

# Transfer

## Main Objectives

The course aims at introducing simple language skills in primary schools.

Each handbook in this collection is a helpful teaching resource for assistants who have not received formal training in the teaching of their own language. The assistant's work may have great impact on pupils' attitudes to learning therefore practical advice is given on how to run the class.

The lessons and activities are designed to ensure a positive approach towards the new language and culture. "Nothing succeeds like success", and indeed the aim of this guide is to enable both students and assistants to go forward into the discovery of the new language with interest and enjoyment.

## Description – directions for use

Some guidelines for the user of this book

The Transfer collection has been designed to help student teachers introduce their own language and culture to children of other languages and cultures. It is important to insist upon good beginnings in all fields of acquisition.

Culture does not mean providing facts and figures about a country nor even presenting its artistic master-pieces although they do contribute as a whole. Culture is expressed naturally through the student's very being, in the way he speaks and thinks and acts, therefore he must be aware of the following :

- the impact his presence has on the child, and the child's first impressions of this experience
- the importance of these first steps which may determine language learning patterns and attitudes to foreign cultures

the value of his presence which inevitably conveys an atmosphere which a non-native speaker cannot convey. The pupil learns through the senses as well as through the intellect and his memory works in an impressionistic way.

It is important therefore to provide him with authentic language situations which are easy to memorise.

It should be an enjoyable experience which impresses the pupil deeply enough for him to retain the language involved and wish to use it again. It should have meaningful impact and be appealing to the ear, easy to understand and say, whilst coming within the child's range of interest.

Every user of the handbook will find some teaching material he feels comfortable with. The lessons range from explicit step by step teaching guides to plays, songs and poems which can be produced and taught once the teacher gains confidence. The material is always authentic and child-friendly, aimed at developing a true intercultural relationship in the classroom.

This book is composed of a series of themes around which lessons and activities are to be organised and they range from theatrics and outdoor games to quiet classroom activities.

Guidelines and variety are offered to the user so he may choose in function of circumstance. There is no strict linear progression so he may choose appropriate themes according to timetable and season and the logistics of his teaching environment. This book's strength lies in the solid teaching strategies used in encouraging language acquisition; namely through song, storytelling, playacting, creative production, flashcards and simple work sheets . Dancing, miming, playing and integrating verbal and body language into the lessons are part of the holistic approach which is learning through body, mind and soul. Thus the memory functions better because its many sources are tapped i.e. visual, tactile, auditive, etc. The language assistant's presence is the first contact the students may have from outside their country which is not media based. Invite them to express what they already know about your country. Try to convey the enjoyment of speaking another Language- remember what Yeats said...

*Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.*

### **A note about the compact disk recording which goes with this book**

The CD has been designed to help the teacher use the songs and stories and poems in the book. Other useful items like the recording of the days of the week and the months of the year and girls' and boys' names have been included.

When the student teacher leaves, the CD will be a useful memory aid for the class teacher and pupils. Listening and understanding the new language is as important as speaking it. The CD will provide a useful source of listening and pleasure, so time should be set aside for listening and imagining, listening and remembering as well as listening and joining in the singing.

After having conducted a lesson, it is a good idea to have the pupils sit quietly (perhaps with their eyes closed)

and simply listen to a poem or a rhyme and try to imagine the scene it evokes. This is a restful exercise for both teacher and pupil and helps the auditory memory. The recorded stories are simple but require a little more preparation and the storytelling skills of the teacher. It is important to encourage the pupils to listen carefully and try to follow the story. This does not mean the pupils should understand every single word. The memory maps are designed to provide the main features of the story and can be copied on the board before listening or as the story unfolds either with words or drawings. Flashcards are also provided at the end of the book to help with the comprehension of the stories.

### **Making the language learning an active experience**

The language content of each lesson is simple and authentic.

Time should be left after a lesson for discussion and comment. This awareness of what is to be done and why, and decision making is an important part of the learning process.

Together pupils and teachers should decide what is to be retained. This can be part of a song, a phrase or two or a question and answer contained in the piece the teacher has chosen to work with

The pupils are invited to recall or express and discuss the language content they have learned for example: the couplets of a rhyme can be distributed so that the learning load is not too heavy.

The pupils may enjoy practising in twos or threes together as most of the language is practical and involves talking to each other or telling stories and singing songs, etc.

Everyone likes to sing and hum a tune.

The keeping of a tune in one's head is an invaluable technique for language learning. Singing it over and over and learning a new verse is not fastidious; this is an active revision technique more rewarding than any homework. The children can be invited to teach the song at home or to their peers.

These few hints should be borne in mind to ensure quality time between you and your pupils. Your presence is the key to the opening of their new horizons. Both you and they have much to give, to transmit and to transfer to each other. Enjoy your time spent in this new country. Teaching is a wonderful, rewarding experience.

### **Before you begin...**

It is important...

- To keep your sense of humour (laugh and the world laughs with you).
- To encourage a good learning environment.
- To tell the students who you are and where you come from and help them discover the limitations of stereotypes.
- To tell them exactly what you are trying to do.
- To discuss participation and active listening (how to listen).
- To encourage their responsiveness and cooperation. - To tell the students what you think they should do to make your time together successful.
- To try to involve their teacher in what you wish to do with their class. Aim for active cooperation.

It is not quite true that children learn a second language naturally. However, this may happen if they are in the second language host country. You will not be with them long enough for this to happen. They have to be aware of what is going on and that their learning is an active experience. Each theme is covered by a series of lessons based on authentic material which comes within the child's range of interest. Rhymes, songs and poetry are the best way of introducing constructive language patterns which are meaningful, leaving aside sophisticated classroom techniques at this early stage. They express the culture you are supposed to be conveying. Children love singing, and music is a universal language. Learning a song, even one simple short verse is a great achievement. The tune provides the framework which guarantees the rhythm of the phrasing, the intonation and accentuation. The music deeply impresses the auditory memory and controls the authentic shape and sound of the words it carries. The songs and rhymes constitute a repertoire like a 'sound bank' which should be practiced and learned well enough to be recalled at will.