

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE LEARNING

‘MISTAKES ON WRITINGS AND VOCABULARY APPROACH’

Plan de Formación en Lenguas Extranjeras 2017

Final Digital Project

Week 1: 10-14th July

Tutor: Robin Walker

Student: Ana Martín



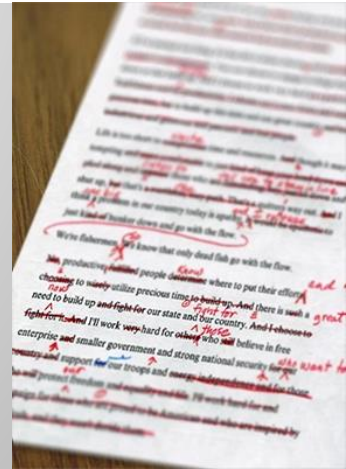
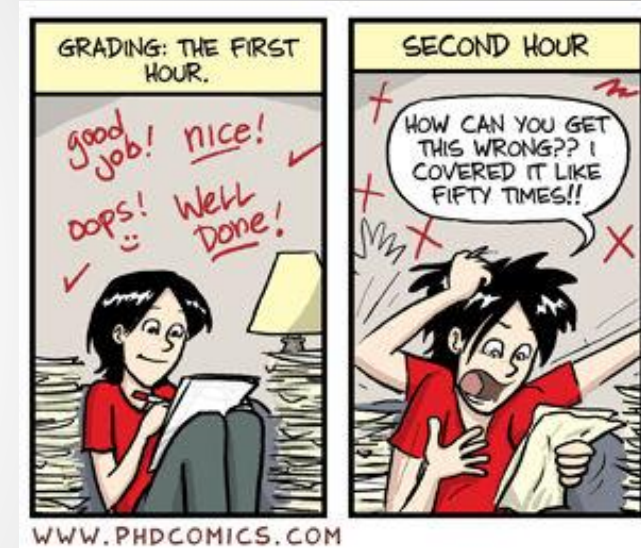
Task 1: mistakes in writing

- ❑ Theory and exemplification**
- ❑ Classroom activity**

THEORY: errors in writing

□ It is true that correcting students' essays is not a fascinating job and these are the facts:

- Is it worth spending the whole Sunday afternoon correcting writings and becoming anxious about marking the same errors?
- Is it the best for them to correct writings in detail?
- Are they really learning effectively when they feel frustrated since all is wrong, they just care about the mark or they don't ask even doubts?
- How can we improve the way of learning from errors?



THEORY: cause of errors

- There are some **reasons** why students make mistakes:
 - ❖ **Carelessness** (e.g. a student forgot the writing and did it in the very last minute)
 - ❖ **Mother-tongue influence** (e.g. thinking in Spanish, Spanglish in Chicago)
 - ❖ **Teaching materials or methodology** (e.g. we usually teach 'for/since' at the same time and students associate them in their minds causing errors)
 - ❖ **Overgeneralization** (e.g. the –s in the 3rd person singular of the modals)
 - ❖ **General Order of Difficulty** (e.g. past simple/present perfect)
 - ❖ **Creativity** (e.g. 'Festival' instead of 'First of all' at oral level)

THEORY: types of errors

- ❑ Classification in a **linguistic way**: grammatical, lexical, verb tense, spelling, etc.
- ❑ Based on the **content**, its understanding and communication:
 - ❖ **Local error**: simply and incorrect form you can understand the meaning
 - ❖ **Global error**: you can't understand

THEORY: classroom strategies

It can be difficult to decide on what and how much to correct in a student's piece of writing. Students can develop a negative attitude towards writing because their teacher corrects all their errors or if the teacher only corrects a few, they might feel that the teacher hasn't spent sufficient time looking at their work. Here are some tips:

- ❑ Writing the **correct version above** the error which is underlined.
- ❑ Using **error codes** to indicate the type of error.
- ❑ **Limiting correction** to certain types of errors specially those which block communication.
- ❑ **Ignoring the error** when the form is acceptable and the message can be understood.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

- ❑ Addressed to **4ESO** students in the **beginning of the school year**.
- ❑ Subject: **English**
- ❑ Type of activity: students have to write three **miniwritings** in class, a great way to see their level of English as a placement test.
- ❑ 1st session: the teacher explains students the importance of doing a '**writing workshop**' in order to train them and improve their writing skills. Among other things they will see the different stages before writing (understanding the task, planning, draft and final version) and an **effective way for correcting writings** which is the main goal of this activity.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

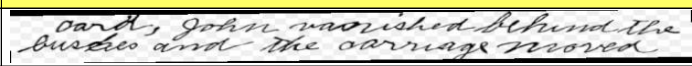
- 1st session: the following tools which will be used in class are explained
 - ❖ List of errors: the teacher asks the students their most typical mistakes (brainstorming on the board) and a few of them are chosen to work during the first term. Then in the second term new mistakes and so on.
 - ❖ An error code correction sheet is done to be used by the teacher and students.
 - ❖ Writing rubric will be used by teacher when he/she is correcting the writings.

Here are some examples:

AN ERROR CODE CORRECTION SHEET (1)

Type of mistake	Example sentence	Code
ORGANIZATION & CONTENT		O/C
No title		T
No paragraph division		//
No introduction, development, and conclusion		
There is no strong opening		
No topic sentence		TS
Limited or no use of connectors	(In spite of, however, nevertheless, besides, moreover.....)	
Wrong punctuation marks	(Extra commas, no commas, no stops....)	P
GRAMMAR		GR
No subject	<i>I met my best friend and ___ went to the cinema to watch a movie (we) / I like English because ___ is really important (it)</i>	S
No subject-verb agreement	<i>People is (are)... / They isn't (aren't)... / He aren't (isn't)... / She come (comes)...</i>	AG
Other wrong agreements	<i>David is my best friend. Her (his) hobby is... / this houses...., (these)</i>	OAG
Wrong sentence order	<i>He comes always (always comes) by bus / Next week I will have an exam very difficult (a very difficult exam)</i>	WO
Sentences that make no sense, TALK TO THE TEACHER	<i>Because is a lot of time and she don't go of her house (because she hasn't gone out of her house for a long time)</i>	?
Wrong verb tense	<i>Last week I go (went) to a very nice restaurant...</i>	VT
Wrong verb form	<i>We have find (found) what we were looking for...</i>	VF
Missing word	<i>I was walking on the middle of ___ street (the)</i>	M
Extra word (unnecessary word)	<i>The people are very selfish.... (People are very selfish)</i>	X
Silly mistake!	<i>As our plane flew over the mountains, we seed snow. (saw) / She has 18 years old. (is)</i>	!

AN ERROR CODE CORRECTION SHEET (2)

VOCABULARY		VOC
Repetition of the same word technology is everywhere nowadays. I love technology and I have a lot of technology at home	R
Spelling mistakes twelf (twelve), whith (with), futbool (football) etc...	SP
Irregular plurals	Childrens , Childs (children & child), feets (feet), mans (men)....	PL
No use of capital letters	They are german (German) but they speak french (French).	CL
Adjectives ending in -s	These houses are very beautifuls (beautiful)	ADJ
Wrong word	In this age in which we are connected every time (all the time)	W
Wrong expression	In my point of view (From my point of view)	EXP
False friends	I cannot support (put up with or stand) my language teacher, he is always shouting and complaining	FF
STYLE		ST
Illegible hand writing		
Crossing out	We go to school all days every day	
Wrong way to start a sentence	Yes , I think this problem is getting worse and worse	
Missing word (to clarify an idea)		
Register: informal or contractions	I am gonna love you. (going to) / You aren't happy (are not)	

WRITING RUBRIC (1)*

NAME _____		GROUP _____			
WRITING RUBRIC					
Your writing task will be assessed according to these criteria:					
		POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCEL.
PRESENTATION	Utiliza márgenes	0,25	0,5	0,75	1
	Los párrafos están separados por espacios en blanco				
	La letra es legible				
	No hay tachones, flechas, dibujitos, se cuida la limpieza y el orden				
ORGANIZATION	El texto está organizado en tres partes (y tiene título)	0,5	1	1,5	2
	La introducción es correcta y apropiada				
	El desarrollo es correcto y apropiado				
	La conclusión es correcta y apropiada				
	La longitud del texto es la exigida				
CONTENT: COHERENCE & COHESION	Las ideas son coherentes, tienen sentido	0,75	1,5	2	3
	Responde a lo que le preguntan				
	Los párrafos tienen 'topic sentence' bien diferenciado				
	Utiliza ideas originales y creativas				
	Usa conectores de forma apropiada				

* Spanish version

WAYS OF CORRECTING COMPOSITIONS

Student's writing

MY LAST HOLIDAY

I going to write about of the what I did month last. I goed with my family to the beach. I not got up early, swam, travelled to cities. Then, I met with news boys and we played much. The weather was very good. I passed very well.

Correction 1 / traditional paper correction:
all mistakes

MY LAST HOLIDAY

^{am}
I going to write about of ~~the~~
what I did ~~month~~ last. I ~~goed~~
~~with my family to the beach~~. I
not ~~got~~ up early, swam,
travelled to cities. Then, I met
~~with news~~ boys and we played
~~much~~. The weather was very
good. I ~~passed~~ very well.

Correction 2 / traditional paper correction:
communicative; just the most important ones.
Use a code

MY LAST HOLIDAY

I going to write about of the
what I did month last. I goed
with my family to the beach. I
not got up early, swam,
travelled to cities. Then, I met
with news boys and we played
much. The weather was very
good. I passed very well.

GR

WO

P

X

W

Good start. Keep working!

WAYS OF CORRECTING COMPOSITIONS

Correction 3 / digital correction:
communicative; just the most important ones.
Use a colourful code

MY LAST HOLIDAY

I going to write about of the
what I did month last. I goed
with my family to the beach. I
not got up early, swam,
travelled to cities. Then, I met
with news boys and we played
much. The weather was very
good. I passed very well.

Good start. Keep working!

- ❑ Teacher corrects using a colorfoul code and recording the positive and negative things. (*screencast-o-matic* can be used)
- ❑ Student gets personal and oral feedback.
- ❑ Individual correction: once student rewrites the teacher's suggestions, he/she will get the mark.
- ❑ It can be more time consuming for teacher, so it could be done once a term or twice a year, just because of its originality and personal approach.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO CORRECT

Once students look at their writings the following activities could be done:

- ❑ **Peer correction:** in pairs they have 15' to improve them identifying the error(s) and if possible making a correction. Then, they will sign, date and even mark their written work. Finally, the teacher will mark the compositions again.
- ❑ **An error auction.** Students in small groups are given some 'money' with which to bid on various sentences taken from their written work. These sentences include correct and incorrect sentences, the group which 'buys' the most correct sentences wins the game.

TASK 1: CONCLUSION

The role of teachers today is communication, therefore when we are correcting writings we should **focus on content but not on all mistakes and then mark**. This way,

- **students** will **feel better** and maybe more **motivated**.
- they will also **think and learn by themselves** in a scaffolding and collaborative way although it will take time to get used to the **rubric and code system**.
- **teachers** will spend **less time correcting** all the writings **in detail**.



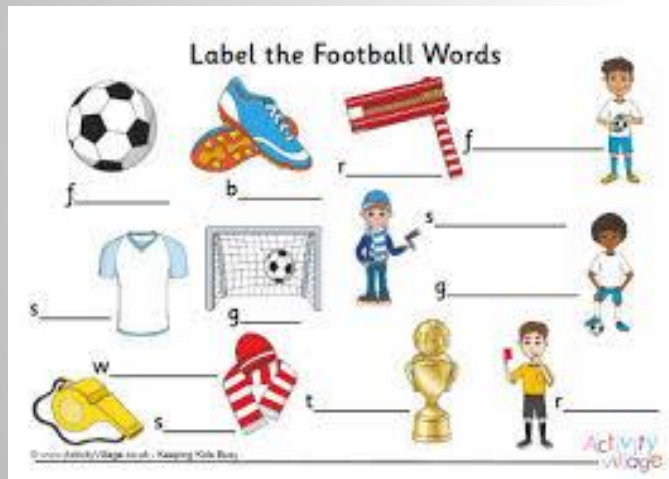
Why not? 😊

Task 2: techniques for learning vocabulary

- ❑ Theory and exemplification**
- ❑ Classroom activity**

THEORY: how do we learn words?

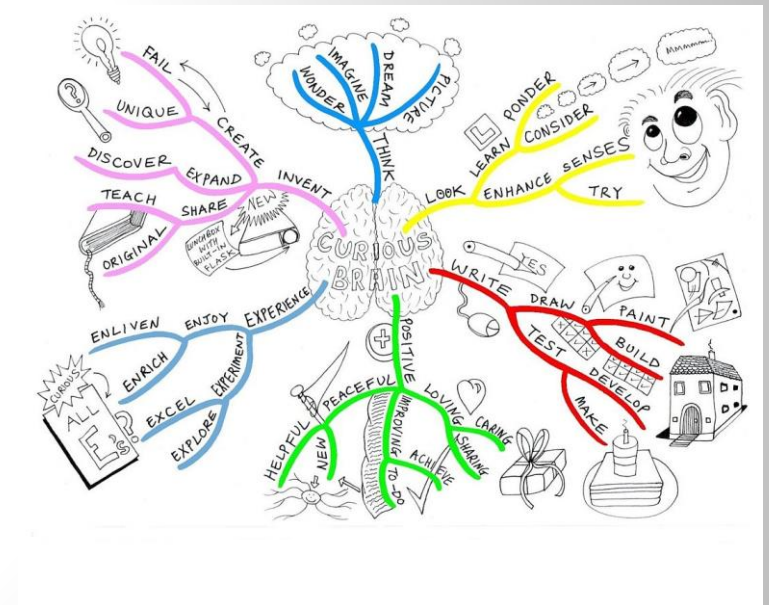
- It is true that learning vocabulary is very personal and the best way to do it is using different types of activities:



➤ labelling



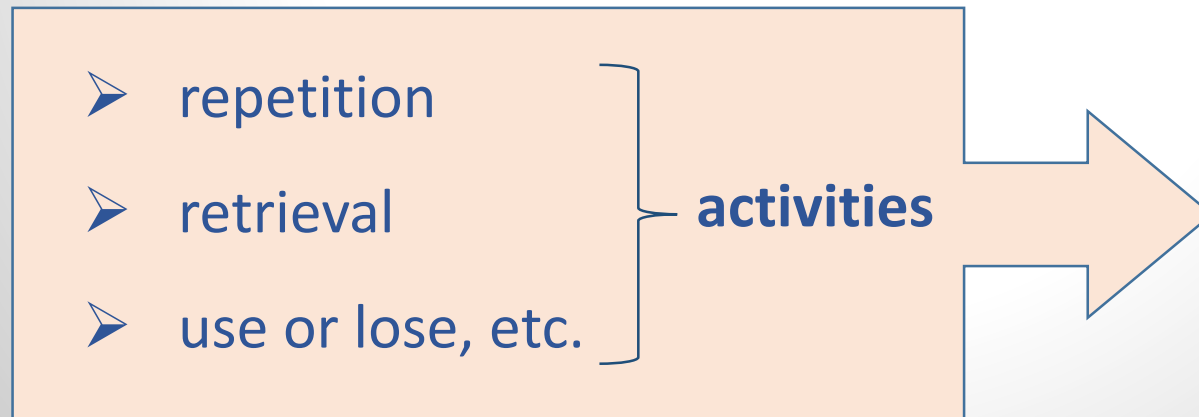
➤ categorising



➤ networking

THEORY: how do we remember words?

- There are three types of memories:



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

- Addressed to **4ESO** students to revise vocabulary.
- Subject: **English**
- Type of activity: a worksheet to revise all the vocabulary seen during any lesson or the term where different scaffolding exercises in order to help long-term memory will be used.

VOCABULARY EXERCISES

Translate the words into your own language. Then, choose your favourite ones and tell your partner why.

ENGLISH	SPANISH	ENGLISH	SPANISH
watermelon			salchicha
	fresa	beef	
eggplant			cereza
	calabaza	chicken	
pea			mayonesa

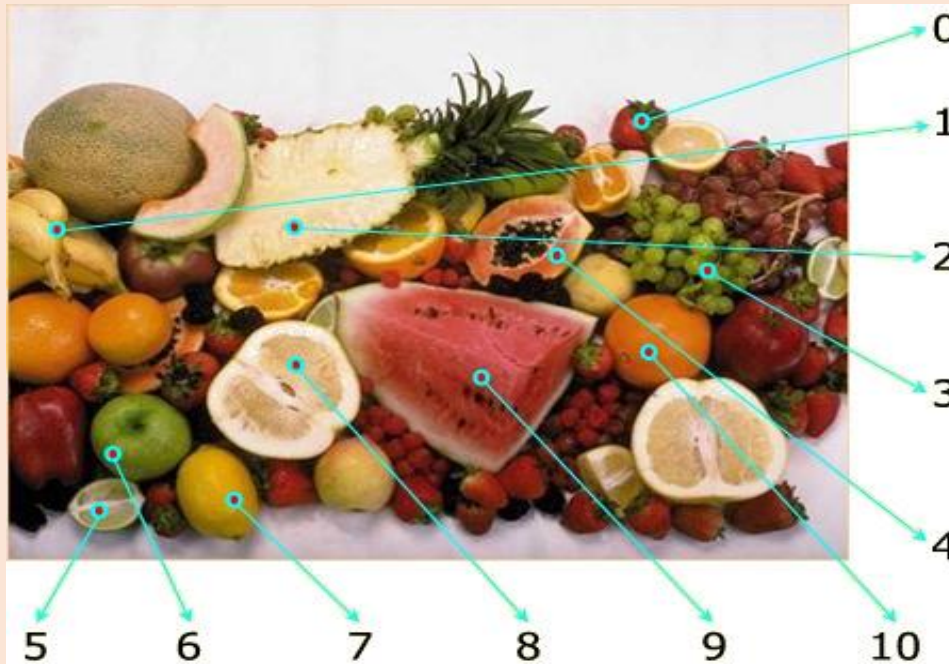
Unscramble these letters to find the food item:

- kilm - _____
- tame - _____
- reap - _____
- tralwemoen - _____
- rarcto - _____
- fefeoc - _____

VOCABULARY EXERCISES

Label the picture with the right words about fruit.

grape banana lemon pineapple orange papaya grapefruit lime melon apple strawberry



0. _____
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Discuss with your partner about your favourite fruit, the one you hate, how often you eat fruit, etc.

VOCABULARY EXERCISES

Work with a partner. List the food in the box in different groups according to the criteria a-d. A food word might belong to more than one group.

milkshake chocolate milk burger cola cabbage french fries beer carrot coffee pizza
butter milk aubergine toast onion cereals tea cucumber hot dog

- a. Vegetables
- b. Fast food
- c. Types of drinks
- d. Breakfast foods

Work with your partner. Tell each other about these topics:

- a. Vegetables you like/dislike
- b. Your daily breakfast consists of...
- c. Drinks you like/dislike
- d. How often do you eat fast food? Where?

VOCABULARY EXERCISES

Complete with the right fixed expressions from the box.

quick gourmet soft balanced junk

1. I'll have a _____ snack because I don't have enough time.
2. I don't eat _____ meal because it is usually expensive but high-quality.
3. I love _____ drinks such as Pepsi, Fanta, etc.
4. I know _____ food is unhealthy but it is quick and easy to eat.
5. I think it is crucial to have a _____ diet.

Tick the sentences that are true for you. Discuss with a partner.

VOCABULARY GAMES

VOCABULARY BAGS or WORD STEW

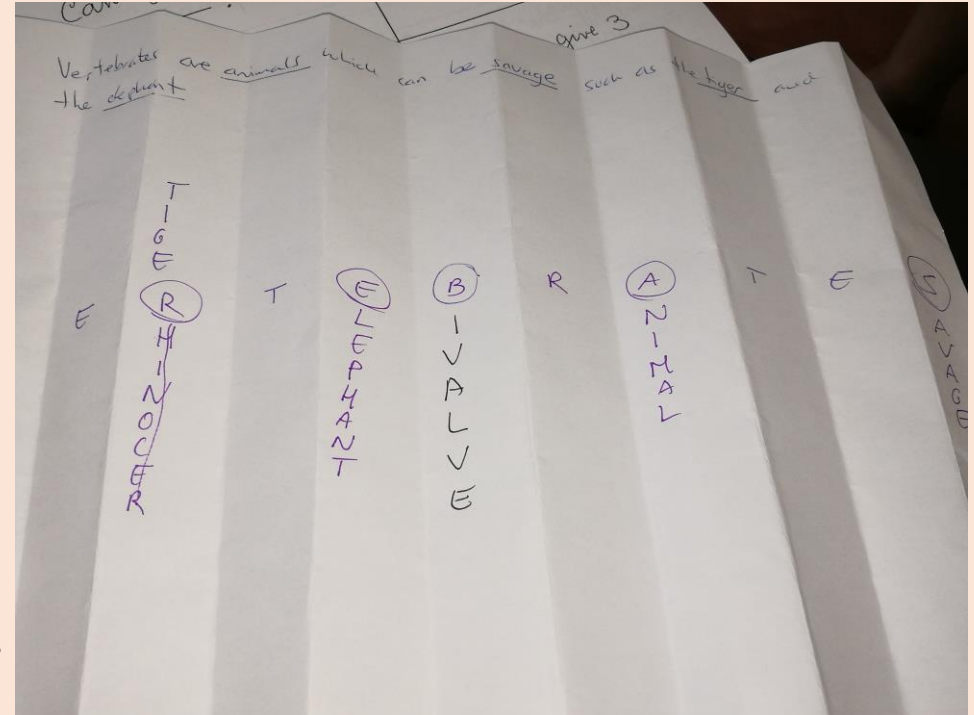
- ✓ Game to be played every 2/3 weeks to check meanings.
- ✓ The teacher asks the students to write some words on a piece of paper (those to revise the unit or term) and put them in the bag (plastic cover) or box.
- ✓ Then the teacher pulls out a selection and give them to the students who are in pairs or small groups.
- ✓ Ways to play:
 - Students have to produce sentences showing correct meaning.
 - Students are asked to write a definition on the back of the cards.
 - Students group words by pronunciation (a great way to practise the phonological loop – is a learner can pronounce words he/she will remember better).
 - Students group words onto a word map (they will Foster personal learning and creativity)
 - Odd one out: students will see relationships, analyse and explain why.
 - Mixed up the vocabulary cards and classify:
 - Categories (nouns, adjectives, verbs)
 - Adjectives: make sentences
 - Verbs: play with verb tenses
 - Nouns: collocations, countable/uncountable
 - Draw and guess
 - Miming



VOCABULARY GAMES

MEMORY FANS

- ✓ Game played every 2/3 weeks to check meanings.
- ✓ All groups can have the same topic or different ones.
- ✓ Students fold a piece of paper as if it were a fan.
- ✓ They write a 'secret Word' in the middle, each letter in a different fold area.
- ✓ They choose 4 letters in a circle.
- ✓ For each of the word they write a word related to the topic.
- ✓ Then, pass the fan clockwise to another group.
- ✓ The new group circle 1 or 2 letters and add more words.
- ✓ Create a definition at the top using the words used.
- ✓ Pass again: the new group read the definition and correct (mini-contest of the best one, the most accuracy, the most simple...)



TASK 2: CONCLUSION

Vocabulary is crucial in any language, the problem is that students usually learn words by heart on their own, through the workbook or notebook, even the day before the exam and therefore they forget easily. Why? Because these skills are only focused on remembering and understanding.

Consequently, teachers should take care of **using different types of written exercises to foster long-term memory**. In addition, we must show students to **learn through a wide variety of games in pairs or small groups on a regular basis**. Management control could be a problem at the beginning but it is worth considering **these tasks** to also **make our students analyze, evaluate and create by themselves** (Bloom's taxonomy), **help each other and have fun** at the same time.



Why not? 😊