

Expanding Reading-Text-Typology Frontiers in Foreign Language Teaching

Extendiendo fronteras en la tipología de textos de lectura para la enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras

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Resumen

Tradicionalmente, la selección y uso de textos en la enseñanza de la comprensión auditiva o lectora en la enseñanza de una lengua extranjera se ha concentrado en un estándar cuasi-obligatorio: el material tiene que ser auténtico. Este artículo tiene como objetivo diseccionar esta idea, en un intento de encontrar otros caminos que—preservando su validez—expandan el concepto original. Por tanto, los autores estudian un grupo de definiciones, las explican y buscan proponer una posición más adaptable, que esté en concordancia con las tendencias actuales en este campo. Para lograrlo, se utilizaron métodos de análisis-síntesis, inducción-deducción y abstracción-concreción. Asimismo, se ofrecen ejemplos de textos "ajenos" y cómo se pueden implementar en clases.

Palabras clave: *textos auténticos; comprensión lectora; enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras*

Abstract

Traditionally, selecting and using texts for teaching listening or reading comprehension in foreign language teaching has focused on a quasi-imperative standard: such material must be authentic. This paper aims at dissecting this established precept, in an attempt to find byways that—while preserving its validity—expand the original concept. Therefore, the authors study a number of definitions, explain them and intend to put forth a more adjustable stance, in line with what is current tendency in the teaching field today. To this end, methods of analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction and abstraction-concretion were used. Alongside, examples are offered of "alien" texts and how they can be implemented in class.

Keywords: authentic texts; reading comprehension; foreign language teaching



Introduction

Being authentic is a quality, an aspiration, a pursuit that is brought to a fruitful finish once a person's inner urges and values blend with the learning he/she systematizes during his/her lifetime. Authenticity applies to almost anything: an authentic reenactment of events, an authentic painting, an authentic display of feelings, authentic behavior, etc.

According to hEnglish - advanced version digital format-, authentic means "having a genuine original or authority, in opposition to that which is false, fictitious, counterfeit, or apocryphal; being what it purports to be; genuine; not of doubtful origin; real; as, an authentic paper or register." It also means "worthy of acceptance or belief: trustworthy... not imaginary, false or imitation: genuine... conforming to an original so as to reproduce essential features... made or done the same way as an original..." (Webster's, p. 59).

All of these definitions and synonyms can be transferred to teaching, specifically to the teaching of English as a foreign language (FL). Traditionally, selecting and using texts for teaching listening or reading comprehension in foreign language teaching has focused on a quasi-imperative standard: such material must be authentic. This paper aims at dissecting this established precept, in an attempt to find byways that—while preserving its validity—expand the original concept. Therefore, the authors study a number of definitions, explain them and intend to put forth a more adaptable stance, which is in line with what is current tendency in the field today. To this end, methods of analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction and abstract-concrete were used. Alongside, examples are offered of "alien" texts and how they can be implemented in class.

About reading comprehension

To further explore that concept of authenticity, the following definition may be helpful in understanding what reading comprehension is: "A reader's interaction with and assimilation of a written text, supported by his/her schemata and worldview, moving gradually in phases through literal, inferential, readjusting, applicative and creative levels. These imply critically decoding and taking in the author's intention and the text's underlying culture, insightfully and effectively assessing and transposing its message to other contexts and situations." (Olivé, 2024, p. 55)



Most of the sources consulted (authors, books, teaching material) coincide on the following general elements. So, according to Byrne (1989), reading is:

A way to communicate.

The capacity to obtain information from a written text.

A process that activates thinking.

Mickulecky (1990, p. 2) states it is "...a complex behavior which involves conscious and unconscious use of various strategies, including problem-solving strategies, to build a model of the meaning which the writer is assumed to have intended."

Didactic hints to consider in teaching reading present authenticity as an invariable element:

1. Start with global understanding and move towards detailed understanding.
2. Use authentic texts whenever possible.
3. Grade exercises rather than texts.
4. Focus on reading sub-skills and plan comprehension exercises for each of them.
5. Do not impose an exercise on a text.
6. Learning to read demands initial intensive oral activity.
7. Silent reading should be introduced gradually.

Notice, however, that the source says "whenever possible." It can be stated that in many teaching materials emphasis is always made on the use of authentic texts whenever possible. It is explained that authentic texts do not complicate learning. According to them, the difficulty of a reading exercise depends on the activity required to be answered by the students rather than on the text proposed.

An essential element in reading comprehension is propounded by Ayala and Machín (2021). It clearly puts forth the relevance of reading and how it must be treated in teaching the language:

There have been very serious articles that describe the writers' thoughts about this topic in different countries. They emphasize the importance of reading in the foreign language as a priority with great implications on everlasting learning. They all assume that the students should be offered the opportunity to widen proficiency in reading comprehension for fostering critical reasoning, study skills, and reading skills, indispensable for success in academic and career development (p. 67).



Authenticity of text and task

The criteria below assist in our initial perception of how authenticity can be addressed:

With less proficient learners, we usually use simplified texts in order to make them appropriate in level for our learners; and tasks also may not represent any kind of real-life reading purpose. This is because such materials on the whole are more effective at earlier stages of learning; indeed, the use of 'authentic' texts with less proficient learners is often frustrating and counter-productive (...) However, ultimately we want our learners to be able to cope with the same kinds of reading that are encountered by native speakers of the target language. As they become more advanced, therefore, it would seem sensible to start basing their reading practice on a wide variety of authentic (or near-authentic) texts, and on tasks that represent the kinds of things a reader would do with them in real life rather than on conventional comprehension exercises (Ur, 1996, n. p.).

Byrne (1989) tells us that there is no short satisfactory answer to the question of authentic and non-authentic texts. For him, the important point is to meet the needs of the learners. He warns that whenever possible, some authentic material should be used, but always on an increasing scale as the course advances.

Byrne gives us clues in terms of selection of the right text: He states that what counts is succeeding in developing reading skills and taking into account the interests, abilities and objectives of the students. He refers to some authentic material we can resort to:

- Newspapers and magazines.
- Handbooks, textbooks, guidebooks, dictionaries, phrasebooks.
- Advertisements, travel brochures, catalogues.
- Letters, postcards, telegrams, notes.
- Articles, reports, reviews, essays, summaries.
- Novels, short stories, tales, diaries, biographies.

Other opinions that can be brought to analysis are that for teacher-provided materials, they should be genuinely related to realistic communication activities. It is advised that truly authentic communication tasks must contain key features such as involvement in solving a true problem or discussing a topic of interest, requiring using language to accomplish a goal, allowing students to use all of the language skills they have.



Finally, to round off these ideas, let's consider the following:

So far, the concept of authenticity and of adapting/using authentic material (reading texts in our discussion) focuses on taking real texts, written by English speakers, and using them in class. As is revealed, authors warn about age, interests, level, goals, etc., but there is no explicit warning—or forbiddance—about using texts proposed by the teacher which are not originally conceived, produced and published by native speakers.

Medina (2012) comes to our rescue defining authentic texts. He explains that one of the fundamental methodological precepts of the communicative approach is the use of authentic texts as the central context for the communicative situation. He mentions the two traditional classifications more frequently used:

A text is authentic when it is produced, either orally or in writing, by a native speaker of that language.

A text is authentic when it is taken directly from objective reality. That is, taken from a magazine, a newspaper, a book, a film, etc., also produced also by a native of that language.

However, he reveals for us that in the process of globalization that is taking place nowadays, in which English is highly used all over the world, another classification is being reckoned with: a text authored by two or more people in English to satisfy specific needs. It includes persons from different nationalities. For Medina, the authenticity of a text may depend also on the reader (learner)-text relationship. Such relationship is conditioned by the task that the learner answers based on the text. Thus, in foreign language, a text may be authenticated based on the tasks assigned and the types of questions learners respond and teachers pose about the text.

Towards a fourth classification

It is evident that the notion of authenticity has evolved, allowing fresh, logic-based, objective perspectives that open new opportunities to work in class on a creativity-based level. Olivé has argued that students need to be exposed to impact texts: "Select impact (memorable, touching, interesting) texts (oral and written) every time you can, texts that will touch the students' feelings and emotions (...) Kinegal (2006) states the need for emotionally engaged students. Motivation is a fire starter. Do not underestimate it." (Olivé, 2024, p. 54). Similarly, Spolsky (2000) sees motivation as a central element of a model of language learning (cited by Elyıldırım and Ashton, 2006).



Therefore, we suggest a fourth classification based on:

1. Flexibility detected in the quotations analyzed here and the position of authors and researchers on the issue.
2. The requirements many authors defend as vital in the authenticity of the text/task selected for teaching reading
3. The instructional-educational goals of our major and the discipline (Integrated English Practice).
4. The viewpoints suggested by Nuttal (1982) for choosing reading material, readability: "The combination of structural and lexical (i.e. vocabulary) difficulty" (p. 25); suitability of content: "The inclusion of a variety of books on subjects known to appeal to the students (...) you really need to carry out an investigation of what your own students like before you (...) select class reading material" (p. 29) and exploitability (facilitation of learning): "A text that you cannot exploit is of no use for teaching (...) When you exploit a text, you make use of it to develop your students' competence as readers (...) We want them to develop the skills needed to extract the content from the language that expresses it" (p. 31).
5. Drawing from the previous foundation, exploiting a text, in our own terms, is helping the students go from understanding it to transferring its message beyond the page into real life. In Olivé's words (2024), it is "Insightfully and effectively assessing and transposing its message to other contexts and situations" (p. 55).
6. The window opened by Medina, a qualified voice, in his definition of authentic texts, especially classification three.
7. Our own experience in working with reading comprehension in advanced levels in our institutions.

Below, the arguments that support our proposal:

1. Most of the texts proposed are in the syllabus but not forced upon it. They are mostly intended as extra cultural material—without abandoning the idea that they serve as well in-class, as is proved in the two samples provided.
2. The texts have the characteristics explained in Medina's third classification. A slight yet valid variation here would be that the two texts included in the sample section were authored originally in English, proofread by a Canadian publisher and published in Canadian issues and formats (newsletters, magazines).



3. The texts meet language and theme standards required for publication.
4. The texts have much potential for instructional (language), educational (formative) and cultural analysis. These are the major's and the subject's essential aims.
5. The texts fit in the syllabus's overall formative conception, and actually respond to the major's demands. In-class experience was that the students welcomed the texts and positively reacted to them (they have been used in class).
6. The texts are varied in content, theme, type of language (including different registers).
7. The texts are in line with creative teaching precepts introduced by Professor Chaz Pugliese, an authorized specialist on creativity and motivation. He speaks about novelty and usefulness (explained above with Nuttal's exploitability) of the material, techniques and procedures implemented in class.
8. Given their broad thematic spectrum and issues narrated/presented, the texts carry a significant emotional component that cannot be disregarded. Emotions play a basic role in forming values and shaping attitudes for learning and living.
9. The lessons and activities prepared to work with the texts invariably channel their contents keeping the emotion element in mind, as well as other profession-related aspects unavoidable in foreign language teaching for teachers-to-be, for example: cross-disciplinary approaches, thought-provoking statements and realities, critical thinking, metacognition, values-forming, etc. Let's remember that the activities designed for texts we bring to class do define the authenticity of what we do. Much language practice, emotion, meaningfulness and engagement must be the compass of any foreign language lesson.
10. The texts spark fresh student enthusiasm, as they see their own teachers successfully write, enjoy and publish material in English, as is the case of both texts and the author. This is a bonus that teachers and students appreciate: "Show your own motivation: Write out your own versions and share them. Let the students know that you practice writing too. It encourages them. In being inspired, we stimulate our students. Students often relate to and appreciate that we bring to class our versions of writing assignments (academic or creative writing) we have left as homework" (Olivé, 2024, p. 54).
11. The texts cover topics and values included in the Integrated English Practice syllabus and others propounded by authors and the Common European Framework of Reference for teaching languages. Some of these topics (and values therein) are:

Text 1 - Hard work, honesty, family values, perseverance, respect, sense of life, hope, etc.



Text 2 - Family values, adolescent issues, life and death, parent-children relations, flexibility, love, hope, fortitude before adversity, capacity to change, optimism, gratefulness, devotion, comprehension, etc.

It should be noted that hope is in the two texts. Growing and learning are also implicitly embedded in the stories.

Hence, we embrace what Nuttal tells us about text selection/adaptation: "Preserve whatever in the original will appeal to the intelligence of your students (...) Above all, retain as much as possible of the textual quality and discourse structure of the original" (1982, p. 32). Consequently, the following definition for the classification of authentic texts is proposed:

Texts originally conceived and written in English by a nonnative to satisfy specific needs (creative or academic writing), revised and proofread by native writers and publishers, accepted for publication in both native and nonnative English issues, such as magazines, books and anthologies, and in other formats and forums. These texts, with instructional, educational and cultural potential, meet the requirements for use in the teaching of English as a foreign language (Olivé, 2024, p. 61).

Proposal of texts and activities for senior students of the Teacher Education Major in English Reading Comprehension Lesson for TEXT 1, I Ain't Gonna Lose No Hope!

INTEGRATED ENGLISH PRACTICE

4TH YEAR PRE AND IN-SERVICE LESSON PLAN

READING COMPREHENSION LESSON

Objective: Express themselves orally and in writing showing full comprehension of the text while critically processing information and assessing contents and message, with an emphasis on linguistic, didactic and educational aspects, channeling them professionally.

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Teacher's Folder: SHORT STORIES FOR TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

Activities:

Warm up.

What do you prefer, watching movies/series or reading stories/books? Why?

What are your favorite genres, themes, narratives? (Sci-fi, fantasy, epics, thrillers, whodunits, romances, history, fables, bedtime stories, culture, fiction, nonfiction, suspense, surprise endings, poetry, profession-related, etc.) Why?

Points to ponder:

The most appealing text for reading is the one that (you can choose and argue more than one item):

- a. Photographically reflects reality.
- b. Creatively handles reality.
- c. Mixes themes.
- d. Is more narrative than dialogic.
- e. Is more dialogic than narrative.
- f. Is balanced between dialogue and narration.
- g. Includes non-personal facts.
- h. Includes personal and intimate facts.
- i. OTHER reasons...

Introducing the text:

Predicting the contents based on the previous talks and the title of the text (Activating the reading comprehension stages).

Based on the Warm-up and Points-to-Ponder ideas elicited, the teacher will create teams and hand out both texts to the students according to their preferences.



First reading (to check predictions).

Second reading (from teamwork to whole-class presentations and discussions).

Answer the following questions and be ready to report to your classmates about the text you chose:

1. What is the text about? How do you know that? Be ready to present the text's gist to your classmates.
2. Were there difficult/new words/phrases for you in the text? Which?
3. What aspect was difficult or new for you? Pronunciation, meaning, spelling, grammatical use, cultural component, etc.?
4. How do you deal with these words/phrases?
5. Did the text satisfy your expectations? Why?

Third reading (from teamwork to whole-class presentations and discussions).

Choose from the text:

- a. The fragment that impresses you the most. Say why.
- b. The fragment that mostly relates to you and your life. Explain.
- c. The fragment you would pick to use with your own students, to motivate them towards reading, language, culture. Justify didactically.

Ponder:

- a. What reading skills are exploited in the previous activity?
- b. What are they used for?
- a. Write out a paragraph with information from the text. Be ready to read it aloud in class.
- b. Which phases of reading have we covered up to now? How do you know that? What phrase is left?
- c. Propose in trios two activities for the post-reading phase. Be ready to defend why you selected them.
- d. What is the relevance of this final stage?



Homework:

Write an essay on any of the topics related to the text you chose or combine them. Provide arguments to support your statements. Reveal the significance of the text for you and the relevance of reading as a cultural asset for personal growth and enlightenment

Consult FL Methodology Professors Ayala Ruiz, PhD; Machín Armas, PhD; Ceballos Bauta, MSc. Prep an interview to collect info on reading as a tool to learn about life, to foster values and education, and to learn an FL.

Read the quotations below and comment on them in class. Make sure to include in your notes elements about learners and teachers, about knowledge acquisition and integral formative potential of reading, and about the cultural and interpersonal significance of reading:

“Reading effectively in a foreign language is one of the most demanding activities for university students. It helps them be successful in their learning process at the institution and in their lives in general. It requires highly trained teachers with an understanding of evidence-based reading instruction and the didactic competence to implement it in the classroom.” (PhD María Elena Ayala Ruiz, Full Professor; PhD Pedro Antonio Machín Armas, Full Professor).

“Libraries are irreplaceable social spaces for reading, recreation, constant learning, research and open access to information that supports comprehensive human being formation. The library is a space for integration within the university. It offers cultural and scientific options for both students and teachers. At the same time it promotes scientific results and technology innovation, preserves heritage collections, widens the interaction spaces and cultural expansion, stimulates and promotes reading.” (MSc Marianela Juana Rabell López, Assistant Professor; MSc Ernesto Galbán Peramo, Associate Professor; MSc Anabel La O Bacallao, Assistant Professor).

“Great literature broadens our knowledge, deepens our understanding, clarifies our emotions, and connects us to the inner wells of the self where deep need is served. In great literature we also find a meaningful connection with our fellow humans.” (John B. Lee. Canadian Poet, Reviewer, Editor, Professor)

TEXT: I Ain't Gonna Lose No Hope!

The Jensen ranch stood, rather wobbled, on its wooden stilts, most of the rickety, rotted down walls leaning windward as if about to finally give in to gravity. The lands around it vast, some patches virgin still for the oil rush that had lured the family in years ago. Poverty was all they had been able to amass from the moment Ramus Jensen and his seven-month-pregnant wife, Gallah, walked out of the City Hall office with a promising oil-drilling permit and high hopes of prosperity, and headed the horse-pulled cart to their prospective home.



That was twenty-five years ago. Ramus's land now looked like a huge colander. Livestock and poultry they raised wandered about often trespassing into areas he had preserved for cultivation in an effort at a bare livelihood. The rest had been left for "oil-hunting," as old Ramus had named his quest. Now his son, Joshua, helped him carry on with the dream despite the years elapsed and wasted.

"Pa, you can't handle these tools like you used to. It's about time we gave up this silly dream you have..." – he would tell his father.

"Never!" – Ramus would retort – "I ain't gonna lose no hope! This land's mine and it'll humor me one day..."

The old man's words felt firm but also weaker and weaker after so many days and nights digging, turning the earth, scraping it, hoeing hard, breaking through the hard stone, sweat covering their foreheads and clothes. They did not have the best resources to go deeper into the bedrock so had to make do with what was handy and could be afforded.

Joshua would try to find an ally in Gallah but she always smiled, eyes half-shiny, half fighting back tears, seated near the fireplace sewing back to usefulness her husband's and son's frayed workwear.

"How could I kill his dream? We came so many years ago and settled for good... It's been so long... We had hopes, you know..."

Her last words trailed off from her lips. Gallah was lost in her thoughts so visibly that Joshua simply let her be.

He was not cut for this – he thought – He would have to find something else to do in town. Maybe work at that Church library they had recently inaugurated for the kids! He liked reading...

Day in day out the Jensen family survived, drilled holes, clung on to hopes, dreamed, except for Joshua, who had different expectations. "Pa, I don't wanna dig no more. Our field looks like a badgers' haven, for God's sake!"

No sooner had he said the words than he regretted having spoken. He feared he could have hurt his father; or upset him. Ramus stopped, slid his hat backwards, wiped clean his wrinkled forehead with the back of his calloused hand, sighed and told him,

"Son, you've been my rock for so long now. If it's your will to go see the world 'n' make a living on somet'ing else, I ain't gonna be the one holding you back" – Joshua was speechless – "All I ask is you get yourself a decent job, not'ing you might regret in the future, not'ing to send them arms of the law hunting you down."



Ramus paused, sighed again, looked at Joshua in the eye and said, "I don't wanna hear the gavel come down crushing my son's life and his mother's heart."

Joshua nodded faintly, tapped his father on the shoulder and proceeded with the work mumbling, "No worries, Dad, I'll be extra careful... but for now I think I'll stick around."

"Thank you, son" was all Ramus said.

...

Winter came, especially harsh that year, white-blanketing the fields Ramus and Joshua had toiled on, making it twice as hard to break soil and rock and bore even deeper. With winter also surfaced Ramus's illness: A failing heart and a cough that made him howl in the middle of nights Gallah devoted to brewing hot beverages for her frail husband.

Once, she whispered to him, "I think you ought to listen to our son, Ramus. You're too old, already too scrawny to go on with this..."

Ramus looked at his beloved wife. So many years together and here she is... "Gallah, darling, if I stop, what will be of our dream... No, I ain't gonna lose no hope." He reached out and kissed her, gulped down the hot drink and lay down to rest.

The following morning Ramus and Joshua came out to the backyard with renewed energies to bore, bore, bore. By noon, they had hit the bedrock on a site they tested using machinery borrowed from a sympathetic neighbor.

Ramus was out of breath and coughing. He paused and urged his son to take him back into the house. He was not feeling well. "I have a burning sensation retching up from my belly to my chest, son. Take me to bed. I need to rest..."

...

They buried him near his dear patches of drilled land, where the animals grazed and hoped for rain as he had hoped for oil. Only a handful of people attended his funeral. Winter had made things worse, his heart could not hold out anymore. His "oil-hunting" prospects seemed to go down with the box, six feet down the lifeless body then up to heaven a hard-working man's decent soul, as Ramus always believed and wished. "Amen" – said the Father.

Later that day, Joshua went out to gather fruit. He crossed the perforation lot to head to the grove. On his way, his feet splashed on something greasy. When he looked down, he froze. From out the deepest gap they had drilled a liquid flowed silent and promising, like the permit his parents had received years ago.



Unable to move, he called his mother, who came out still wearing the black dress she had mended for Ramus's burial, blank-eyed, pale-faced with downright bereavement. "What is it, son?" – Joshua had tears in his eyes and a trembling voice when he answered, "O-Oil, Mo-Mom, oil..." – he stuttered.

Her eyes opened wide. She fell on her knees and collapsed. Joshua ran to her yet turning his head for an instant to the mound under which his father rested, grateful now realizing that his dear father had never lost hope.

Reading Comprehension lesson for TEXT 2, Thou Shalt Honor Thy Father

INTEGRATED ENGLISH PRACTICE.

4TH YEAR PRE AND IN-SERVICE LESSON PLAN

READING COMPREHENSION LESSON

Objective: Comprehend the text totally while critically assessing its contents and message and processing relevant information and message, expressing themselves orally and in writing stressing on social, axiological and professional aspects.

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Teacher's Folder: SHORT STORIES FOR TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

Activities:

Warm up

Title work. Biblical allusion. Language and lesson comments.

Pre-reading. Read the first paragraph. Comment on your impression.

While reading. Read the text once.



A. What is your impression now as compared to your expectations after reading the first paragraph?

B. What reading skill did you resort to in this first reading you had?

C. Comment in two's the feelings that arouse in you as you read the story.

Second reading. Answer the following questions. Prepare your answers in trios:

1. Why do we sometimes take people for granted?

2. What makes the author realize the hard way what had happened with his father?

3. Draw a chart and transfer to it the characteristics of the Dad in the story (Find out later as

Homework 1. Enquire with your professors of FL teaching the technical name of this type of activity. You can also read Teaching English as an International Language by Abbott et al.)

- What happened when the author was thirteen? Did it happen to any of you? Explain.

- Where in the text can you spot the turning-point in the author's attitude towards his father?

- Why do you believe it happened? Use your knowledge of Pedagogy and Developmental Psychology to answer!

Post-reading.

According to Terroux and Howards (1989), there are five types of questions. Which ones do you see in the set you just answered? Which types are missing? Prepare them! (the teacher will activate the types of questions with the students' help – literal, reorganizational, inferential, personal, general. He/she will offer/ elicit from the students a brief definition of each if necessary, and examples)

Choose from the text:

a. The fragment that impresses you the most. Say why. (individual work)

b. The fragment that connects you the most with your life. Explain. (individual work)

c. The fragment you would prepare to use with your own students from an axiological view. Justify. (teamwork)

From any of the previous fragments you selected:

A. Prepare six Y/N and six WH questions.



B. Prepare a R, W, IDK exercise. (five items).

C. Select a sentence and transcribe it phonetically!

Spot the main pronunciation problems in the sounds of the sentence you chose. Which correction techniques would you use?

Follow up.

Write notes to:

1. The writer of the story. Compliment him on the positive change he had.
2. The father in the story. Compliment him on the boy he has and the importance of a good parent-child relationship.
3. A student of yours who has issues with his mother. He is 16, she is 40.

Simulated situation

One of your students is having trouble concentrating. His oral expression is not ok. He is turning more and more timid. When you approach him he says he has problems with his father (son, 13; father, 46). He also confesses to you that he does not like English, much less speaking in front of others.

A. Identify the obstacles you have as a teacher in this situation.

B. Identify what is good in the situation.

C. Propose suggestions for the boy to improve and pass your subject: more preparation, more concentration, presentation of reports in private, etc.

D. How would you approach the father-son problem? Can you "interfere"? What subjects you have taken may help you in this?

E. Oral expression in English is central in Senior High. Do you consider the skill is a good one for carrying out a Term/Diploma/research Paper? Why? Base your arguments on your practice teaching experiences and the subjects you've taken in class.

Homework 2.

Write an essay on the role of parents in upbringing their children and the role of teachers in the schools today. Hand it in or send it via email to me (migueloi@uho.edu.cu).



TEXT: Thou Shalt Honor Thy Father

We take people for granted and fail to see the beauty and meaning they naturally bring into our daily lives. It was only when my sister called me to let me know my father was very ill that I started to realize I had taken him for granted. I was working miles away and the call came in late at night so I waited for daybreak to start my journey home. That night was a harrowing experience of anguish and revelation as the hours ticked slowly away. It was then that the first flashbacks of my childhood memories visited me...

My father was kind yet very strict with my misbehavior or encroachments. He never missed a single occasion to please my mother with poetry-reading sessions and serenades, followed by bowls of chocolate candies from which my sister and I always received a generous share.

He was the best Daddy there is, as many kids would call theirs and would be proud to show off to their classmates... But at thirteen I sort of changed, distancing myself away from a father who was always busy but had found time anyway to take me with him on his journeys and try to teach me things.

Even after these many years I have not been able to clearly figure out the reasons of my behavior. I blame it on my edgy temperament and the long seasons that I was spending away from home. All I know is that it was there, like a wall of bricks I had laid between the two of us, and it seemed to be there even when I definitely moved out to another town.

That is when my sister phoned me. I took it calmly at first, almost incredulously, hoping it was not my father she was talking about. Crude reality hit me below the belt: There was my father – the best Daddy there is – hooked up to plastic tubes, attached to a life-supporting machine, cooped up in a gloomy hospital room. The vision of vitality I had always had of my father was brutally collapsing before my eyes. The man in front of me was an old man, engulfed by a death-like aura...

Days and nights slipped away as we took care of him. Those many hours forged a revitalization of our relationship. As a son I learned to show and administer affection and attention to my father. I saw my father's return to life and to my heart... My father recovered with the months, after he underwent two life-risking operations.

I still cherish those days at the hospital when I took him for slow-paced walks. He would confidently place his hand upon my shoulder and I would gently hold him around the waist. Never had I been so emotionally attached to my father. Doctors, nurses, orderlies, patients, would pause and smile at such a harmonious father-son relationship. Father and son embraced, conquering inches, conquering life, conquering each other.

Yes, I had taken my father for granted. I had forgotten that having him at my disposal was not everything, when I ought to have patted him on the back and told him, Hey, Dad, I love you; and



I ought to have tried to get the most out of our lives together. We needed that—I needed that. I had let years go by before life struck me like lightning, making me realize that living means also sharing and loving others openly, giving our all and receiving the same.

Today, I feel redeeming warmth coming from those moments when my father and I became entirely interrelated beings after I had been a blind, haughty adolescent for so long. I am grateful he is here now to share my life with him. And to honor him even when death do us part.

Conclusions

This paper intended to delve on the conception of authentic texts for teaching reading in foreign language contexts. The authors presented various authoritative definitions of the term, unveiled possible variants “outside the box” towards a more flexible perspective on text selection, bringing to the forefront broader proposals.

Arguments in favor of a new classification for authentic text selection and examples of allegedly “alien” texts and their implementation in class (lessons and activities), complete the paper’s aims.

Without intending to impose on teachers the proposal made, the authors expound their points of view based on sources, experience and trial implementation in class, which has been satisfactory. Researching and science allow to push the boundaries of knowledge towards a more comprehensive, exploratory stance in teaching foreign languages, but also in life.

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Conflict of interests

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests

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Miguel Ángel Olivé Iglesias (principal author): Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing- Original draft preparation, Writing- Reviewing and Editing.

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