



EngLife:
Strengthening Teachers' Digital Readiness
for a Lifetime English Language Education
Project No: 2020-1-PL01-KA226-SCH-095824

The Englife Methodology



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the European Union

The Ethical Framework

EngLife methodology encourages ethical use of technology in order to limit:

- misinformation;
- misuse of personal information; and to promote:
- use of AI and ML tools;
- use of autonomous technology;
- moral and ethical use of data, information and resources;
- ethical use of copyrighted material and licences in the domain of software (Free Software, Open Source software and Proprietary Software) and intellectual property;
- the freedom to distribute, study, change and improve digital technology used for teaching and learning;
- data security and data privacy.

Disclaimer

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Introduction

This Methodology Framework is a response to the need of teachers and learners for a more inclusive approach to teaching in a digital age, now more pronounced than ever before. With effective utilisation of existing professional knowledge and skills and incorporation of the proposed new methodology, the approach looks to use both the students' and teachers' existing online expertise and presence.

The Methodology proposes to fuse the traditional model of classroom teaching and an already existent online domain, currently providing younger learners and their teachers with an untapped resource of language production, into a more structured methodology beneficial to students and teachers alike.

Thus the Methodology becomes a vital and inevitable tool for language learning which requires calibration, research and regulation, all areas of which this project addresses and in this intellectual output compiles into a coherent methodology.

Its **output** is a methodology published online, while its **outcome** is a comprehensive, innovative approach to language teaching which can take place both inside and outside of the classroom (and, in certain crisis situations, temporarily entirely online), which strengthens the profession of English language teachers in secondary education world-wide.

The EngLife project a) developed, b) tested and c) refined a comprehensive approach to an English language programme design which we hope would contribute to the development of the profession of English language teachers, at the same time providing solutions relevant to today's generation of students.

The test phase of the Methodology involved a designated student body from each EngLife partner school for a semester-long sequence of online meetings and joint work. The teachers participating in the project led classes using digital resources previously not systemically used to engage students. Online interactions served as a digital resource and as a platform of international and intercultural communication between teachers and students from participating schools.

In the experimental semester, the national teams of teachers and their students (Polish, Italian, Greek and Serbian) worked together on developing language skills related to Sustainable Development Goals. This approach supported SDG 4.7 which states that we must "ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development". The teams decided to discuss climate change throughout the semester and EngLife Methodology examples reflect the discussion on the current state of environment.

The EngLife Methodology Summary

EngLife is an innovative and inclusive methodology whose primary goal is to effectively integrate technology as a medium for language learning both in and outside the classroom. The methodology puts emphasis on engaging and motivating students towards life-long learning and 21st century life skills.

EngLife aims at diverting students' inclination to use technology merely for entertainment away towards using it for didactic purposes, thus encouraging and motivating them to become autonomous learners. Their active involvement might be further achieved by providing access to authentic sources that match their interests and experiences.

Training teachers to successfully use technology in the language learning process may be implemented by providing them with positive reinforcement based on relevant tools.

Teachers who already know and use the methodology can help other teachers in their working environment with learning it through a Train-the-Trainer module. Thanks to that, teachers will be able to consciously select, adapt and use digital tools with a clear understanding of the intended outcomes, so that students:

- engage in meaningful activities that promote learning beyond the classroom;
- develop skills and confidence to use technology for learning;
- deal with ethical issues related to the use of technology.



Image source: Getty Images

The EngLife Roadmap - Overview

The EngLife Methodology can be envisaged in 5 steps:

1. First of all, **evaluate what you currently have** in your programme, cycle or an individual lesson.
2. Then, you would need to **decide what kind of a teacher you want to be** (see Framework of digital competencies for the self-assessment tool). It is essential that you honestly answer questions we have gathered in the Self-Assessment Tool of Competencies of an English Language Teacher for the Future.
3. In the third step, **establish what your students need**. Talk to your students about their needs and expectations. Pause to think how to adjust your language teaching material to the current reality, to the kind of a world you teach your students for.
4. Finally, **choose the technological and other tools** to help you achieve your and your students goals! You may use our Digital Resources Repository to choose appropriate solutions.
5. **And then endlessly repeat!**








Image source: CDC

The EngLife Roadmap - Step by Step

Evaluating your repertoire

Evaluating your programme, cycle or an individual lesson requires a look at your resources: learning theories, pedagogical approaches and content.

Check:

-  What learning theory you use/prefer
-  What pedagogy you employ
-  What is your pedagogical plan
-  What content you use to support your teaching
-  What kinds of technology you use and for what purpose

To do that, use the [Mapping Language Teaching and Learning](#), an EngLife tool, preferably together with your colleagues at your school,

A **learning theory** is a set of ideas about how people learn and retain information.

There are quite a few approaches to how people learn and they are phrased in a variety of ways and order. We shall consider **three basic theories**, which pave way for more detailed and/or combined approaches. They are: behaviourism, cognitive constructivism and social constructivism. They can be summarised as follows (from GSI Teaching & Resource Center, University of California at Berkeley, USA).

	Behaviorism	Cognitive Constructivism	Social Constructivism
View of knowledge	Knowledge is a repertoire of behavioral responses to environmental stimuli.	Knowledge systems of cognitive structures are actively constructed by learners based on pre-existing cognitive structures.	Knowledge is constructed within social contexts through interactions with a knowledge community.
View of learning	Passive absorption of a predefined body of knowledge by the learner. Promoted by repetition and positive reinforcement.	Active assimilation and accommodation of new information to existing cognitive structures. Discovery by learners is emphasized.	Integration of students into a knowledge community. Collaborative assimilation and accommodation of new information.
View of motivation	Extrinsic, involving positive and negative reinforcement.	Intrinsic; learners set their own goals and motivate themselves to learn.	Intrinsic and extrinsic. Learning goals and motives are determined both by learners and extrinsic rewards provided by the knowledge community.
Implications for teaching	Correct behavioral responses are transmitted by the teacher and absorbed by the students.	The teacher facilitates learning by providing an environment that promotes discovery and assimilation/accommodation.	Collaborative learning is facilitated and guided by the teacher. Group work is encouraged.

The popularity of English Language Methodology (ELT) in recent times can be attributed to its more contextualised and meaning focused approach. In fact, explained simply, ELT methodology can be used for any kind of teaching that is focused on how learners learn rather than how teachers teach. The EngLife Methodology takes this approach a step further and argues for integration of technology to meet the needs and expectations of the 21st century learner. Some of the learning theories that this methodology derives inspiration from are:

Constructivism	argues that: learning takes place when learners themselves make sense of what they are learning
Social constructivism	maintains that: learning is a social, dynamic process, and that learners create meaning together, through interacting with one another
Cognitive learning theories	suggest that: people remember things more effectively if they spend more time thinking about them, and if their brains have to work harder to complete a task
Intake theory	suggests that: input which leads to learning should be meaningful, relevant and realistic -In terms of L2 (second language), it should also be at a slightly higher level of language than learners are able to understand
Input theory	proposes that: learners will learn language if they come across it frequently and if they take some time to process this language
Pushed Output	posits that: knowledge that is needed to speak about the topic will not come unless the learners are encouraged to produce spoken language in unfamiliar areas such as certain kinds of discourse, e.g. making poster presentation, making a podcast etc. When they are “pushed” to speak in such kinds of discourse, they tend to notice the gap that exists in their L2 knowledge.

Learning Theories, Pedagogical Approaches and EngLife

Pedagogy is the combination of what teachers do (by choosing teaching methods), what teachers ask students to do (by proposing learning activities), and how teachers measure student learning (learning assessments: assignments, projects, and other tasks). In the end, it is what the student does in reaction to what the teacher suggests that matters for the learning process. Teacher cannot “learn” the student; it is the student who actively learns. But what the teacher can do, is to clearly explain the subject matter and can make it interesting for the student to engage and absorb.

It is often said that genuine learning involves reading theories and observing the theories in action but it is still incomplete without actual active engagement such as doing a task,

practising and thinking retrospectively. EngLife methodology aims to build lesson plans that integrate and employ the understanding gained from the theories by manifesting them in learner-centred pedagogies and stimulating tools. Some examples include:

Learning Theory	Example of Pedagogy	Example of technology
Constructivism	Project-based learning	Canva
Social Constructivism	Collaborative learning	Padlet
Cognitive learning theories	Peer tutoring learning	Mentimeter
Intake theory	Gamification	Goosechase
Input theory	Blended learning	Ted-Ed
Pushed Output	Drama-based learning	OpenShot

The Pedagogical Plan in Language Teaching

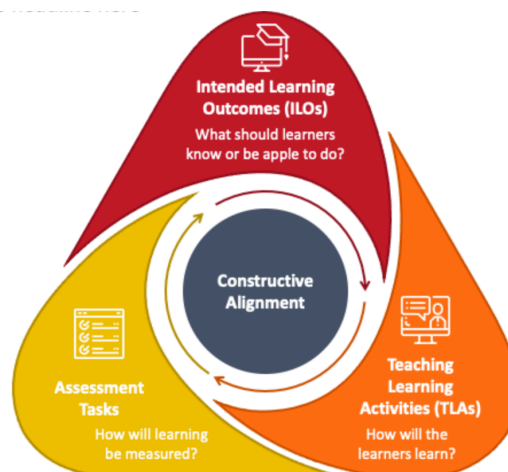
If we want to be concerned with what the student does as a result of our teaching, we must look closer at pedagogical approaches in language teaching:

- the communicative approach and the related task-based teaching methodology;
- cognitive-code approach;
- aural-oral approach.

In this project we have focused on the communicative approach and focused on Constructive Alignment and how Bloom's Taxonomy aids it.

Constructive Alignment as the *New Normal*

John Biggs* in his now fundamental paper on Constructive Alignment (Biggs, J. (2003). Aligning teaching for constructing learning. Higher Education Academy, 1(4), 1-4.) has shown that there must be a constant interplay between Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Teaching Learning Activities (TLAs) and Assessment Tasks.

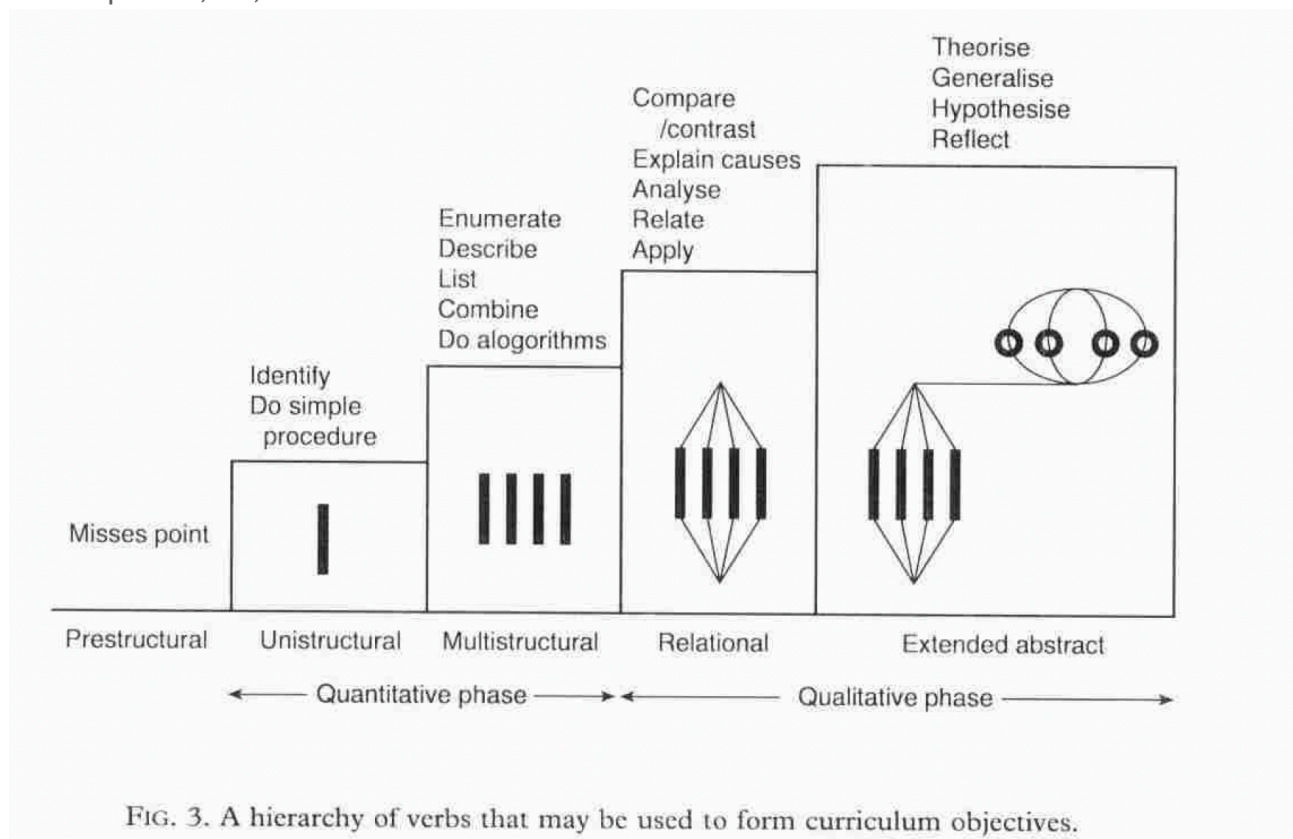


To achieve Constructive Alignment according to Biggs as cited above, you need to take three major steps:

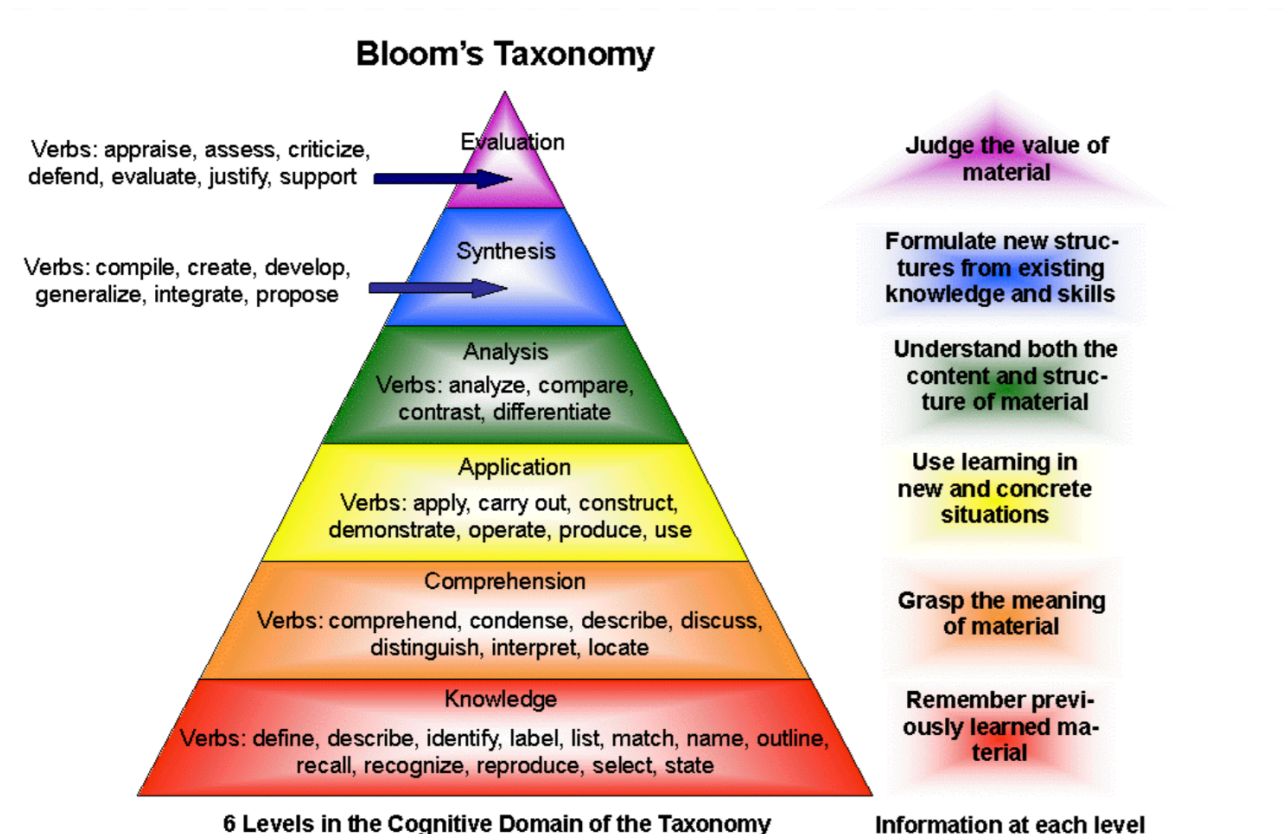
1. Define the intended learning outcomes (ILOs);
2. Choose teaching and learning activities supporting the ILOs;
3. Assess students' actual learning outcomes toward set ILOs.

Having a clear idea what you want your students to know and do is essential: you can define what your student needs to know about (f.ex. the English language grammar) and what they need to have a functioning understanding of (f.ex. when to use Past Continuous and when Past Perfect Continuous - and actually use it). It is crucial that you distinguish first for yourself the declarative and the functional knowledge you want your learners to possess as a learning outcome.

This is how Biggs pictured Constructive Alignment. Source: Biggs, J. (1999). What the Student Does: Teaching for Enhanced Learning. Higher Education Research & Development, 18, 57-75.

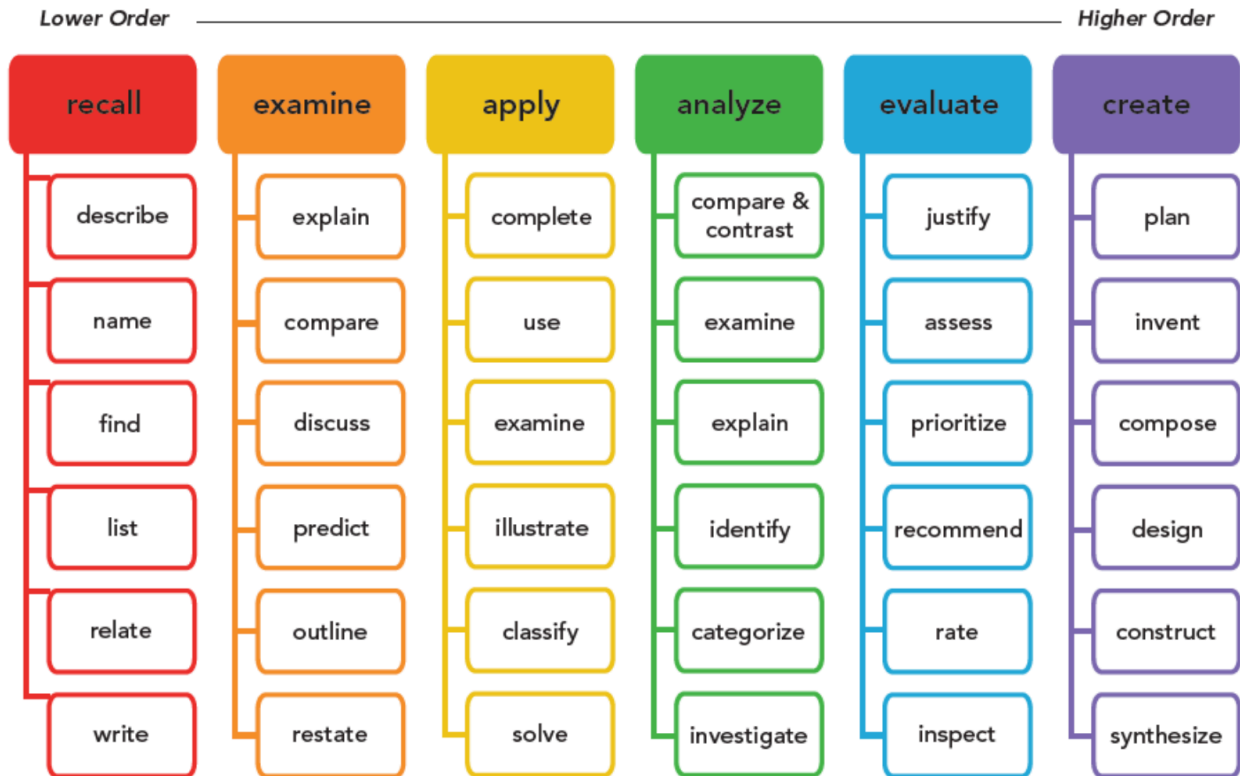


You may also use Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy to help you define how your learners might progress and the specific **1. intended learning outcomes**. See depiction below, based on: Bloom, B. S. (1956). "Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain." New York: David McKay Co Inc.



At the very top of the pyramid you may add the ability to create something entirely new; in language learning this might be new word creation. See the table below to discover what action verbs will describe what you should be looking for when assessing the progress of your learner. These action verbs, only the ones which can be observed and measured, will also help you choose the **2. teaching and learning activities**.

Generating LOs using *Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy* (adapted 2019)



Retrieved from <http://maasd.edublogs.org/2012/26/linking-ipads-blooms-taxonomy/>

Assessment of student learning is very much founded on the ILOs you choose. You will structure your assessment differently if you want your learner to recall knowledge or if you want them to be creative.

See our course ENGLIFE: Teaching English to Teens for more examples, case studies, videos and interactive activities.

Teachers' preparedness and abilities

Today, there are over 15 million English language teachers in the world. Is this a sufficient number? No! Many more are needed globally.

Key findings of the British Council report on The Future of English: Global Perspectives (April 2023) are below. See here for full report <https://www.britishcouncil.org/about/press/british-council-looks-future-english>:

- "English is the most widely spoken language in the world. It is the global language of communication and English is likely to retain this position for the next decade and beyond.

- English will continue to play an important role, increasingly doing so alongside other languages to provide rich linguistic opportunities for learners all over the world.
- **There is a strong connection between the desire to learn English and the need for teachers, even when new technologies are considered.**
- The private sector can fill the gaps in public sector language education provision and can increase opportunities for young people. However, the quality of some private provision is variable and the report recommends greater collaboration between public and private providers.
- Policy makers should continuously review the approach to assessing English proficiency to make sure assessment practices stay relevant for today's study, work and social interactions.
- **Technology has the potential to help greater numbers of students access language learning.** But the publication found that it also risks widening the **divide between people who have access to technology and those who do not.**
- Change is happening. The report notes that there has been a gradual, industry-led, **shift away from the ideal of mother tongue fluency towards a more applied and contextualised approach to language proficiency**^{1*}.

Communicating in English becomes one of the key life skills for the world today. Thus, your role as an EFL Teacher matters.

However, a number of questions remain:

- How to assess whether a professional, an English language teacher, has the desired competencies to teach in a generationally and culturally sensitive environment?
- What can be done to help teachers develop professionally?
- What competencies an English language teacher ought to have to teach in the contemporary English language classroom?

To help teachers and school managers answer such questions, we prepared a set of Competencies of English Language Teacher Today, which should guide these persons toward the answer. We hope that this tool will help English language teachers in performing a simple online check to see their level of knowledge and skill development against the definition. The result of our work is an online tool helping to increase in self-awareness among English language teachers about their own knowledge and skills related to their profession.

What are your digital competencies?

During the EngLife project, the team designed a [framework of digital competencies for the self-assessment tool](#).

This online tool is aimed at helping the English language teachers check their level of knowledge and skill development with regard to implementing digital technologies in different stages and aspects of teaching. Upon answering all questions by ticking the boxes, the teachers will receive a score for each section, with the overall score being added up at the end of the questionnaire and represented in the following manner:

1. The teacher will be able to see what **digital competence category** they currently belong to based on the percentile score, with a short description of the profile.
2. **The radar diagram** will outline the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher's digital competencies, showing the areas which require more development of competencies on teacher's part.

The tool for self-assessing digital competencies for English language teachers is ready to be used. Any teacher using the tool will find it highly beneficial in a form of self evaluation and a reminder to use digital technologies in their curricula. Teachers will be able to self evaluate their digital competencies multiple times if they wish to do so, as well as monitor their progression in the process of using digital technologies in the classroom and outside of it.

Download the [Self-Assessment Tool of Competencies of an English Language Teacher for the Future \(excel file\)](#) from the project website (output no. 3) to define your own competencies.





The needs of your students

A number of years ago marketing specialists in the USA begun talking about **generations** to properly address the potential customers. Social scientists joined the discussion to understand the differences in needs and behaviours of these groups in a broader social context.

Generations are less about age and more about the description of persons' values, leadership styles, education preferences, personal needs and other categories.





Today the concept remains largely applicable to Western societies; f.ex. it rarely takes into consideration the fact of a highly uneven wealth and power distribution across the globe and armed conflicts, or even wars, going on outside of the Western world. Underprivileged regions have different access to education or technology.

Still, it is a concept worth looking at when trying to define who our students are.

				
	Baby boomer 1940–59	Gen X 1960–79	Gen Y (millennial) 1980–94	Gen Z 1995–2010
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postwar • Dictatorship and repression in Brazil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political transition • Capitalism and meritocracy dominate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalization • Economic stability • Emergence of internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobility and multiple realities • Social networks • Digital natives
Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idealism • Revolutionary • Collectivist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materialistic • Competitive • Individualistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globalist • Questioning • Oriented to self 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undefined ID • “Communaholic” • “Dialoguer” • Realistic
Consumption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideology • Vinyl and movies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status • Brands and cars • Luxury articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience • Festivals and travel • Flagships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniqueness • Unlimited • Ethical

McKinsey&Company

Generation Z is the one you will work at the moment. See what their “truths” are:

<p>‘Undefined ID’ “Don’t define yourself in only one way”</p>  <p>Expressing individual truth</p>	<p>‘Communaholic’ “Be radically inclusive”</p>  <p>Connecting through different truths</p>	<p>‘Dialoguer’ “Have fewer confrontations and more dialogue”</p>  <p>Understanding different truths</p>	<p>Realistic “Live life pragmatically”</p>  <p>Unveiling the truth behind all things</p>
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McKinsey&Company

Based on the assumption that generations exist in the above-defined sense, will their needs be the same? Is what you teach relevant for your students? Is how you teach possible to engage the students?

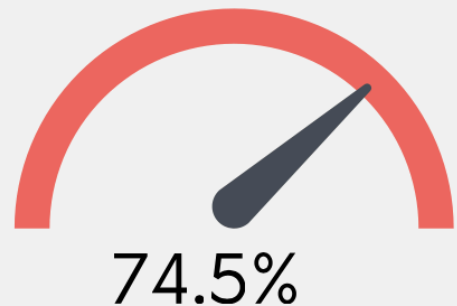
In this third step, you not only have to know where your students come from but you also need to **establish what your students need** from your class. Talk to your students about their needs and expectations. Pause to think how to adjust your language teaching

methods and materials to the current reality, to the kind of a world you teach your students for.

In our project's [Analysis](#) on what is the potential for student learning with the use of technology, we found that although teens use digital technology to communicate through and play with or entertain themselves, they rarely use it to learn. This suggests that there is a huge potential to use that online time for learning that is also fun.

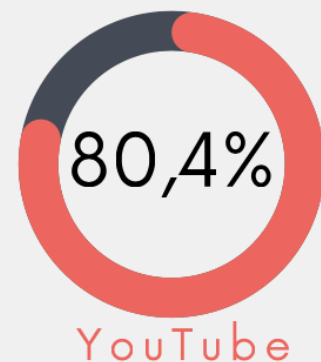
It also showed what they need English for - communication.

The majority of the participants agreed that being able to use spoken and written English for communicating purposes is of extreme importance.



The Analysis also demonstrated that the preferred medium for teens today are visual media and that they typically use that time spent on watching content on the internet is for entertainment:

YouTube scored the highest among the most widely used apps and websites by high school students during their free time. Instant messaging apps follow, immediately followed by Instagram.



At the same time teens strongly believe that technology could help them learn English. So if they say so themselves, why not use it to teachers' advantage?

Technology at your service

Digital technology, like any other technology in the classroom, is just a tool to illustrate the point in the teaching and learning process. Digital educational technology in the classroom poses some issues for the teachers as majority of them are not what we call “digital natives”, i.e. persons born into a time when internet was already available. The teachers on average have less knowledge about technology than their students. With the right kind of preparation, however, the teachers might be poised to possess more knowledge and skills when educational technology comes into play.

Thus, after checking what are the learning theories and pedagogical approaches employed to serve the teaching and learning process and after discovering what one’s own predispositions and abilities are to teach in a digital classroom, it is time to look at EdTech - educational technology.

Changing your class to include EdTech will require time, patience and resources.

Time is what many teachers around the world have little of so you need to use it wisely. To help teachers with choosing the technology that is best for them and their teaching approach, we created a [Digital Resources Repository](#).

What online tools are out there? What quality and value do they represent? How can they be included in the methodology of teaching English with the aid of technology? The Digital Resources Repository categorises the online solutions according to various filters, enabling teachers to use it quickly and efficiently.

In the EngLife project, we reviewed existing digital resources and provided their definitions and application for the wide use from our website. The Digital Resources Repository is an online database in the form of a searchable website available globally to English language teachers, strengthening their teacher's toolbox.

What remains up to you is to **choose the technological and other tools** to help you achieve your goals and those of your students.

The never-ending cycle

The constant review, improvement, implementation of an adjusted programme does not end. It is important that you set a time periodically (for example, at the end of your cycle), to see if all went as you wanted and as students expected. Do not forget to ask them what they thought about your teaching and their learning, what were the difficulties and what went easily and why.

Pedagogical Approaches Compatible with EngLife Methodology

Please note that all approaches presented below allow for the use of technology both inside and outside of the classroom.

Blended Learning

Target group

14-18 year-old students

Tools

The online component could be carried out using various tools. Many teachers opt to use a learning management system like the ones used for e- learning. Recommended tools are: Wakelet for sharing materials, Quizlet, Jamboard and Liveworksheets for assessment.

Description

Blended learning is a combination of traditional, brick-and-mortar, learning and teaching and e-learning. It is also known as hybrid learning or mixed-mode instruction, and is intended to combine the best of online and offline teaching environments. There are many models that can be used but the one most typically used at schools with teenage students is the arrangement where students work in class with the teacher as they always would, but additionally they also access online materials and activities. This is different from just doing homework, because the online component can be more independent and not as reliant on classroom instruction.

Aims/Objectives

The aim of this method of instruction is for the teacher to enhance the instruction by using digital online tools in addition to giving students time, in a structured manner outside of class. The online work is usually done by students outside the classroom, after regular school hours, at their own pace, which is wonderful for teaching self-discipline and modeling correct online behaviour. Blended learning allows for assessment to also be moved online if necessary.

Strengths and weaknesses

The biggest weakness of blended learning is that it requires access to technology minimal digital literacy skills on the part of the students and the teacher. Sometimes students'

privacy as well as school data-protection policies have to be taken into account and might limit the choice of tools and platforms.

The greatest strength achieved from moving part of the learning to an online environment is prolonging the time students can interact with the educational content by providing additional practice (especially useful when learning new vocabulary) but also freeing up lesson time for tasks other than memorisation. For instance, students can do the tests online, or watch lectures or educational materials meaning they arrive prepared to engage in the lesson using higher order thinking skills such as 'critical thinking' rather than simply 'remembering and understanding'.

Method of Assessment

Blended teaching and learning as a method of instruction is best assessed after a longer period of use, so the teacher and the students can be aware of the benefits of additional time and various new media on their overall performance.

Final Remarks

Blended learning has become extremely important during the COVID-19 pandemic, when schools had to be very flexible mixing online and in-class work, resulting in new synchronous and asynchronous learning styles developing. For instance, some schools wanted to allow students who were staying at home to connect with their classes for the lessons that were being taught meaning that many schools have adapted Blended learning to some degree.



Image source: ESN

Collaborative Learning

Target

14-15 year-old students (B2-C1 level)

Tools

- Online: Zoompad
- Miro
- Padlet
- Mindmeister
- and similar sites

Description

A collaborative (or cooperative) learning approach involves pupils learning and working together on activities or tasks in a group small enough to ensure that everyone participates. Pupils in the group may work on separate tasks contributing to a common outcome, or work together on a shared task. This is distinct from unstructured group work.

Aims/Objectives

A collaborative approach can improve communication, save time, reduce effort, improve working relationships and provide a better experience for people who use health and social care services.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

Peer learning - In group work, students will learn from their fellow students. Sometimes peers will be able to explain concepts or ideas to their fellow students better than a lecturer or teacher.

Improves critical thinking - During the group work process students will be expressing their opinions or ideas with the other students in the group providing feedback. This feedback to each student will include critique as well as the interpretation of the opinions or ideas expressed. The final piece of group work will be based on the total opinions and ideas discussed.

Enhances problem solving - Each piece of group work provided for collaborative learning will require some problem solving. Every member in the group will need to help solve the problem in order to complete the task.

Improves communication skills - Working in groups to learn will encourage people to improve their communication skills. They will need to learn how to communicate their opinions or ideas, how to listen to other people's opinions or ideas and provide feedback.

Improves cultural awareness - People from different backgrounds and cultures may have different ways to learn as well as different opinions or ideas than other people in the group. By working in groups, these differences will be highlighted which will not only improve their awareness but also understanding of other cultures.

Weaknesses

People learn at different speeds - It is true that students learn at different speeds, faster learners may feel frustrated when group work takes longer than needed for their individual learning. However, by providing the opportunity for group learning, fast finishers within the group may have the opportunity to explain something to another student that a teacher or lecturer has struggled to explain to the same creating both a learning and teaching role among peers.

Someone may be in charge of the group - In group situations the best case scenario is that no one is in charge and everyone works together to complete the task. In some groups someone decides to be in charge, which can cause group tension. Teachers and lecturers can avoid students being put in charge of groups by stating the objective at the start of the task and by encouraging other people in the group to get involved in decision making.

Some groups may struggle if they don't have group work skills - If people have never worked in groups before, they won't have the skills to work together. Teachers and lecturers should help initially by explaining the task and the aims of the group work required. This should help spark conversation on the required task and make participants aware that this is a skill that must be learned.

Introverts may struggle - Social loafing is when someone in group working situations puts in less effort than the rest of the team. This can occur when group members don't get along with each other and wish to avoid interaction so choose to participate as little as possible. Additionally, introverts can also struggle in groups to get their voice heard. Teachers or lecturers can address these problems by putting people who are introverts or tend to be social loafers in groups they will work well while encouraging them throughout the process.

Method of Assessment

There can be three types of assessment, each with a different purpose:

1. Formative assessment represents diagnostic testing, which can be either formal or informal, i.e. students can but don't have to be given a grade for the learning activity. What matters is that both student and teacher receive valuable feedback, which enables them to

keep track of student progress and monitor student achievement. Feedback shows if students have mastered a concept or if they still need to work on it. It also gives teachers an insight into their teaching and shows if they have to modify their activities. Constant feedback on student performance is crucial for students to enhance their learning.

2. Summative assessment refers to the assessment of the learning: students take an exam which measures the knowledge they gained over a particular period of time and for which students will be graded. Traditional classroom is based mostly on summative assessment, whereas in the 21st century classroom summative and formative assessment should be well-balanced.

3. Self-assessment. By reflecting on their learning students become aware of weaknesses and are motivated to work harder to improve. Teachers should teach students how to assess themselves, because many find it difficult to objectively assess their own skills and knowledge.



Image source: Platon Schools

Drama-Based Methodology

Target

15-18 year-old students

Tools

Online: Podcasts, radio plays, videos, sound databases; apps that display texts and allow for storyboarding

Offline: Plays, scripts, books, realia, clay, props

Description

The last ten years has seen an uptick in Performance Methodology or Drama-Based Methodology being used and made more essential in language learning. Performance Methodology relies on neuroscientific research, different learning styles, the connection between brain and body, and addresses that “contextual learning helps us find our place in society in relationship to other peoples and cultures” (van de Water et al, 2015). Techniques included in the methodology include performance art, drama for social peace and justice, linear drama and process-oriented drama.

This can be realised in the classroom in different ways. The most traditional is a teacher introducing a play to a class, casting the roles, and rehearsing and performing the play. There are many more activities than this. Students can work on dialogues with different voices, intonations, and explore the proper pitch and delivery of a text. Students can work on tongue twisters and pronunciation through vocal warm ups and sound games. Devised theatre can also be incorporated, working off a student's life, realia, photos, drawings, writing, or brainstorm. These activities can work over the course of a semester, a week, or even as once-off workshops for a class.

Aims/Objectives

The aims of this methodology is to link the brain and body when learning, to connect knowledge to emotions, and kinaesthetic memory. A student acting out an encounter in a shop in class is more likely to physically recall the interaction and thus the dialogue, when they are in the real-life situation.

Studies have shown that meaning conveyed when one's emotions are heightened, such as grave sadness or great happiness, are more likely to be remembered. Therefore, using vocabulary in a play when one is acting upset, angry or jubilant, will help implant the lexicon in students' minds.

As well as enhancing memory, learning can also be more corporal. For example, instead of sitting in class for 45 minutes, students can walk, stretch, toss a ball, and move about. The students will be physically more involved as well as mentally and emotionally.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- This method is useful and beneficial for all students, but especially aural and kinaesthetic learners, who tend to be ignored in traditional teaching methods.
- This method tends to be a surprising jolt for students, and they tend to be more excited and involved in lessons than normal.

- Research shows that being emotionally connected to learning enhances memory, which is useful for language learning.

Weaknesses:

- Much teacher training is needed.
- At the onset, more preparation time is required.

Method of Assessment

There is not one concrete form of assessment for drama-based therapy, rather, a gradual improvement in language learning can be measured. This can be done through traditional forms of assessment, as well as more activities to check understanding. There can be assessments of learning, for learning and as learning incorporated into the learning process.

Students' feelings should also not be ignored in this methodology. A successful outcome should be one in which students also feel more comfortable and confident with English as well as improving their lexicon and grammar.

Final Remarks

Performance Methodology is becoming more popular every year, as research reveals how beneficial it can be for memory, learning, and understanding. Though there is work to implement it in a school, the results can be very obviously advantageous.

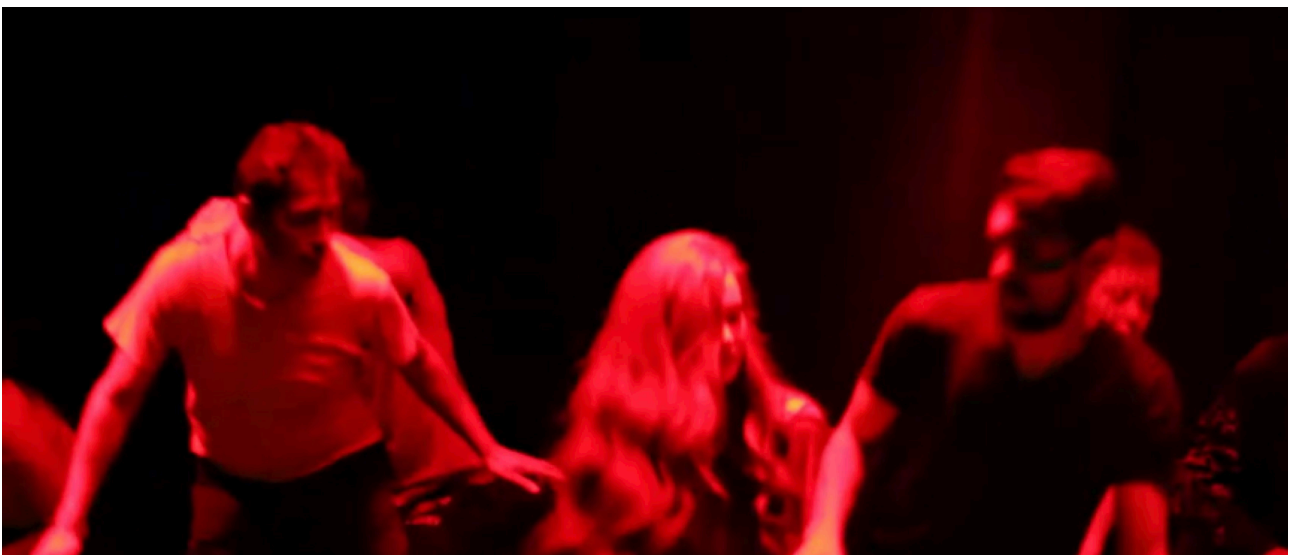


Image source: Atlantic Language

Gamification

Target

14-18 year-old students

Tools

Smart phone; software platforms; tablet; PC

Description

“If we have fun, we get better results” this is the principle of Gamification. It is a method that introduces an element of play into study, which makes for a fun experience. Gamification changes the mindset of learning being a chore into something enjoyable that students can look forward to. Gamification represents an extremely effective tool capable of conveying messages of various types, depending on needs, and inducing active behaviour on the part of users, enabling them to achieve specific goals, personal or business. The active involvement of the user should always be central to this approach.

Gamification in school settings promotes socialisation with other students and enables pupils to develop greater empathy through witnessing the success and failures of their peers. This method allows a faster long-term memorisation of acquired notions and in addition the student can actually see progress and at the same time visible mistakes become a stimulus to improve rather than a serious failure.

Aims/Objectives

Gamification is a method that motivates students by using video game design and game elements in learning environments. The activities used enhance engagement and motivation.

Interactive and a collaborative form of education. The students find themselves in an artificial environment that resembles a specific real-life situation so that they can acquire situation-related knowledge and skills. The criteria for the acquisition of knowledge and skills can be established, and it is possible to observe whether participants achieve the required level of knowledge.

As it is a method focused on the student, the results can be achieved by each student according to their own level.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- Great motivation and engagement of the student in the learning process.
- It includes quick thinking, making decisions and solving problems.
- It promotes socialisation with other students and enables pupils to develop greater empathy.
- It improves memory and concentration and students learn how to work together.
- It could be seen as a support to the teacher and an added value to allow all students to be involved in the lesson and keep high interest in all school subjects.

Weaknesses:

- Students who are not familiar with gaming could perform negatively or students could be distracted by the game.
- There can be the possibility of students developing video game addiction, or increase anxiety due to constant graded assessments.
- It is also widely accepted that while gamification is a useful tool it cannot be used exclusively to cover entire areas of the curriculum.

Method of Assessment

The evaluation of the students' performance in gamification can lead to more realistic results because there is no stress and anxiety during the activity. Students behave themselves freely without the stress of being judged.

The starting point of assessment is evaluation of the student's progress, beginning with elementary tasks and progressing to more complex ones. Immediate feedback can be gained through badge and scores. The student self-evaluates his performance and immediately understands where mistakes were made. There are both traditional assessment, such as standardised items (multiple-choice tests, true/false tests, short answers, and essays) and computer-based testing characterised by great efficiency, security, and immediate scoring.

Final Remarks

Gamification can be successful if students have proper digital skills and tools. It is important that students shouldn't consider it as a waste of time or just a game but an activity to learn in an entertaining way.

While Gamification definitely enhances motivation among most young learners, we should also be aware that not all students favour this method so we must aim to enthusiastically convey the benefits for its use with all potential learners.



Image source: ITT Malafarina, EngLife meeting at LO Dubiecko, Poland

Peer Tutoring

Target

15-18 year-old students

Tools

- Online: Screencastify
- Padlet
- ZUMPad
- EtherCalc
- Moodle
- GanttProject
- Discussions | Blackboard, Google Classroom
- Discord, WhatsApp, Telegram, Viber
- Meet, Zoom, Teams, Jitsi Meet
- Mote
- Google Drive, One Drive

Description

Docendo discimus is a Latin principle that translates to *the best way to learn is to teach*. This principle is the foundation of peer tutoring methodology.

Peer tutoring is one of the constructivist approaches to learning, which is based on the idea that knowledge is acquired through social interaction. It takes the form of cognitive co-construction in which students are grouped in dyads (or triads). A more competent peer mediates the new knowledge and the cognitive activity to the less competent peer. In such groupings, the more competent student takes the role of a tutor, and the less competent one becomes a tutee. In order for this methodology to be effective, there needs to be a clear focus on curriculum content and procedures on tutor-tutee interaction.

One of the most effective peer tutoring forms is reciprocal peer-tutoring, in which students alternate their roles of tutor/tutee. This form of peer tutoring can also be called Peer Assisted Learning Strategies, and entails that the dyads are made of students of the same ability and age. In addition, alternating roles keeps both the tutor and the tutee actively engaged in the learning process.

Other ways of pairing students are Cross-Age Peer Tutoring, in which an older student (tutor) works with a younger student (tutee), and Class-Wide Peer Tutoring, in which the entire class participates in a peer tutoring session simultaneously. In order for peer tutoring to be successful, peer tutors must receive proper training, as well-trained and experienced tutors use more appropriate explanations and tutoring behaviour.

Aims/Objectives

Aims are to make the learning process more independent, to develop students' communication skills, to develop students' critical thinking, to encourage students to reflect on their work and learn from their mistakes and to personalise learning.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- Motivates students' proactivity, self-regulation and independence in learning, as teachers transfer control to students
- Enhances the learning experience for both the tutor and the tutee
- Promotes metacognitive self-awareness
- Develops learner autonomy through correcting tutees' work
- More opportunities for linguistic reflection and development
- More interactivity, which is a step away from teacher-led instruction
- Encourages reflective engagement in the learning process, which helps students to accept responsibility for their own learning
- Students take initiative to plan and deliver learning activities
- Students learn how to review their learning and evaluate its effectiveness

Weaknesses:

- In technologically equipped classrooms where the interaction between peers is held online, there may be heavy reliance on the internet. connection
- Technical issues with the devices used in communication
- Tutors might not correct all mistakes their tutees make
- Unclear instructions and explanations given by the tutors who are not properly trained

Method of Assessment

In order to assess the effectiveness of the peer tutoring methodology, the peer tutoring sessions need to be held over a defined period of time, so that the data collected over that time can be analysed and compared to the initial data to track student progress.

During the designated period of peer tutoring, there should be a number of sessions of certain duration, in which the tutors and tutees will interact with each other, with peer reviewing, error correction and providing feedback on the tutors' part. The tutees should then correct the mistakes in their work. The error correction will mainly fall under the following categories: morph syntax, orthography, and lexicon, but depending on the goals set and the learning outcomes expected, it can be agreed that the corrections and feedback are suggested only for one of these categories.

Although peer tutoring methodology is student-centred, all sessions need to be supervised by teachers to ensure the instructions are followed closely and that the tutors and tutees understand and abide by their roles. Finally, the role of the teacher is vital in analysing the students' progress over the period of time and pointing out the language items and skills that have been improved during this period.

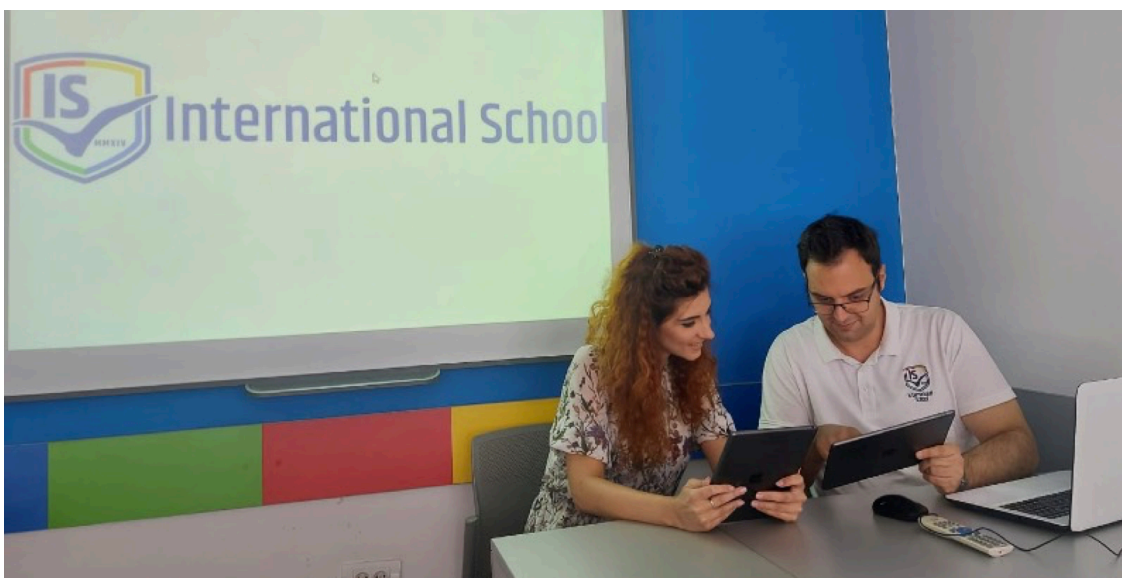


Image Source: International School in Belgrade, Serbia

Problem Solving

Target

15-18 year-old students

Tools

Online:

- Pugh Matrix: Free Interactive Decision-Making Tool
- Ben Franklin Method Decision Balance Sheet
- GitMind
- Creately: Online SWOT Analysis Creator
- Pareto Analysis: Chart Templates from Visual Paradigm
- Syncopation Software: DPL

Offline:

- Brainstorming
- Decision Tree
- Five Whys
- Histogram
- Flowchart
- Check Sheet
- Goals Grid
- Fishbone
- Benchmarking

Description

A problem-solving method of teaching or problem-based learning is the act of defining a problem; determining the cause of the problem; identifying, prioritising and selecting alternatives for a solution; and implementing a solution. In this method, students learn by working on problems. This skill allows students to gain new knowledge by facing the problems to be solved. They need to observe, understand, analyse, interpret, find solutions, and perform applications that lead to a holistic understanding of a concept. This

method develops scientific process skills as well as helping to develop a brainstorming approach to learning concepts.

Briefly, problem-solving is an ongoing activity in which we rely on what we know in order to discover what we do not know. It involves overcoming obstacles by generating hypotheses, testing those predictions, and arriving at satisfactory solutions. The problem-solving method involves three basic functions: seeking information, generating new knowledge and making decisions.

Aims/Objectives

Identify different problem solving styles. Identify methods appropriate for solving problems. Apply methods to specific problems. Apply problem solving skills when working with children.

Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths:

- This method is psychological and scientific in nature.
- It helps in developing good study habits and reasoning powers.
- It helps to improve and apply knowledge and experience.
- This method stimulates thinking of the student.
- It helps to develop the power of expression of the student.
- The student learns how to act in new situation.
- It develops healthy group dynamics through working together.
- Teachers become more familiar with the capabilities of each student.
- It develops analytical, critical and generalisation abilities of the student.

Weaknesses:

- This method is not suitable for lower classes.
- There is a lack of suitable books and references for students.
- It involves a lot of time and energy which may be difficult for teachers who are covering a prescribed syllabus to introduce to their classes.
- The method relies on the talent of the teacher to manage the activity well.
- There is always the possibility of coming to the wrong conclusion.
- The process involves cognitive problem solving skills and it is difficult to integrate movement to this methodology.

Method of Assessment

The implementation of problem-based learning (PBL) faces many challenges. Among the most important which need to be discussed and solved is the question of students'

assessment. Students are frequently shocked when they take part in its unusual procedure. It is often the similar for educators who take the first steps with this technique. Besides the challenge of creating a good problem, educators are faced with the task of deciding how to evaluate the technique's effectiveness and how to assess whether students have met the overall learning objectives for the course. Traditional assessment techniques are not effective nor adequate to measure students' learning experiences. It requires more complex techniques or approaches. Being the integral part of the whole process, the assessment is not easy to perform as tutors and students are often inexperienced and don't know how to do it. This can become particularly true when it comes to assessment of foreign language proficiency.

Final Remarks

A worthy problem draws on our students' talents, moves them towards their purpose and increases their skills. We face problems every day. The solutions to most problems lies within our capabilities. The challenge is to tackle the right problems. By taking a structured step-by-step approach to problem-solving, we develop skills which will enable us to tackle problems we may come up against in our studies as well as our personal life. With these skills, and a little hope and belief, it is possible to solve the bigger problems facing the world.



Image source: ViewPoint Center

Project Based Learning

Target

15-17 year-old students (level B2 – C1)

Tools

Padlet, Vocaroo, Canva

Description

When students learn a language through a subject other than English, this can be considered Project-Based Learning (PBL). More specifically, when students are not consciously studying language, but subconsciously absorbing the information for another means, they are taking part in this methodology. This can be used when students focus on another task, such as baking a cake. The recipe and instructions are encountered through English, but the end result for the students is not an assessment of the lexis related to baking, but a nicely baked strawberry cake. However, the students will have comprehended and assimilated the new vocabulary, verbs, and general phrases used throughout the process.

In a project-based approach students are presented with a real issue or problem and they must learn content to solve it. It is important to plan and outline the project carefully, so that the students understand what is expected from them as the outcome. In order to achieve that, the following technique can be applied: students are given a topic, they choose a role they will take on individually or as a group, they choose an audience related to their role and they choose a format they will use, such as a website, press release, podcast etc.

Aims/Objectives

The world is becoming increasingly project-based. More and more people, whether freelance or corporate, will work on project teams. In order to get students ready to smoothly enter this new job market, PBL should become one of the core methodologies incorporated in the process of teaching and preparing students for further life and work challenges.

PBL is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. The main goals of the methodology are to teach content knowledge and skills, and develop deeper understanding; to build, maintain and upgrade 21st century success skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration,

creativity/innovation, flexibility, relationship skills; to help students become aware of their own academic, personal and social development; to help students gain confidence for meeting new challenges in school and in life.

Strengths and weaknesses

When implemented well, project-based learning can positively impact students' academic and personal growth.

Strengths:

- offering a different way to explore a subject area, PBL can increase students' attitudes towards learning,
- students can utilise and develop 21-st century skills,
- working with peers without step-by-step directions from the teacher enhances autonomy and agency in learning,
- because the content connects to a meaningful experience versus an isolated assignment,
- provides fun learning opportunities, which lowers students' anxiety level in the learning process.

Weaknesses:

- time consuming design and assessment, time management challenge,
- projects often take longer time than anticipated,
- classroom management challenge,
- potentially poorer performance on standardised tests,
- students' lack of experience in project-based learning and their preferences for traditional-structured approach,
- teachers' lack of preparedness,
- uncomfortable for differently-abled students.

Method of Assessment

It is essential that the teacher should clearly state what is truly to be assessed. Formative and summative assessment should be applied.

Formative assessment should be used continually to identify where students are in relation to their goals, to give meaningful feedback, to ensure that they are getting the knowledge and the skills that they need. It can be obtained by giving students an opportunity to discuss their ideas, experiences and opinions in small groups and as a whole class while listening to them carefully. The teacher can also develop a rubric or checklist for student

work and share it with learners. Also, Quizzes, polls and short interviews can help the teacher make sure that students are on the right track to achieve the final goal. Formative assessment should not be graded. Instead, it should monitor progress and motivate students to keep learning.

At the end of the project summative assessment should be used to evaluate student learning, skills acquisition and academic achievements. Summative assessment will take the form of presentation, debate, press release, movie, court trial, etc. Unlike formative assessment, it should be graded.

Final Remarks

Contemporary work is often project-based work. It is therefore essential for students to have experience with project-based learning at school, along with the knowledge and skills required to be a successful project team member. In project-based approach learning, having students engaged in the project is more important than assessment. Seeing the teacher as the ultimate resource and using technology with purpose are must-follow rules for designing a PBL classroom.



Image source: LO Twarda



We highly recommend that you take the EngLife free course on [Teaching English for a Lifetime: How to use digital technology to teach teenagers](#). All issues presented here are explained there with the use of activities, case studies and examples.

References and Resources

This is a bibliography for teachers on English as a Foreign Language (EFL), a helpful way to provide educators with a curated list of resources to enhance their teaching practices. Below, you'll find a bibliography that covers a range of topics related to EFL teaching:

Books:

Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Pearson Education Limited.

Ur, P. (2012). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning Teaching: The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching*. Macmillan Education.

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Lightbown, P. M., & Spada, N. (2013). *How Languages are Learned*. Oxford University Press.

Journals and Articles:

Richards, J. C. (2006). Communicative Language Teaching Today. *SEAMEO Regional Language Centre Journal*, 11(1), 1-12.

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Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). A Postmethod Perspective on English Language Teaching. *World Englishes*, 22(4), 539-550.

Crystal, D. (2003). English as a Global Language. *Cambridge University Press*.

Online Resources:

British Council - TeachingEnglish: A comprehensive website with lesson plans, teaching tips, and resources for EFL teachers. Available at: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/>

TESOL International Association: Offers a variety of resources, journals, and webinars for EFL teachers. Available at: <https://www.tesol.org/>

ESL Flow: Provides a wide range of free ESL lesson plans, activities, and worksheets. Available at: <http://www.eslflow.com/>

Dave's ESL Cafe: A popular online community for EFL teachers with forums, job listings, and resources. Available at: <http://www.eslcafe.com/>

Edutopia - English Language Learners: Offers articles, videos, and classroom strategies for teaching ELLs. Available at: <https://www.edutopia.org/english-language-learners>

Research Papers:

Brown, H. D. (2000). Principles of Language Learning and Teaching (4th ed.). Longman.

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Pica, T. (1994). Research on Negotiation: What Does It Reveal About Second-language Learning Conditions, Processes, and Outcomes? *Language Learning*, 44(3), 493-527.

Conferences and Workshops:

TESOL International Convention & English Language Expo: An annual conference that brings together EFL professionals to share insights and best practices. Available at: <https://www.tesol.org/conventiononline2023>

IATEFL Annual Conference and Exhibition: A leading event in the field of English language teaching, featuring presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities. Available at: <https://www.iatefl.org/conference>

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