well your kids learnt the song about the body. It’s going to help them recognize Zippo and his friends. I liked the way you asked them to first just listen to the song and guess what it’s about before you did it with actions. They quickly realized the content of the song.

**Greek teacher:** I purposely didn’t tell them the content of the song as I wanted them to practice their inference skills. I also wanted them to reflect on what helped them understand the meaning of the song.

**Zi teacher:** When they sang the song and followed your actions you could see the concentration on their faces and how eager they were to remember the words for the parts of the body.

**Greek teacher:** Yes, by repeating the song they were able to memorise the new words and associate them with the appropriate body part. I think the different paces we sang it at, helped them further.

**Zi teacher:** They seem to have recognized a word or two so this helped them understand the content also.

**Greek teacher:** Did you also notice how happy the children were when they were asked to give feedback on the song. They had post-its which they stuck on a wall poster with a musical scale drawn on it.

Chapter 10: Zippo on planet Earth
10.4.3 Message from Zippo

**Sequence 1:** Learners listen and/or read Zippo’s message and assemble the photos according to the description of the parts of the body.

**Zi teacher:** We’re sending you some balloons which contain pieces of a photo of a planet Zi friend. There may be some extra pieces included as unfortunately, because of the bad weather, the photos have been torn and mixed up. A message from each friend is also in the balloon. You will also find the names of the planet Zi friends and a message from Zippo and friends.

Why don’t you organize your class into groups of four and then they can choose a balloon. Remember the learners have to create their friends by assembling the correct parts of the body (photo) while listening to the descriptions. Each part of the body is in a different colour. They can even glue the pictures onto cardboard if you like and then introduce their special friends to their classmates.

**Greek teacher:** Thanks Zi teacher! I’ve already told them that Zippo is from planet Zi and that he and some of his friends are coming to Earth.

**Zi teacher:** How do they feel about this?

**Greek teacher:** They very much want to meet them. We talked about what it would be like meeting them for the first time and what they would need to know in order to recognize them. We used a picture of a crystal ball to remind them of the appropriate strategy (prediction), that is what the book I told you about before suggests.

**Zi teacher:** My learners had the same questions. They were curious about what Earth children are like.

Zippo has sent your class a message. Do you think your learners will be able to guess what the message is about?

**Greek teacher:** I’ll ask them to predict the content of the message. Could you tell me before we listen to it?

**Zi teacher:** In the message, Zippo describes himself and his friends. He has also sent you some photos. The space postman is delivering these photos. They are in the balloons.

**HOLA! A Holistic Approach to Language Learning**
Greek teacher: Why are the photos in balloons?

Zi teacher: That’s how we deliver mail here. You have to find a way to burst the balloon in order to get the mail. I’ll send you an e-mail with the messages written by my learners.

E-mail:

- Hello, I’m Zippo. Look at me! I’m tall and thin. I’ve got a red head, a green body, yellow arms, blue hands, black legs and orange feet.
- Hello, I’m Zirro. I’ve got a green head, a yellow body, blue arms, black hands, orange legs and red feet. I’m very short and thin.
- Hello, I’m Ziffa I’m short and thin. I’ve got a yellow head, a blue body, black arms, orange hands, red legs and green feet.
- Hello, I’m Zilla. I’ve got a blue head, a black body, orange arms, red hands, green legs and yellow feet. I’m a tall and fat girl.
- Hello, I’m Zinna. I’ve got a black head, an orange body, red arms and green hands but only one leg. My leg is yellow and my foot is blue.

Zi teacher: I suggest some learners listen to the message only whereas others will also glance at the written text. This way we can cater for different learning styles. The learners will have to cooperate as they are working in groups. I’ll be watching through my telescope to see how things work.

Greek teacher: It would be useful to get some feedback from you. I’m sure they’ll be able to use their previous knowledge to put together the photos. They just have to listen for colours and body parts. I think I might have to teach them more about cooperation though.

Zi teacher: Don’t forget to ask them about what helped them identify the parts of the body.

Greek teacher: Definitely I won’t. That’s one way of helping them assess what they have done and how well they have managed to assemble the photos and to reflect once again.

Oral Message:

Um, hello children from planet Earth. I’m Zippo. Your teacher is my friend. I’m coming to see you! Would you like to meet me and my friends? Who’s got my photo?
• Look at me! I’m tall and thin. I’ve got a red head, a green body, yellow arms, blue hands, black legs and orange feet. And these are my friends. They are my best friends.

• Well, my friend Zirro has got a green head, a yellow body, blue arms, black hands, orange legs and red feet. He’s very short and thin.

• Ziffa is, of course, very beautiful. She’s short and thin. She’s got a yellow head, a blue body, black arms, orange hands, red legs and green feet. She’s very clever, too.

• Zilla’s got a blue head, a black body, orange arms, red hands, green legs and yellow feet. She’s a cute, tall and fat girl.

• Zinna is tall and very nice. She’s my best friend. She’s got a black head, an orange body, red arms and green hands but only one leg. Her leg is yellow and her foot is blue.

Can you see the photos of my friends? Will you come to the airport to meet us? We can’t wait to meet you! O.K. then, see you soon boys and girls!

Zi teacher: I see that all groups were successful in assembling the photos! Very good job! I’m sure they’ll recognize Zippo and his friends. They used their background knowledge in order to do the task. They made associations between the colours which they already knew and the body parts which was new language for them. It was an authentic task for them. They cooperated well, nevertheless you were right when you said that they need more practice on cooperation strategies.

Greek teacher: They each chose the face that showed how they felt at this stage of the lesson. If you look at the picture frame on the wall you’ll see that they were all very happy with their achievement.

Zi teacher: Yes, I see that you also asked if they enjoyed working in groups.

Greek teacher: As they were not used to it I thought it was important to get their feedback. I also asked them to answer the following question.
10.4.4 Before the airport

**Sequence 2:** Learners prepare to meet their planet Zi friends at the airport and choose a present they can offer them.

**Greek teacher:** Now we are going to the airport to welcome Zippo and his friends. I’ll ask the children what they think. Maybe they’d like to go and also take a present for their friend.

In their groups they can decide how to welcome their new friends. However, as can be seen from the feedback they gave earlier they need to learn how to cooperate better therefore they need some guidelines on team work. I can help them divide the work amongst themselves. For example, one learner could suggest some presents, another some expressions to introduce themselves to their new friends, another expressions to welcome their friend while the fourth learner could find an expression for offering the present. Together they can then decide on the final product.

**Zi teacher:** Why don’t you also give them possible expressions to use? This would cater for different linguistic levels and learning styles – in this way we can facilitate the work to ‘verbal’ learners for example.

```
Hello, my name is ....................
Welcome to our planet.
Nice to meet you.
How are you?
Are you ...?
Here is a present for you.
This is for you.
```

Chapter 10: Zippo on planet Earth
Sequence 3: Role play activity. At random learners take on either the role of an Earth child or a planet Zi friend.

Greek teacher: We’re at the airport waiting for Zippo. The children are telling me how they feel. They also believe that our planet Zi friends feel excited but also a little anxious because they don’t know us. We hope that by giving them our presents they’ll feel safer.

Zi teacher: I’m sure that will happen. I spoke to Zippo on the spacephone just a few minutes ago and he told me that that’s exactly how they felt. They are worried that you won’t recognize them.

Greek teacher: They shouldn’t worry. We have ID cards with our names, age and hobbies written on them. You can prepare as many as you need also.

| PLANET ZI PEOPLE | | PLANET EARTH PEOPLE |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| NAME              | Zippo             | NAME              | Panayiota         |
| AGE               | 5 + 5             | AGE               | 8                 |
| HOBBY             | Playing the ziano (piano) | HOBBY             | Swimming          |

Zi teacher: That’s great! We already have. This way it will be easier to find each other.

Greek teacher: If they look for someone with the same hobby they’ll have a friend who they have more in common with. They already know the language necessary to ask personal questions.

Zi teacher: Perfect! They can then introduce their new friend to others at school.

I also liked the idea you had of their putting their presents and any feelings they wanted to express on the feedback tree.
10.4.6 Farewell party

Sequence 4: Logical sequence activity to be given a rhythm

Zi teacher: From what I observed the children from our two planets have become close friends. Unfortunately, it’s only a short visit and Zippo and his friends have to come home.

Greek teacher: Why don’t we have a farewell party?

Zi teacher: Zippo would like to thank you with a song. It’s a puzzle song from planet Zi. Here is the puzzle. Finish it by drawing the pictures.
Greek teacher: Why don’t they clap to this song? Who can give a rhythm? Let’s see how musical they are.

10.4.7 A few days later...

Sequence 5: Letter from planet Zi and preparation of scrapbook

Zi teacher: Have you received Zippo’s letter?

Greek teacher: We can see the space postman arriving. He is carrying a blue balloon! The children are so excited!

Letter:
Hi there dear friends!
We miss you. We had a great time with you.
Can you send us some photos?
We want to show our new friends to our families.
Thank you again for your presents and the party.
Do you remember our song? We liked singing it with you.
We’d like to invite you to come to planet Zi sometime soon. Our spaceship will come and get you.
Be in touch
Your Zzzziiii friends!!!

Zi teacher: Why don’t your learners also write a letter or something?

Greek teacher: We have already prepared a scrapbook! They were so proud of their work. They helped each other, either by giving ideas or by giving feedback to each other. They have also kept their own personal file with all the drawings, photos, letters and their own copy of the song Zippo taught them.

Zi teacher: We’ll look forward to receiving it. We’ll also prepare one with different aspects of life on planet Zi.

Greek teacher: Fantastic!

10.4.8 The experience

Assessment and portfolio activities are presented here.
Greek teacher: Don’t you think that we need to do some reflection activities now that the visit is over?

Zi teacher: Definitely! How about a grid where they can evaluate what they have managed to do over the last week?

Greek teacher: I have prepared something. Have a look...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How many stars would you give yourself? I can…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>listen to a message and identify the parts of the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>welcome a friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introduce myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introduce a friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ask personal questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>answer personal questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recognise 6 body parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write about myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>describe my friend from planet Zi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zi teacher: Yes, this gives them the opportunity to evaluate their performance. What we also need is a task where the learners can reflect on their learning styles and the learning strategies that they use or could use in the future.

Greek teacher: Reflection is a very important part of learning. This next activity provides them with the opportunity to think about their learning strategies and also how to improve in the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How could I get more stars next time?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Following the teacher examples carefully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing with the help of the teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revising previous work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Zi teacher: We as teachers need to encourage our learners to reflect often. It is an ongoing process that takes part throughout the whole learning experience not just at the end of a lesson as part of a portfolio.

Greek teacher: We need to provide them with some time to reflect both on the work they have done and also on the process they have undergone. It doesn’t have to be written; it can be done orally and in L1 if necessary.

Zi teacher: That’s true. Only recently did I become aware of this aspect of the portfolio. I thought it was only collecting some work they had done and filling in a self-assessment grid.

Greek teacher: You’re not the only one. By learning more about the holistic approach I became more aware of this and I now try to introduce reflection when it is suitable. I am also working on planning my lessons with more emphasis on learning strategies.

Zi teacher: I assume you mean how to teach them - how we can help them to learn how to learn.

Greek teacher: Yes, it is important to develop learners’ awareness of their own learning processes. They need to be aware of not only their weaknesses but also their strengths.

10.5    HOLA! axioms

Zi teacher: We also have to discuss and think about the four HOLA! axioms as regards what we’ve been doing with our learners during this unit of work.

10.5.1    The whole teacher

Greek teacher: It would also be a good idea for us to reflect on our role as teachers. Obviously our role is not just restricted to teaching a foreign language.
We need to do more. We need to provide an environment that is conducive to learning. The question is what kind of an environment this should be.

**Zi teacher:** Firstly, it should be one that reflects the support and encouragement that we provide. The learners should feel safe and confident so we have to take into account all the different learning styles they have. Our teaching should cater for these.

**Greek teacher:** Don’t forget about the learning strategies! We have to carefully plan how to introduce these into our lessons while at the same time providing ample time for reflection.

**Zi teacher:** We haven’t discussed the way we give the learners feedback yet – another major issue.

**Greek teacher:** If we want our learners to be eager to learn we should allow them to be part of the decision making process. Why not let them take a role in deciding what they will learn. We can always negotiate this with them – at least to some extent.

**Zi teacher:** It all contributes to learner autonomy!

### 10.5.2 The whole learner

**Greek teacher:** As I said before, the environment is very significant for a learner. We want to involve each and every learner. We want them to trust the teacher and to feel emotionally safe and ready to learn.

**Zi teacher:** Which is why we have to make sure that their viewpoint is taken into consideration. By discussing and negotiating with them they are also taking responsibility for what they learn.

**Greek teacher:** A way to their becoming more autonomous! Learning has to feel natural and not forced! We’ve mentioned the fact that we have to deal with learning strategies and styles but we haven’t discussed multiple intelligences.

**Zi teacher:** I saw that some were included in the lesson. I can definitely say that you touched on the interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences when you asked them how they felt about meeting us and when they imagined themselves in our place.

**Greek teacher:** Yes, as you said touched on! Is that enough?

**Zi teacher:** They did have time to reflect on their experience. I did notice however that one of the learners kept to himself very much and did not take such an active role in the lesson. You didn’t put pressure on him and after a while I saw that he got up and joined in.
**Greek teacher:** Yes, I’ve realized that encouraging and not putting pressure on him is more productive. The other learners have also slowly learnt to be more considerate of others in general.

**Zi teacher:** I always try to get them to listen to each other. Easier said than done!

**Greek teacher:** What other intelligences do you think came into the lesson?

**Zi teacher:** Obviously, the linguistic intelligence. We are teaching language.

**Greek teacher:** When Zippo taught us the puzzle song I think the musical intelligence came in as we had to develop our own rhythm and sound.

10.5.3 **The whole world**

**Greek teacher:** It was a great experience for the children to meet other children from a completely different planet – from a completely different world. They worked on various tasks together and had the chance to collaborate in an authentic children’s world situation.

**Zi teacher:** Even now that the planet Zi children have left Earth there is still communication with their new friends.

**Greek teacher:** We can thank technology for this. E-mails and spacephones help a lot. Also, we made new discoveries. For example, we have never sent our post by balloon.

**Zi teacher:** My learners had never visited an airport like yours before!

**Greek teacher:** Neither had some of mine! Apart from these experiences they had the chance to use English in a real life situation when they had to introduce their friends to their classmates for instance.

**Zi teacher:** Also when they had to welcome the planet Zi children and find a friend with the same hobby.

**Greek teacher:** It was interesting to see that they really didn’t pay much attention to the way you write your age. It just seemed natural for them.

10.5.4 **The whole language**

**Greek teacher:** One of my aims in the lesson was for the learners to be able to describe someone’s appearance using both the language and appropriate grammatical structures. How to go about this using the holistic approach was the question!
According to the holistic approach we should go from the whole to parts to whole again. We don’t teach vocabulary or grammatical items, structures, functions and culture independently! We see language as being a whole.

Zi teacher: Well, I think that’s what happened in the lesson. I didn’t see you teaching vocabulary items explicitly. Whatever vocabulary they learnt was implicitly acquired either through the song or by listening to the message.

10.6 A message from the HOLA! people

We hope you have enjoyed the trip to our HOLA! Universe ... lesson.

For us learning and teaching are together one and the same: a never-ending trip to the whole real world. It is a trip which the whole learner and the whole teacher plan, organize, prepare and experience together.

Being along the same road they both need to develop a warm relationship of trust and cooperation and a safe environment, which will allow them to take risks. They need to stop from time to time to check where they were, where they stand and negotiate and discuss where they need to go to next and what they will need in order to carry on.

They need to discover the colours, the shapes, the smells and tastes of life together and enjoy the excitement of discovery.

It is important that both the teacher and the learner realize that it is not reaching the destination itself that matters so much, but the process, the way to it, the trip itself.

As the Greek poet, Cavafy, wrote...

As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.

(C.P. Cavafy, Ithaka)

Chryssa Laskaridou and Theodoros Skenderis

Chapter 10: Zippo on planet Earth
The HOLA! Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>ZIPPO ON PLANET EARTH</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>A1. 7-9 years of age</td>
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**Objectives**

**Whole learner**
- to develop learner collaboration
- to develop learners’ language awareness
- to raise awareness of some learning strategies

**Whole world**
- to introduce a new friend
- to welcome someone at the airport

**Whole language**
- to describe someone’s appearance
- to ask and answer personal questions (hobby, name, age,)

**Language use**

**Listening**
- for specific information (description of friends from planet Zi
- identifying vocabulary

**Speaking**
- developing learners’ ability to describe appearance orally

**Interacting**
- greeting friends
- asking and answering personal questions
- negotiating
- reacting/responding spontaneously

**Reading**
- identity cards
- message/letter

**Writing**
- describing themselves
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language focus</th>
<th>Linguistic focus</th>
<th>Discourse focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verb “to have”</td>
<td>Personal questions and corresponding answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you like…?</td>
<td>Description of appearance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Parts of the body</td>
<td>Introducing oneself</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Size adjectives</td>
<td>Welcoming</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Colours</td>
<td>Greeting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hobbies</td>
<td>Identifying</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>Offering</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discourse markers</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pragmatic focus</th>
<th>Cultural focus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zippo or planet Zi culture can be developed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open reflection on both their own and other cultures</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reflection on learning</th>
<th>Learning strategies: Cooperation, Deduction/Induction, Note-taking, Personalize, Predicting, Resourcing, Setting goals and planning, Selective attention, Self-monitoring, Self-assessment, Transfer/Use cognates, Using background knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towards learners’ autonomy</td>
<td>Learning styles: Abstract, Active, Concrete, Inductive, Reflective, Verbal, Visual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multiple Intelligences: Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Linguistic, Logical/Mathematical, Musical</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Portfolio: Self-assessment grids, Opportunities for reflection</td>
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<td>Peer and self-assessment</td>
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<td>Materials in portfolio</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Materials and resources needed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Balloons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cut outs of Zippo and friends (for assembling)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Identification cards</td>
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<th>Sequence of activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Warm up: Song: Head and Shoulders</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Message from Zippo</td>
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<td>2 Before the airport</td>
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<td>3 At the airport</td>
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<td>4 Farewell party</td>
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<td>5 A few days later</td>
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Once upon time there were two children, Hanna and Lorenz. They had known each other for a while. Their parents had bought a summer house in Brighton. Hanna was Danish. She had long auburn hair, green eyes and lovely red cheekbones. Lorenz was German. He had sky-blue eyes and a lovely blond mop of hair. They were both 8 years of age. Several times a year they met with a group of friends coming from different European countries: from France, Italy, Greece, Spain, Denmark, Turkey, Belgium... They had a lot of fun together and communicated as well as they could in a kind of English full of mimes, gestures, dances...

They all learned English at school. They loved to learn English. They learned lots of things and in the evening they revised their lists of vocabulary, their verbs and they did their grammar exercises. For them it was the key to the Promised Land. They were impatient to know enough English to play with their friends.

After a few weeks they felt it was hard to do all that homework! If only they could have quicker results! If only they could see what all that work and study would lead to... They spent so much time trying to form an English sentence. They felt they would need millions of years before they would be able to communicate in English and understand their friends while fooling around at the playground or at the beach where they always met. Their teacher was very nice and supportive. But it was so hard and they needed so much patience... They had waited for such a long time for this magic moment and they were so eager to find different ways of communicating other than with gestures, signs, sounds or pantomimes... even if it made them burst out laughing. They wanted to learn faster and to be more active in their language learning.

One day a fairy named HOLA found them quite silent. As she could read their dreams, she suggested that they give her their hand and squeeze it very hard. They jumped into the middle of an imaginary circle. They were the only ones who could see the circle thanks to the pink glasses of the fairy. With their eyes closed, they landed in a totally unknown universe.

A welcoming school opened its doors and swallowed them up in a cloud of pink petals. They were overwhelmed by an atmosphere of peace and well-being. It
was as if to say that they were attracted by a magnet and felt themselves rushed into a corridor with colourful walls.

A young teacher approached them.

- You must be Lorenz and Hanne… We were just waiting for you.
- Well… eh…

They didn’t know what to say… On their school bag, in rainbow colours, there was a label with their name. They were so surprised that they didn’t know how to react. The HOLA fairy winked at them and then, suddenly disappeared.

- I’m going to introduce you to your classmates.
- Well, eh, yes, mmm… thanks!

When they arrived in their classroom they saw their new play friends.

- Hi, I’m Hamid and I come from Istanbul, but my friends call me Happy!
- And I’m Alexandra. You can call me Sandra. I come from Thessaloniki.

They were overwhelmed by a wave of new names. How would they manage to know them all? Their classmates seemed very happy and to be enjoying themselves.

- Maybe we could start by a game in order to get to know each other, Miss Anna said.

Grateful for this suggestion, Lorenz and Hanna put their stuff on the two free desks in the back of the room and joined the group. They couldn’t believe their eyes. Were they really going to learn to do things in English… to understand each other, to play and have fun together?

In their new universe, they were overwhelmed by a fabulous life style and they were in a completely different class than they were used to. The comments on what they didn’t know yet were replaced by resounding bravos and encouragements!

- I know you can do it! I’m confident!

The topics they approached were adapted to their children’s world. Together they discovered the cultures and habits which enabled them to understand and to value each other more easily. They learned to prepare delicious dishes that the children of the whole world were fond of: Pannukakku, Kaiserschmarren, semolina cakes, chocolate truffles… They got to know the most terrifying monsters: Fuma Pipa, Baba Yaga, Mano Negra and the Black Peters of Saint-Nicholas. They learned all most beautiful songs in the world: Yialo Yialo in Greek, Alle meine Entchen in German, Fate la nanna in Italian… They learned
how to say “Good morning” in many languages: bonjour, goddag, kalimera, dobar dan, buenos dias, goede morgen… but most of all, they learned English.

Miss Anna told them beautiful stories about Okilélé, the small ugly animal, about the Hunter who wanted to kill all the animals in the wood, about the Caterpillar that made holes in everything because he was so hungry… And while they were listening, Miss Anna asked them to make small creatures out of plasticine in order to have them act out the story afterwards. So their small creatures became the heroes in a role play or in a small performance through which the kids learned and had fun. They discovered the body parts of Zippo, a well-known inhabitant of a very faraway planet, which were in balloons they had to burst in order to get the parts… Miss Anna taught them rhymes they performed happily and cheerfully.

They learned small dialogues and basic concepts which enabled them to cope with everyday situations in English. By changing concepts they managed to multiply the context in which they could use the same dialogue. How marvelous!

They used their cell phone to send short text messages. They had a portable computer for discovering all the nooks and crannies of the universe that had conquered them. Miss Anna had them all close to her heart (she was so fond of all of them). In each of her pupils she recognised great artistic talents or future scientists. Happy was good at gymnastics. He made them all burst out laughing when he came down from the stairs on his hands. Sandra knew how to dance with an unprecedented charm and gracefulness. Poppy, who came from Patras – his full name was Papadopoulos, but the kids got used to calling him Poppy –, was an unheard of cartographer. Pepito knew how to solve maths problems in less than no time.

They often had to work in groups in order to learn together. Sometimes Miss Anna said she was tired. Then she asked Jensen, the small Danish boy, to give a piano lesson or Pappas to teach his mates how to juggle. Each of them had one or more specialised areas. One day, Miss Anna asked Hanna to teach the others how to create a fashion collection for summer. A bit timid and hesitant at first, she started talking about her passion and guided her friends in the creation of colourful dresses that her apprentice needle boys and girls were eager to make under the kind eye of Alicia, who dreamed of becoming a dressmaker like her aunt Maria José.

One day, Miss Anna explained that they were stronger together than separately. She made them reflect on how they learned. Sandra and Jensen remembered more easily while listening whereas Poppy and Pepito were rather visual. Luigi absorbed better through observation and reflection while Samira preferred to be active and to try everything in order to get to know how it worked. Pappas was attracted by small details and was an expert in observation, whereas Brice dreamed of becoming a journalist and was brilliant in getting the global view. Ari, the philosopher of the group, had a vivid imagination and absorbed concepts as if they were candy. Niels and Poppy needed more structure and method, more guidance as well. They were fonder of concrete issues. Mette and Niels always
needed to start from the whole before going into the details and to apply what had been presented. Darius and Pappas were brilliant analysers and always managed to end up with their own principles and theories. Darius dreamed of becoming a second Darwin… Miss Anna thought it was a good thing that they were all so different because it enabled them to improve, trying to work in a different way according to the example their friends set. Knowing how their black box functioned best, would definitely help them progress in English.

Without being aware of it, they had to use a common language. Our happy kids learned to communicate better, driven by the need to convey their cute messages of amazement and excitement, supported by the flow of language to which Miss Anna exposed them with her stories every day. One day Miss Anna even asked them to create a short story. The name of the game was the “Fantastic binomial”: Superman who got married to the beautiful Onion Ring, the Dragon who saved the Marmalade Jar from the Banner, or the Baby Caterpillar who terrorised the Stamp who didn’t want to let go of his Oak Tree. Proud as peacocks, the children asked Miss Anna if they were allowed to make a small stories booklet they could offer to other children. Lucas took care of the illustrations together with Lorenz and Samira. Darius, who was an excellent break dancer and had a Russian baritone voice – which made them all laugh because it made him seem so odd – asked if he could make a CD with the raps based on their crazy stories.

Not only did they reflect on how to develop and enrich their language, they also learned how to manage a situation in order to reduce an obstacle they perceived as higher than the Himalayas, to a small fly which they could just wave away. They talked about what they were doing and why, they tried to understand how they learned best. This way, they learned in a natural way how to become a bit more who they wanted to be, how to take advantage of their talents, how to excel in them and to be proud of what they already managed to do.

Miss Anna was never angry when they weren’t so successful. She never talked about mistakes. She said they were “errors”, and it was a good thing because it helped them learn and they just had to be confident because they all progressed very well. According to her, there was no such a thing as “more gifted pupils”: they all had different talents and a different learning pace. Working together they learned from each other, they helped each other and became still better in English.

Poppy had become very “popular” with his “hergraine”. They all thought it was a joke, until Miss Anna made them reflect on what she saw as an underlying paradigm: “migraine, yourgraine, hergraine”.

− This is very interesting, Poppy! I see you try to find patterns in the system of the language!

As a matter of fact, Poppy thought he had found a possessive adjective in the word “migraine”. Miss Anna congratulated him because he had tried to deduce rules from what he had heard. She asked the children to come up with a few
examples of objects with these small words indicating to whom these objects belonged. And she added that everybody could have a migraine and that there was no gap between “mi” and “graine” whereas there was one in “my friend”, that “migraine” had an “i” and “my” a “y”. This was the reason why they couldn’t change the migraine.

One thing they all had in common was their contagious smile which lit up their faces. Conviviality, complicity, mutual respect, curiosity towards the other… all these things brought them together and gave them wings. They felt very well; they were so at ease in their environment! They were all overwhelmed by the praise for their unique contribution to the HOLA! Universe.

One day, the HOLA fairy reappeared. Still a few days to go and it would be Teachers’ Day. So the fairy asked them if they could think of something to celebrate for Miss Anna. The children wanted to do something really special for their warm and caring teacher that they were so fond of. Happy suggested they write her a beautiful postcard. Jade proposed creating a new story, especially for Miss Anna, and to act it out together. Hanna wanted to design a new dress. Nikos, who was always hungry and loved to eat ice cream, proposed forgetting about his preferred desert and making the famous chocolate truffles as Miss Anna had taught them. Pepito came up with the idea of making a shopping list in a Venn diagram. Poppy proposed drawing the map of their HOLA! Universe. Spontaneously, the kids came up with the whole list of what they had learned with Miss Anna. They wanted to show their gratefulness to Miss Anna and how proud they were of what they had achieved. They put everything in a portfolio and presented it to Miss Anna on Teachers’ Day. The months before had all been Children’s Day. Now it would be the turn of their adored teacher.

For reasons of discretion, an attitude in which Miss Anna excelled, we’ll let the children celebrate their achievements behind closed doors. What a celebration! We just want to tell you that Miss Anna felt she had everything she could wish for when she experienced all the things her children had prepared for her. She knew they were excellent, but what a dream come true…

At the end of the day, the HOLA fairy told the kids she was the godmother of Miss Anna and she felt so happy about the passion they had shown during Teachers’ Day, filling the universe with perfume, smells, melodies, movement, words, warmth and glitter.

Do you want to know how our story ends? We invite you yourself to choose the ending you prefer, knowing that millions of children would adore to live and work in the warm and safe HOLA! Universe.

You might prefer this end:

- Hanna! Wake up! It’s time to prepare for school! Are you already in the bathroom? Hurry! Breakfast is ready, and you still have to revise your vocabulary list for the test!

Chapter 11: Once upon a time there was HOLA!
Or maybe this one…

- Miss Anna, could I ask you something? How come there are just twenty of us here? I know a lot of friends who would love to be here in class with us…

Miss Anna whispered a few words in the ear of her godmother, who exclaimed:

- What a brilliant idea! Why wouldn’t we…

She took her magic wand, and pronounced a gobbledygook nobody understood, and the school became bigger, and bigger, and bigger… until it was IMMENSE! A flood of children laughing, playing, turning around streamed into the lane leading to the building. With a second wave of her magic wand, the fairy made hundreds of Miss Annas appear, all wearing the wonderful dress the kids had created for Teachers’ Day.

The HOLA! Universe went quiet. The HOLA fairy, exhausted but so immensely happy, was seated on the crescent moon, satisfied with hearing the faraway soft sighs of the children who had finally fallen asleep, entrusted into the warm care of the Miss Annas. Yes, one day they would all manage to speak English, to stay curious, creative and resourceful, to enjoy their childhood, while learning to become happy European kids…

Whatever ending you prefer, we hope you fully enjoyed discovering the culture and work style of our HOLA! Universe.

Karine Van Thienen
HOLA! project coordinator
CONCLUSION

The children of Year 5 are excited. Catherine is coming to their school and is going to give them a HOLA! lesson. They make a card for Mother’s Day. They learn to make rhymes to complete the poem. They can choose the words themselves. Catherine always speaks French with them. They reply in French, but they say a lot of things in Flemish as well, their mother tongue. Sometimes they repeat words aloud, expressions or sentences they have heard. “Great!” One of the pupils mispronounces. But Catherine lets him finish. Afterwards she explains that it is something very hard because it is different in Flemish. She asks if they know other differences to their mother tongue. She tells them what they are going to do without too many explanations. They can take the initiative to ask questions. Catherine’s task is set in a way that the kids need the help of their classmates. There are fifteen children in the class. Catherine has fifteen assistants who help each other. She teaches them ready made sentences for the purpose of the task. One of the children doesn’t like poems. Catherine challenges him: he is going to count the accents in the poem. At the end of the lesson she asks him to take up his challenge: there was just one accent and the lesson wasn’t boring. Fifteen cards for Mother’s Day. All competing in beauty. Fifteen happy faces? No, sixteen: Catherine enjoyed being their teacher as well.

HOLA! is about classroom practice. It is the child who is allowed to be who he is, with his emotions, his sensibilities, his imagination, his curiosity, his questions, his need to move, to laugh, to cry. It is the child who runs through the wood because the hunting season has started. It is the child who is proud of the rap he created. It is the child who could select his own task. It is the child who welcomes Zippo and his friends at the airport and organises a party before his guests go back home. It is the child who learns in a natural way, at his own pace and in his own way. The encouragement and the confidence of the teacher give him wings. One day he will fly on his own into the meaningful universe of foreign language he created by himself.

HOLA! is about the teacher who listens to the pupils, who understand, helps, laughs, comforts, who acts in a natural way, who reflects, who helps to learn, who acknowledges the special talents in each of the children and who helps them progress. It is not the sage on the stage. It is the warm voice behind the scenes, the safety net of the trapeze artists, the ally of the learner in the acquisition of that cool and funny language that is English.
HOLA! is about the universe rich in language, in emotions, in imagination and creativity… It is the world within the reach of the youngster, it is the world of the child.

HOLA! is about the language which enables the pupil to get to know other children, to discover other horizons and different cultures. It is learning to be curious and to continue learning. It is being empowered by the language.

For the child taking his first steps in English it is important to start with chunks which enable him to do something with language. He learns by doing and what he has acquired helps him to fulfil himself as a child. Grammar would certainly allow for more freedom: for creating unique utterances. But before reflecting on the language, let’s just teach him the language. And when he will be a bit older, he will understand why “heart” is written in a different way to “hard”.

HOLA! is about the teacher who makes the child aware of the things of life, who opens the doors of the school and lets every day life come in. Unconsciously and spontaneously the child learns English, learns the world… But most of all he learns to learn, to discover more easily, to help himself, to help others and to accept the help of the other. The task, a challenge embedded in real life, stimulates the child’s involvement. He likes to be active!

HOLA! is about the constructive and comprehensible feedback of the classmate, the parent or the teacher. A kind and authentic look directed towards the future. The teacher serves as a model for the learner. He shows him how to say things without hurting, he teaches him how to encourage and be open to the other. HOLA! is also about the portfolio: the box, file or travel bag which is full of progress, pride and plans for improvement. It is the celebration of what has been acquired and achieved. A good reason to stay involved!

HOLA! is about those twenty people who have worked, reflected, laughed, eaten together during the past two years. They will continue HOLA! so that pupils can learn to learn HOLA!

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MY PERSONAL NOTES

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