CPD Teaching English as a Foreign Language

19-23 August 2024

DAY 1

- Task-Based Language teaching: from PPP to TBL
- SMART lesson objectives
- Building blocks

DAY 2

- Teaching communicative skills
- Teaching reading & listening
- Participation and motivation

DAY 3

- Teaching speaking/spoken interaction
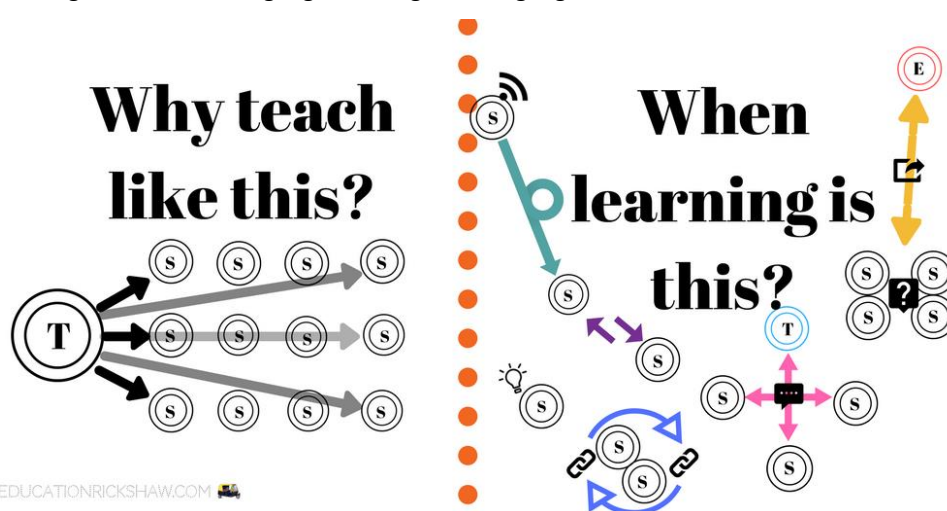- Teaching writing/written interaction
- Scaffolding

DAY 4

- Teaching functional skills
- Teaching vocabulary
- Teaching grammar
- Teaching spelling and pronunciation

1 TASK-BASED LANGUAGE TEACHING

1.1 DEFINING TBLT

The last decades have been marked by an increase in task-based language teaching. Characteristics of TBLT are:

- o A needs-based approach to content selection,
- o An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language,
- o The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation,
- o The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself (strategies),
- o An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning,
- o The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom.

Source: https://educationrickshaw.com/2017/12/02/after-100-years-of-the-same-teaching-model-its-time-to-throw-out-the-playbook/

DEFINING 'TASKS'

TBLT centres around the concept of 'tasks'. In defining a task, we draw a distinction between what can be seen as real-world or target tasks and pedagogical tasks. '[t]arget tasks, as the name implies, refer to the uses of language in the world beyond the classroom; pedagogical tasks are those that occur in the classroom.' (Nunan 2004: 1)

'A definition of a pedagogical task […] would be 'a workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive [and/]or receptive, and oral [and/]or written skills and also various cognitive processes.' (Ellis, 2003: 16)

'[A] workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome.'
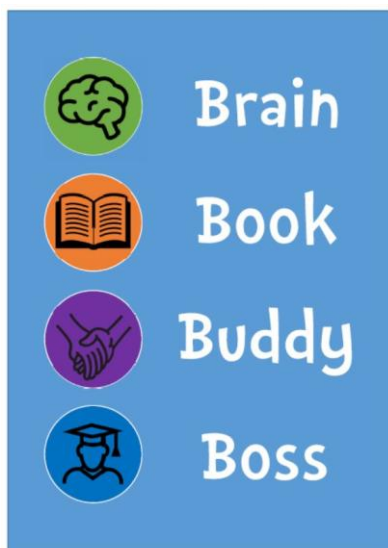
The task is seen as a workplan, i.e. as a strategic approach rather than a focus on execution. The learner does not jump right in but has to 'process language pragmatically'. This means that a learner has to be able to analyse the given task himself, deciding on the elements that are important and that require a certain approach. 'In order to achieve the outcome that the task sets out to achieve, which elements do I, as a language user, need to have?'

This means that for educators, the hardest part is teaching these strategies, and making a learner behave independently from them. Analysing a task, deciding on the necessary elements, using them correctly and achieving learner autonomy are vital skills for an English language learner. And even though educators sometimes believe that this only applies to upper-intermediate or advanced learners, the opposite is true. A task-based approach is a process of lifelong learning, so has to be started with as soon as the learners start learning.

'Achieving an outcome' is the ultimate objective of this task. As teaching usually happens in the classroom, this outcome is often limited to the classroom walls. Students are not going to book a real hotel room, have an actual party, or write a letter to a real-life exchange student that will be living with them. Though options are maybe limited, it is always advisable to look for contexts that are as authentic as possible. Posting their reviews on websites such as Tripadvisor, reacting to news events through YouTube vlogs, communicating with students in different countries through various means, are all valid alternatives to 'hand in your task at the end of the lesson'.

'[An outcome] that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed.'

The focus of the task is on communication, so the transfer (conveying) of information (propositional content). As the objective can be broadly referred to as 'successful communication', the main criterion to evaluate whether or not the learner has executed the task successfully is 'has the information been transferred correctly and appropriately'.

'Correctly' should not be mistaken for 'in formally correct language', or 'without any language errors'. The content that is conveyed has to be correct, meaning that the learner has to adapt the information that is transferred to the objective of this exercise, and in failing to do so, risks not executing the task at all.

'Appropriate' refers to the language situation that should be as authentic as possible, and that has to be interpreted for the learner to choose the manner and style in which the information is transferred. Not selecting the appropriate propositional content could also lead to the task not being executed.

'To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning…'

As learners are required to give primary attention to meaning, many educators fear a focus on fluency and negligence when it comes to accuracy. It is indeed so that the importance of accuracy can greatly vary between different authentic language contexts. Compare the task of instructing your friend on how to iron a shirt to the task of instructing a new worker on first aid. The first situation is highly informal, so a context in which accuracy is not as important as in the second, a situation that is (or should be) more formal.

To say that something has 'primary attention', also implies that there is something that gets 'secondary attention', as in 'in 2nd place'. Many teachers forget this, and abandon accuracy all together, which has never been the purpose of TBLT.

…and to make use of their own linguistic resources…'

Many students turn to their teacher as soon as there is a slight bump in the path to task execution. 'Sir, how do you say…', 'What does … mean' or 'What's another word for…?' fly through the classroom as soon as they get started. After all, you are the teacher, and it is often a situation that they have been made used to in the past.

However, it is vital that students are trained in making use of their own linguistic resources. They have been trained before in expressing absolute truths, expressing irritation through the present continuous, scanning and skimming, different semantic fields, etc. However, as soon as we are on task level, many teachers explicitly state the resources to be used in the given task, instead of relying on the learners' decisions.

The fact that you focus on task execution also means that you have to allow your students some playing room. While they decide on which linguistic resources to use, they can also make use of many different materials and/or helplines. Whether this be another learner, a dictionary, a glossary, a model, a text builder, grammar books, translation engines or any other source, is a decision learners gradually have to make by themselves. The main job of a teacher is to make himself/herself redundant. When a student manages to execute a task, having consulted 'brains, book, buddy' instead of 'boss', he has become an independent learner.

Teaching students how to make use of linguistic resources isalso an important part of language learning with a focus on strategies. The fact that online language education is becoming ever more present, and as some translation engines are even replacing foreign language learning, students rely on this/these more heavily than ever. How many and which materials to allow in classroom practice and task execution is a matter of choice, best taken by a group of teachers as a whole.

'…although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms.'

While we previously stated that a student should be allowed to use his/her own linguistic resources, the criterion of 'appropriateness' also plays a role here. Teachers usually design tasks with a particular element of language theory in mind, that they would like to see being used correctly. In asking students to describe an invention that would make the world a better place, you are clearly aiming for the first or second conditional to be used, although it might be perfectly possible for a student to circumvent this and not this at all.

A solution is to design the task so that a particular form has to be used, no matter what. Often this is not an authentic language situation though, but when these contexts can be found, so much the better.

A second solution is to make it explicit in either the instructions or the assessment criteria that a particular form has to be used. Although this is also far from authentic, this is often the solution that teachers turn to, to strike a balance between task-based language teaching and stubborn teenagers that have no interest in learning.

As always, the solution is usually in between. By relying on differentiated instruction and working with individualised learning trajectories, it is possible to instill the need for particular forms in learners, provided they need it at the point where they actually wánt to use it, rather than being obliged to learn it because it is on the calendar.

'A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world.'

The way that the language is used should bear a resemblance to the real world, so not be specific for classroom practice. For this reason, it is also important to teach students conversation strategies, expressions for disagreeing, polite requests, apologies, signing off on formal letters, evaluating reliability of news reports and advertisements,…

'Like other language activities, a task can engage productive [and/]or receptive, and oral [and/]or written skills…'

Many teachers use tasks only for productive skills, as it is usually easier to find authentic situations in which the learner has to produce language in oral or written form as the main means of communication. However, receptive skills can also be engaged in authentic language situations. For example: listening to a weather report and deciding on what to wear for a busy day, reading a takeaway menu and choosing what you are going to have, being vegan and on a budget.

'…and also various cognitive processes.'

Last but not least, the task can (or should?) engage various cognitive processes. These cognitive processes are what we usually refer to as functional skills but are not limited to those.

Students are expected to make use of the correct and appropriate vocabulary, to use grammar correctly and to pronounce words as they should be pronounced. They have to build complex sentences, structure their thoughts into paragraphs or be able to continue reading, even though they do not know all the words. In general, they have to know and be able to use all the theory they have been studying for many years, correctly and appropriately.

Besides that, students have to know the social situation that this authentic task is set in. They have to recognise and make a difference between formal and informal speech, be aware of cultural stereotypes and/or sensitivities, place texts in their historic frame of reference and separate fact from fiction. In general, they have to know and be able to apply all the strategies they have been studying for many years, correctly and appropriately.

1.2   Designing 'tasks'

When you design a task, everything starts with the **objectives** you want to work on. It is possible to design an authentic language task for all communicative objectives, but some might require more effort and thought than others. Do not think of a task first and then start looking for objectives that go with it. That approach will be very time-consuming, confusing, and in the end, not very effective. It is possible though, but it is not recommended, certainly not to relatively inexperienced teachers.

Then, decide on the **particular forms** that you want your task to make use of. Although this is not a requirement, as task-based language teaching focuses on meaning, it is advisable for a secondary school setting. After all, you want your learners to become better at various elements of the English language, so directing them in a certain direction is always a good idea. Whether this is direction by pointing them towards the materials, or guiding them through the entire process, is a choice you and your team (and possibly, other foreign language teachers) have to make.

Thirdly, find a **language situation** that is as authentic as possible. Many different 'tasks' centre around a language situation that a learner will never be in, for example: presenting a weather report. With a few tweaks, these contexts can often be turned into more authentic examples, so situations that foreign language speakers might find themselves in at some point in their life. Often options

revolve around communicating with exchange students, being on an exchange programme, life in a host family, being on holiday, speaking with new co-workers etc, but the internet gives you many possibilities for authentic settings, as many websites ask for users' input. Traditional reading, writing, listening and speaking assignments can easily be made more authentic with the use of an appropriate resource.

When writing instructions for a task, stick to the KISS principle. The more elaborate your instructions have to be, the less authentic the situation is and the more you will probably have to rethink your choice. As the language user should be 'making use of their own linguistic resources', breaking the assignment down too much is forfeiting a huge aspect of what makes the assignment task-based.

1.3   ASSESSING AND EVALUATING 'TASKS'

The same KISS principle goes for assessment and/or evaluation criteria. As your instructions and criteria are intrinsically linked, the more you rely on a language user's freedom to choose linguistic resources to execute the task, the more your criteria should respect this and focus on the outcome of the task.

a.   Assessment

As assessment is more formative and should provide guidance for learning, having some more explicit criteria regarding for example linguistic resources or cognitive processes could be beneficial towards the learning process. Repeating a task or allowing to hand in a second version straight after feedback has proven to be very effective.

b.   Evaluation

As evaluation is more summative, it should focus on the single criterion 'task execution'. Has the task been executed correctly and appropriately? If so, your evaluation should reflect that. Breaking evaluation down into many separate criteria is doing no justice to the practice of task-based language teaching. But as we established before, since you might be dealing with an audience that is not always predisposed to learning, a careful balance between theory and practice is important.

For both assessment and evaluation, **grading rubrics** are very useful to offer the students guidance.

Note
As task-based learning focuses heavily on authentic tasks, it can leave little room for more 'academic tasks', which are almost by definition not authentic. They focus on the theory behind communicative skills and ask the learner to perform these skills for a learning objective that cannot be regarded as an outcome in the way that TBLT requires.

Although, with a little effort, these could be turned into authentic language tasks, most students are predestined to go to higher education, where they have to use these skills as well, so with that in mind, the authenticity of the situation might be guaranteed in the future.

2   THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (ELT)

The hard work of teaching is usually preparation. Class management takes personality, practice and a few techniques, but preparing a lesson is what it all boils down to.

'Basically, during English language lessons the teacher is only involved with three processes: presenting new material, practising familiar material and testing it. And up to 90 per cent of his [or her] time is taken up by practice of one kind or another.' (Broughton et al 1993: 46)

Processes of selection and grading

Selection = decision about **what** is to be taught, usually made by textbook authors or by curriculum designers.

Grading = decision about 'the breaking down of that body of knowledge or skills into teachable units' (Broughton et al 1993: 39), so basically **how** and in what order it is to be taught, usually determined by the underlying theory (methodological framework) of teaching.

ESA building blocks

ESA sequence

Engage – Study – Activate: 3 elements that foster effective learning (cf Harmer 1999)

- **Engage** = to 'arouse students' interest, involving their emotions' to get them 'amused, moved, stimulated or challenged.' (Harmer 1999: 25)
  e.g. game, music, discussion, picture, story, anecdote

> Without engagement, there is no attention. Without attention, there is no memory. If there is no memory, learning did not take place. – André Hedlund

- **Study** = to 'focus in on language (or information) and how it is constructed.' (Harmer 1999: 25)
  e.g. deductive approach (presenting and explaining rules), inductive approach (discovering rules), self-tuition

- **Activate** = to 'get students using language as freely and "communicatively" as they can' by means of real-life (or at least realistic) exercises and activities (Harmer 1999: 26)
  e.g. role-play, debate, writing, designing

Most teaching sequences or learning modules should contain these elements, however:

- possibly **not** in the **same period** (teaching session)
- possibly **not** always in the **same order**

ESA Straight Arrows sequence
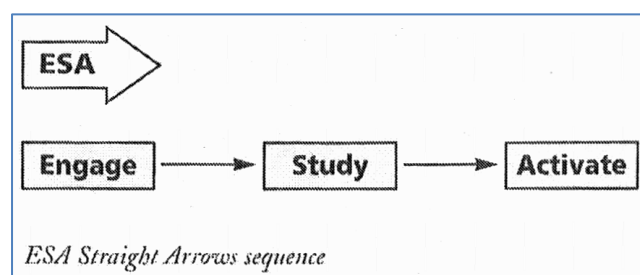
(Harmer 1999: 27)

Straight Arrows (≈ PPP, see infra)

'if we teach all our lessons like this, we may not be giving our students' own learning styles a fair chance. Such a procedure may work at lower levels for straightforward language, but it might not be so appropriate for more advanced learners with more complex language.' (Harmer 1999: 27)


EAS(A) Boomerang sequence
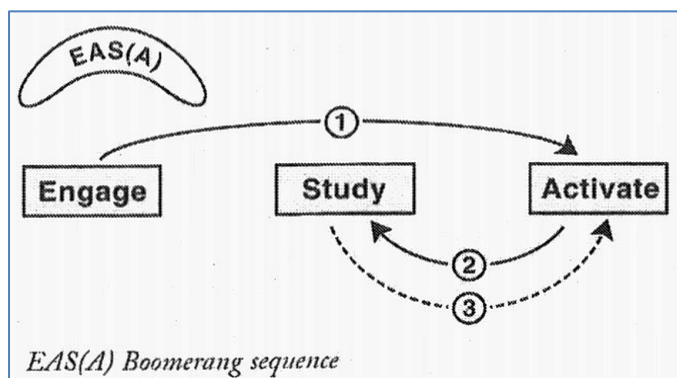
(Harmer 1999: 28)

Boomerang ('EAS(A)')

The so-called Boomerang sequence is about creating a **need** for knowledge prior to the Study phase (= Task-Based Learning, see infra). An advantage of this sequence is that the teacher can let the outcome of the Activate stage decide **what** to study.

'[I]t places a greater burden on the teacher since he or she will have to be able to find good teaching material based on the (often unforeseen) problems thrown up at the *Activate* stage. It may also be more appropriate for students at intermediate and advanced levels.' (Harmer 1999: 28)

EAASASEA (etc.) Patchwork sequence
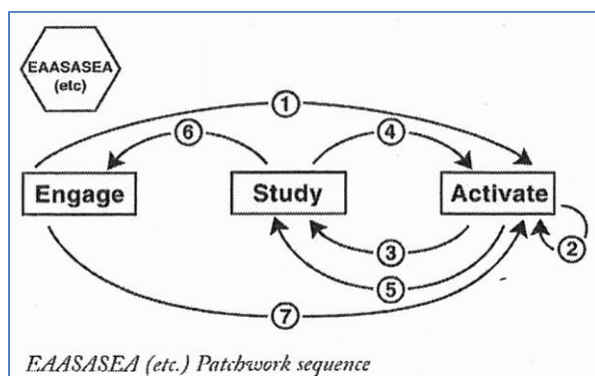
(Harmer 1999: 30)

Patchwork ('…')

'Such classes are very common, especially at intermediate and advanced levels. Not only do they probably reflect the way we learn – rather chaotically, not always in a straight line – but they also provide an appealing balance between *Study* and *Activation*, between language and topic.' (Harmer 1999: 30)

From PPP to TBL
PPP sequence
Presentation – Practice – Production

As in the Straight Arrows sequence, in PPP classes or sequences subject matter is presented before practising it, and it is a suitable method for teaching elementary students.

- **Presentation** = the teacher is **presenting** 'the context and situation for the language' as well as **explaining** and **demonstrating** 'the meaning and form of the new language'
  (Harmer 1999: 31)

- **Practice** = pupils **practising** in a rather guided way (cf shallow end approach, see infra), by means of   exercises

- **Production** = pupils **using** the language freely (cf deep end approach, see infra) in a communicative and a more authentic way

Task-Based Learning
As in the Boomerang sequence, learner motivation is enhanced by challenging tasks (exercises) before studying (if necessary).

'[T]he emphasis is on the task rather than the language. […] When they have completed the task […], we can then, if necessary – and only if necessary – give them a bit of language study to clear up some of the problems they encountered while completing the task.' (Harmer 1999: 31)

'For a language activity to be considered a task it must satisfy the following four criteria:

1. The primary focus should be on 'meaning', i.e. learners should be mainly concerned with processing the semantic and pragmatic meaning of utterances;
2. There should be a 'gap', i.e. a need to convey information, to express an opinion or to infer meaning;
3. Learners should largely have to rely on their own resources – linguistic and non-linguistic – in order to complete the activity, i.e. the task materials do not dictate what linguistic forms are to be used;
4. There is a clearly defined outcome other than the use of language, i.e. the language serves as the means for achieving the outcome, not as end in its own right.

These criteria effectively distinguish a 'task' from an 'exercise'.' (Ellis 2012)

Shallow vs deep end approach to (language) learning
Within the **communicative** methodological framework for language learning Thornbury (1999) distinguishes between a shallow end and a deep end approach to language learning.

- **shallow end approach to learning** = focus on (reproducing) factual content (by memorizing)

'In the shallow end, or weak form, a piece of language may be preselected and taught, but the teacher ensures that there will be opportunities to practise that piece of language in communicative contexts as the lesson progresses.' (Watkins 2005: 11)

- **deep end approach to learning** = focus on (long-term understanding and constructing) meaningful content

'In the deep end, or strong form, communication is dominant and language systems (grammar, vocabulary and so on) are focused on in so far as they affect a particular piece of communication.' (Watkins 2005: 11)

3 Lesson planning: aspects of the EFL lesson plan

Is it necessary to draw up a lesson plan?

Yes. Advantages of a lesson plan (Harmer 1999: 121, Watkins 2005: 107) are that it

- allows teachers to think about where they are going, how to make lessons interesting, and how to grade and differentiate;
- reminds them what they intended to do when teaching;
- makes pupils respond positively (to well-prepared teachers).

Are you allowed to diverge from your lesson plan?

Yes. The teacher has to be flexible, has to be able to leave the plan for however long it takes to satisfy the students' needs at a point in the lesson.' (Harmer 1999: 122)

How do you decide what the contents of your lesson will be?

It is almost like a mathematical formula, but in general it comes down to:

Contents = coherence of overall theme/subject matter + variety of methods/activities

'A varied lesson, besides being more interesting and pleasant for both teacher and learners, is also likely to cater for a wider range of learning styles and strategies, and may delay onset of fatigue by providing regular refreshing changes in the type of mental or physical activity demanded.' (Ur 1996: 216)

1. Guidelines

When brainstorming about your lessons, ask yourself the following questions, and keep Penny Ur's suggestions in mind.

Questions (Harmer 1999: 123-124)

- Who are the students?
- Why do I want to do this?
- What will it achieve?
- How long will it take?
- What might go wrong and how will I respond?
- What materials will be needed?
- What classroom procedure will be needed?
- How will it fit in with what comes before and after it?

Content guidelines: Suggestions (Ur 1996: 217-218, 222-223)

- Put the harder tasks earlier
- Have quieter activities before lively ones
- Think about transitions
- Pull the class together at the beginning and at the end
- End on a positive note
- Have an extra activity ready in case of extra time and conversely note which components you could sacrifice
- Do not leave the explaining (and giving) of homework to the last minute

2. The lesson plan template

Lesson plans come in various shapes and sizes, but for now, you will use the given template for all the lesson planning you do.

1. Header
2. Learning goals/lesson objectives

Specify what you want your students to be able to do during the lesson, based on the curriculum.

3. Evaluation during the lesson

How will you check if your students are reaching your lesson objectives? How and when can they demonstrate if they are making progress, if by the end of the lesson they can actually do what you wanted them to learn how to do? Maybe some quick checking questions can do the trick, maybe you can find a way to make students visualise their answers… Think this through and explain how that exercise/activity will actually assess students' progress with regard to your lesson objectives. This will in turn make it easier for you to spot any problems students might be experiencing, facilitate giving feedback and further inform your teaching practice.

4. Sources and references

Copyright is a serious issue; plagiarism is not tolerated. We do not expect you to reinvent the wheel, but you do need to cite your sources both in your lesson plans and in your lesson materials. This is not only practical, it will also allow you to share your lessons with your peers or even teachers around the world.

© 2015 SERP

5. Lesson outline

Fill in the E-S-A building blocks first, so that your lesson is structurally sound. Then add the 'study' component: what do students need to know/be able to do after this lesson? Select or design materials so that students can practise this throughout the lesson.

- Is there a way to engage your students, using the (new) language material from the very start of the lesson?
- Is there a motivating task in which students can/must actively use the new language, so that it will stick more easily?
- How will you check if students have reached your objectives, throughout or by the end of the lesson?

Match your lesson objectives to the relevant parts of your lesson outline.

Add a suggestion of timing: 'engage' should be short and effective, about 5 minutes. 'Study' takes more time, also think of how you can differentiate if some students struggle more than others. Sufficient exercises are necessary, indicate which ones are necessary, which ones are more challenging/optional. Always do the exercises yourself first and time your efforts. Students will take twice or even three or four times longer than you, the expert.

Add your instructions in full. As instructions are so important, you really need to think and write down every component of the instruction you will give your students in this phase of your teacher training. If that makes your lesson outline twice as long, think of how you can simplify those instructions (keep it short and simple, demonstrate, add information on a handout/on the board…).

Finally, think ahead of the teaching materials you and your students will need, how/where you want your students to sit.

6. Board layout

Same as with clear and complete instructions, a well-structured board will always stand you in good stead when you teach. If you do not plan ahead where you will write what on the board, it will confuse rather than help your students.

A final checklist of your lesson could be the following:

'Lessons should be planned and executed so that new language material is soundly integrated with the old. This calls for a sensitive shift from a presentation stage during which the learner's focus of attention is on the new material through early practice where the attention is gradually diverted, into a later practice during which the new material is being handled without conscious attention.' (Broughton et al 1993: 46)

Planning a series of lessons (syllabus design)

As a teacher, you are not just teaching single lessons in a row. Depending on the way your internship is organised in your host school, you will only be teaching a few lessons in the same class. Even if that is the case, it is important to think about the bigger picture. Then, when you find yourself suddenly teaching a full school year, you will be amazed at what students can do at the end of the year that they could not do in the beginning. And that is when you realise you actually are a teacher.

3 PARTICIPATION AND MOTIVATION

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Indicate your answers.

	AGREE	DISAGREE
Just because a teacher is teaching, does not mean students are learning. (Graham Nuthall)		
Motivation in most EFL classes is a teacher's responsibility.		
An optimal classroom climate for learning is one that generates an atmosphere of trust – a climate in which it is understood that it is okay to make mistakes, because mistakes are the essence of learning. (John Hattie)		
Most people who achieve a high level of success also turn out to be very strongly motivated. (Alison Mackey)		
Learning has to be visible if we want it to occur and improve. (John Hattie)		
Active learning requires students to participate in class, as opposed to sitting and listening quietly.		

3.1 Participation

You can't start a fire without a spark (Bruce Springsteen)

It is of the utmost importance that your students feel safe and welcome in the positive learning environment you have created in your classroom. If not, they will not participate and not much learning will take place.

'It is generally argued that learners will do best when they are free from anxiety and feel secure in their environment. Teachers need to develop strategies which develop the learners' self-esteem [sic], allow them to participate when they wish, and allow them to experiment with language use in such a protected environment.' (Watkins 2005: 104)

Take your time getting to know your students and bonding with them, genuinely listen to what they have to say and explicitly value their input and cooperation. Make them feel that it is okay to make mistakes, as they are essential to the learning process. Talk to uncooperative students individually about their feeling about the class, what solutions they suggest, etc. Remember, however, that 'students live in a personal and social world of their own in the classroom. They probably care more about how their peers evaluate their behaviour than they care about the teacher's judgement' (Nuthall 2007), yet it is important that you, as a teacher, let them know that you do care and would very much like them to participate.

'Some temporary lowering in learner interest can be caused by factors beyond our control – the need of the learner to take a short break, for example, or external distractions – but there are also certain teacher behaviours which can quickly catch or lose learner interest, and it is important to be sensitive to their effect.' (Ur 1996: 282)

Engage your students

Engaging students with the **topic**, learning **content** and learning **goals** is vital. If you manage to spark their interest, students will automatically want to know and learn more and thus participate more. Almost every teacher intuitively knows that their teaching is going well from **signs** of students' engagement: the look in the students' eyes, the questions they ask, the fact that they keep talking about the topic or problem when they leave the classroom. In short, by the feel and sounds of

interest and focused busyness. (Nuthall 2007)

Communicating learning goals

As a teacher, you know why you are teaching your students specific learning content. It is spelled out for us in the attainment targets and in the curricula. Your students, on the other hand, only know that they have to take English class. Some may be intrinsically motivated to learn English, nearly all of them would like to know why they are doing the things you tell them to do. It is your job to translate the curriculum into learning goals which interest your students.

The learning goals and/or lesson objectives you communicate should be SMART. They should be manageable and attainable: 'by the end of this lesson (series), you will be able to…' Ideally you (at least) refer back to them at the end of the lesson (series) so that students can see for themselves what they have accomplished so far.

Choice of materials

The beauty of Flanders' foreign languages attainment targets is that they offer you a certain amount of freedom. They do not force you to talk about extreme sports when you are revising comparatives or the present perfect tense, but if you - or more importantly: your students - want to, you are free to do so.

'We need materials that students will want to understand, materials that will get them thinking, materials that will get them communicating and materials that will teach them more than just English. In other words, material which is **authentic**. Authentic material means authentic learning with authentic tasks and outcomes. Equally, we also need materials that students can **relate** to, that is **relevant** to them and has a **real-world purpose**; materials that give them choice and which **challenges** them in the right ways.' (Warren 2019)

Finding topics that teenagers are interested in is **a hit-and-miss endeavour**. The best way to find topics that work is (1) to pay attention to the students themselves, rather than just choosing topics based on our assumptions about what students like. (2) Ask them to suggest topics that they are interested in, (3) offer them choices, (4) ask them for feedback on lesson topics, (5) focus on people their age, (6) keep it down-to-earth and (7) never get too personal. Do not take it personally if you get a negative response: teenagers can be quite outspoken but genuinely do not mean to cause offence. (Dudley 2018: 114-115)

Suitable teaching methods

Classes where students simply sit and listen while the teacher is lecturing for fifty minutes still exist. In English classes, they should be a thing of the past. Your students learn a language by practising it, using it, communicating with it. That does not happen when the teacher is doing all the talking and students are supposed to do no more than listening. 'Teachers should use various methods of teaching, and if one method does not work, they should change to another.' (Hattie 2015) Make sure that your choice of teaching method leaves room for participation, ideally as much participation as you are looking for.

Mind you: **clear instructions** are needed to ensure students know exactly what they have to do, what the expected outcome is, how much time they have, which materials they need and who they are working with. Ideally, they also know what to do when they are ready with the learning activity.

Variety is the spice of the English classroom. A good mix of **different interaction patterns** as well as actual **activity types** encourages student engagement.

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

10 reasons to get teenagers working in small groups and pairs

1. They get time to confer
2. They can recharge their batteries
3. It provides variety
4. It reduces dependence on the teacher
5. It takes the pressure off
6. It enables peer-learning and peer teaching
7. It engages different skills and strengths
8. It promotes social skills
9. It gives the teacher a chance to observe
10. It allows the teacher to provide feedback discreetly

(Dudley 2018: 41-42)

</div>

Increase participation levels

'Many teachers make use of the class brainstorm as a routine for finding out what students know. In a brainstorm, students are invited to contribute any or all of the ideas they have on the topic. Typically, a few students contribute the majority of the ideas, a few more students contribute one or two ideas, and most students are silent. The mesmerizing power of whole-class routines, like the brainstorm, is such that most teachers, and most observers, come away feeling they know what all the students know.' (Nuthall 2001)

Frontal teaching 'whole class routines' are misleading where participation is concerned. It is impossible to know what is going on in every student's head, chances are they are planning their lunch instead of thinking about the answer to your question. As Nuthall remarked, widespread teaching activities such as a class brainstorm do not necessarily encourage student participation. Only when students **visibly participate** (cf. John Hattie's *Visible Learning*) are they giving you a clue as to whether they understand/cooperate/struggle/… Try to **visualise** learning so that you can figure out the impact your teaching has or does not have on your students.

Personalisation

Personalisation in the classroom helps to build rapport, add authenticity and make classroom activities more motivating. In general, students love to talk about themselves, as long as they are allowed to define the parameters of the conversation. Be aware that you may encounter some resistance, so steer clear of family situations, and matters related to finances, income and social status. Be sensitive to that learner resistance, do not pry nor interrogate, know when to stop and plan an alternative activity, just in case. Other than that, personalisation comes highly recommended in language didactics.

Examples of personalisation include:

- **Sharing what they already know**

It is mostly a good idea to find out what students already know about a topic/grammar item/… The typical go-to activity would be a plenary brainstorm but be wary of that routine (see Nuthall 2001). Let them all write down what they know on a slip of paper and collect those slips to fill the word

cloud, or use an ICT-tool (*PollEverywhere, Mentimeter*…) to lower the threshold – there is no need to raise their hands and say things in front of the entire class. You can also let them work in pairs, for example with a RallyRobin during which students repeatedly take turns, giving one answer each turn to create an oral list. Or you can use the Think-Pair-Share method: students have a minute to think, a minute to discuss with their neighbour and only after that they share their answers with the class.

- **Having the opportunity to express themselves, giving their opinions**

Students mostly have an opinion on what they are (not) doing in class. Giving them the opportunity of expressing their opinions and sharing them with classmates tends to get them to talk, especially if it is done in smaller groups first. Letting them find a solution to a problem using the placemat method is another way of making their learning visible and to ensure you have real, personal student ideas to work with.

- **The opportunity to be creative in the application of (new) language**

'Have you ever broken a bone?' 'Have you ever been to Brussels?' This use of the present perfect + ever for describing past experiences lends itself perfectly to extracting personal answers from students: 'Yes, I have.' or 'No, I haven't. If the teacher's primary interest is whether a student has learnt to say the target structure correctly, then the student's truthful answer is largely irrelevant. Going deeper would mean not only checking and praising correct use of the target language but also responding to what the student actually says. (Hughes 2017). Once again, to make the learning both personal and visible, ask your students to write down a specific number of personal examples using the new language. Two truths and a lie, 'never have I ever'… games all increase participation and focus, all while being quite personal. Bear in mind that sharing personal experiences or anecdotes with their peers feels less intrusive than sharing them with a teacher. To increase the students' social skills, vary their conversation partners, e.g. with Kagan's 'Face and Shoulder Partners'.

- **Having a choice (differentiation!)**

Choice gives students a sense of empowerment over their own learning and helps to keep them engaged. Even a simple choice between two options can do the trick: e.g. either you record your interview or you act out the interview live in class. When the topic is 'nature and the environment', let them look up an organisation working in that field that interests them (and then ask them to say why they chose it)… The possibilities are endless.

Get 'em moving

When you sense the students' energy levels start to flag, getting your students out of their seats and moving around the classroom will help to reinvigorate them and wake up their brains. **Before you release the students from their desks, it is important to give your instructions and make your expectations clear**. Have a signal prepared to indicate when the activity is over.

The hard work for the teacher is in the **preparation**: the better-prepared your students are, the more they understand about exactly what they have to do and how they have to do it. A blank form for students to complete is usually a big help. If you feel redundant, that is a good sign! You now have the opportunity to watch your students at work, note down common errors, and act as a timekeeper.

Classroom surveys are a classic, but you need to be aware of what you wish to achieve:
   o Is it a quick activity (e.g. *Find someone who…*) or a longer one?
   o Is the focus on communication (fluency) or do you incorporate targeted grammar/vocabulary practice (accuracy)?
   o Do you provide the questions or do the students write their own (give them a few examples first!)?

- o How are they going to keep note of their classmates' answers?
- o How many people should they include in their survey (count!)?
- o How much time do they have?
- o What do they do once they have completed their survey?
- o How and when do they process and report the information they have found out?

(Stannett 2017)

Find someone who…

1. has never been to Germany.	6. has broken their leg once.
2. has never flown in an aeroplane.	7. has visited the doctor while on holiday.
3. has forgotten someone's birthday lately.	8. has used an Ouija board to call up ghosts.
4. has already bought someone's Christmas present.	9. has written a text message this morning.
5. has already made plans for Halloween.	10. has skipped breakfast today.

1. Walk around the classroom and ask your classmates the questions above,

e.g.: **Have you ever been to Germany?**

2. You answer the questions with **'Yes, I have'** or **'No, I haven't'**.

3. Write down the name of the classmate who answers '**Yes, I have'**.

When you have written down a name for all the questions (NOT your own name!), you **shout 'BINGO'** and sit down at your desk.

Tips and tricks

- ▪ Introduce an element of competition – this works like a charm, especially with boys.
- ▪ Use pictures (or brief video clips) to evoke responses.
- ▪ Give students some responsibility.
- ▪ Keep organisational activities (e.g. giving out/collecting papers, register taking) as short as possible (Ur 1996: 283).
- ▪ Address the whole class instead of individuals.
- ▪ Use activities as a reward: make students understand fun extras (a video/song they like…) or a certain type of activities are only possible if they cooperate properly (Harmer 1999: 130-131).
- ▪ Use visual support.
- ▪ Give students the means to measure their 'success' with clear lesson objectives / activity outcomes etc.

3.2 Learner motivation

The more positivity there is around the learning journey,
the more motivated students become. (Alex Warren)

'[T]eacher skills in motivating learners should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness. Indeed, research has shown that for many teachers, problems about motivating pupils are the second most serious source of difficulty (after maintaining classroom discipline), preceding other obviously important issues such as the effective use of different teaching methods or a knowledge of the subject matter.' (Hadfield & Dörnyei 2014: 1)

There is no easy, one-size-fits-all answer to how we can motivate our language learners. Every teaching scenario is unique, no two students, let alone class groups are the same. Different things

motivate different students. Teachers try to find some kind of middle ground, **make their classes as varied, interesting and engaging as possible** to ensure that all students are engaged and motivated for as much of our lessons as possible. This, of course, means **meticulous planning**… (Warren 2019)

Motivation and English Language Teaching

Motivation is found to be very strongly related to **success** in language learning, but it remains unknown what is the cause and what the result. However, this 'does not entail any particular problems for teaching: it simply means that among other things we do to increase our students' motivation, strategies to increase the likelihood of success in learning activities should have high priority.' (Ur 1996: 275) Motivation in most EFL classes is mainly a teacher's responsibility. With most teenage learners, intrinsic motivation hardly plays any role at all.

---

10 tips for motivating teenagers
1. Have a **positive attitude**: if we ourselves are not enthused about the English lesson, why should they be?
2. **Be organised** and ready to 'sell' the lesson: '*What are we going to do today?*' is more than mere curiosity. In many cases your students are actively deciding whether or not it is worth paying much attention in class that day.
3. **Communicate clearly**: make sure the students know what they are going to do – and why it is worth doing. Write key challenges or outcomes on the board.
4. **Create a relaxed, focused environment**. Before you begin the activities of the day, take the time to deal with students' questions, and reassure them that there are no nasty surprises in store.
5. Spark students' **curiosity**.
6. Set a challenge.
7. **Personalise** language analysis. One way of doing this is to use your students' names when presenting model grammar sentences to the class: it makes the language more real and also raises a smile.
8. Establish **routines**. Build popular, short activities into the routine of your teaching, so that there is always something your students look forward to in every lesson. Be careful not to overuse the activities.
9. **Welcome students' questions**. Pause regularly to see if students have any questions, and thank them emphatically when they do.
10. Be mindful of maintaining **your own motivation**.
(Dudley 2018: 34-35)

Some of the items in Dudley's list already featured in the first part of this chapter, since motivation, engagement and participation often go hand in hand. Demotivated students will understandably be less willing to take an active part in the class you are teaching. Of course the lessons you teach should be **relevant** and **interesting** (visual, entertaining, challenging!), actively involve the students, be **personalised** (monitoring, goals, content) and whenever possible also **differentiated**. (Watkins 2005: 104, Ur 1996: 281, Harmer 1999: 129)

Making students work together collaboratively, for example on a challenging project, can be highly motivating. Careful planning on the teacher's part is, as always, absolutely necessary to turn group work into a successful venture. '**Collaboration** is based on cooperativeness, learning from errors, seeking feedback about progress and enjoying venturing into the 'pit of not knowing' together with expert help that provides safety nets and, ultimately, ways out of the pit. Creative collaboration

involves bringing together two or more seemingly unrelated ideas, and this highlights again the importance of having safe and trusting places to explore ideas, to make and to learn from errors and to use expertise to maximise successful learning.' (John Hattie 2015b)

Tips and Tricks

1. **Giving students a specific outcome to aim for leads to a sense of achievement.** Do you remember the importance of SMART learning goals? Have you ever felt frustrated when someone asked you to find 'all' examples of something (present perfect, there is/are, shortened verb forms, repetition…) in a text and were never sure if you got them? The simple and easy solution is to set **number targets**. If your students can **count** the items they are looking for or supposed to come up with, they can mentally tick them off (think: to do-list). It works like a charm with noticing, scanning, formulating questions, discussions… The same is true for **time limits**: it means there is no 'endless' brainstorming, reading or mingling going on (which also takes the pace right out of your lesson) and mentally reassures students that something else will happen after this. Always set a clear end point to an activity.

2. **Remind your learners why they are learning** English, why you are making them do the things you are making them do. 'What is in it for *me*?' is a question many students ask themselves. 'As our students find out about other people in other places and discover shared interests, fears, hopes and values, they feel genuinely motivated to learn how to communicate better and to find out even more. The challenge for us is to guide our students to find those points of connection.' (Stannett 2018) Cultural topics are a goldmine: what are the differences, what are the similarities? Ideally language practice is integrated with information that the students can do something with in **real life**. Converting recipes from the imperial to the metric system in order to prepare a typically British/Irish/American meal or dessert that looks good on a cooking show to taste in class later on is a real winner, for example. It also demonstrates that using English is a **means to an end**.

3. Today's active generation has grown up **associating 'challenge' with 'fun'** (Tamulis 2019), which of course is not always possible as learning can be really hard. However, if you can dress up the learning content as a fun challenge, a game or a bit of healthy (not too serious) competition between students (Ur 1996: 278-279), with or without technology, your students will probably find it all the more motivating.

4. It seems we have an innate **urge to complete patterns**, to fill in empty spaces, to want to find out what happens next etc. You can easily use this to your advantage when you teach:
   o Tables and charts with strategic gaps
   o Withholding the ending of any text with a sequential structure
   o Hiding steps or events within a sequence (3rd conditional structures, explanations with past perfect, cause and effect expressions…)
   o Providing only prompts or starting words to sentences
   o 'Fill the silence' to encourage speaking
   Of course, you need to plan carefully what (language aspect) you want to focus on. It is also good to know that motivation is higher when the **students themselves** are providing the information that leads to completion. Support the learners' language production as they are doing so (scaffolding!). (Stephenson 2018)

5. **Confidence is key**. Remember that teenagers can be very insecure and hesitant to try new things. **Positivity** is more important than perfection, so always react positively to content *first*, focus on

correction later. Make sure the learning goals are attainable and make students aware of their successes (praise, nod…). Tests can be challenging but should always be **feasible** (you have done something similar in class!) with **meaningful feedback**. Point out (or have the students themselves figure out!) the **progress** they are making.

6. We want our students to have a **growth mindset**, to think 'I have failed at this, now how can I get better?'. Objectify failure in your feedback: the student has performed less than they could have, but this is only a step in the student's learning process, point them in the right direction and give tips on how they can improve. Help them to see **failure as a motivation for improvement**, so that they enter a 'virtuous cycle', a cycle of positive reinforcement: if you practise regularly, you will start to improve, as you start to improve, you will feel motivated to practise more, much like swimmers swimming laps. See if you can plan moments when you can explicitly show students how a given activity, skill or strategy actually works towards their (personal?) learning goals.

7. **Not finishing stuff is demotivating**. Therefore, please avoid running out of time in class, leaving pages/exercises unfinished – if you pick things up there 'next time', the students will in all probability no longer be engaged or motivated to do so. Keep an eye on the clock and tie up loose ends neatly before the school bell rings.

'The ultimate engagement is to put the learner in charge of learning. Create a rich learning environment and a motivation to learn, and the students do all the hard work of learning, while the teacher merely facilitates. It sounds so easy. I do not minimize the hard work involved in creating those rich learning scenarios, custom-made motivators and engaging learning content. And it is a bit risky. Sometimes it works like a charm, and other times it would have been better to assign seat work. But we keep trying, improving, and enhancing until we get it right.' (Johnson 2013)
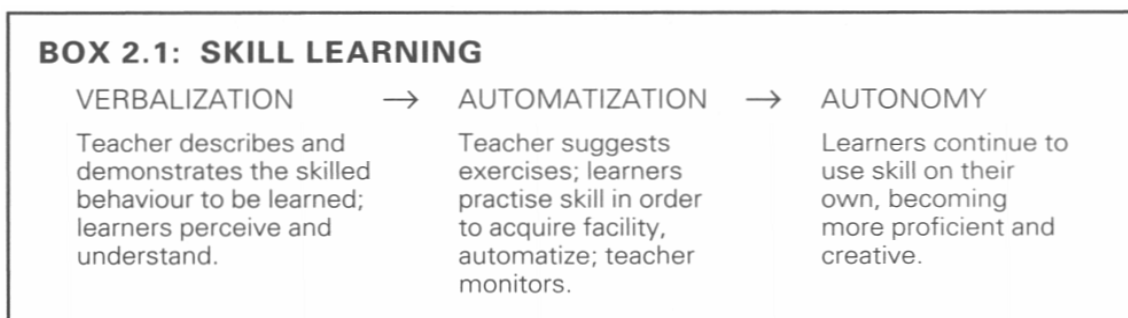
4 COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS

Most people learn a language in order to be able to communicate with other people. Training, developing and fine-tuning students' communicative skills for successful communication is therefore somewhat unsurprisingly the core business of our English teaching.

Reading and listening/watching are **receptive skills**, as opposed to speaking and writing which are **productive skills**. Spoken and written interaction are **interactive skills**. Students often find it more difficult to come up with the language they are learning themselves, they typically *understand* more (receptive) of the language than they can produce and/or use interactively. Bear in mind, however, that the brain has to work hard regardless of the skill practised.

Listening, speaking, reading and writing may be different, yet they strongly influence each other and partly rely on the same underlying functional skills such as vocab and grammar (Casteleyn et al. 2022: 41). Moreover, oral language skills form the basis for written language skills. For example, a large vocabulary comes in handy when reading (and understanding) a text. Just as the ability to fluently express and defend one's own opinion provides will help when performing a writing task (ibid: 57).

Learning any skill, be it a linguistic skill or a practical skill, typically follows the same pattern (see picture). In spite of their many differences, any language skills lesson usually contains the same key ingredients. In this chapter you will find everything you need to know to basically teach any communicative skill, and do it properly.

BOX 2.1: SKILL LEARNING

VERBALIZATION → AUTOMATIZATION → AUTONOMY

Teacher describes and demonstrates the skilled behaviour to be learned; learners perceive and understand.

Teacher suggests exercises; learners practise skill in order to acquire facility, automatize; teacher monitors.

Learners continue to use skill on their own, becoming more proficient and creative.

(Ur 1996: 20)

4.1 Pre, while and post

Do you remember the ESA building blocks? Pre, while and post are the three stages, or building blocks, of any skills activity.

4.1.1 Pre

Before students start to practice the skill, you need to prepare them for what is to come. This pre-phase has three different purposes. First of all, you need to **engage and familiarize** them with the topic of the text they are about to deal with. If they do not know or remember any relevant key vocabulary, your skills lesson is doomed to failure. Try to activate some of the language and vocabulary they will need beforehand. Secondly, you need to really **prepare** them for what is to come. Take your time to give your instructions, to model strategies, to make sure students know exactly what is expected of them. Thirdly, you need to give them a purpose (e.g. fluency or accuracy?), a **goal**, a **motivation** to complete whatever it is you want them to do. Spark their curiosity.

× What do you think of the following class situations? Why would you (not) teach the same way? What would you change?

a.	Students watch Mister Bean arrive in an unknown city and getting into some unexpected situations when he is taking public transport, then having trouble finding his way, and finally checking into a hotel. They discuss in pairs what they saw, then in plenary as the teacher writes down useful vocabulary and phrases. After that, every student receives a role play card and prepares to act out a similar situation.
b.	When students enter the classroom, they see these sentences from the text they will read or hear/watch on the board: **'If I do my job properly, thousands of other people have more fun. It's brilliant!'** They brainstorm together and make predictions about the text: Who may have said this? What kind of job could this be? What would that job involve? They then read/watch to see if they were right.
c.	Hello class! Today we will be having a reading lesson. I want you to take your books at page 78 and start reading the text you find there, then answer questions 1-8 on pages 81-84. You have twenty minutes to do this, individually, so I do not want to hear you!
d.	In class, students listen to 'The Lady or the Tiger' by F.R. Stockton and answer some content questions. After listening, they receive a handout with the last paragraph of the story. Underneath, they have to write their own ending to the story. Afterwards they share their ending with their classmates, first in pairs, then in groups.

4.1.2 While

While students are engaged with a particular skill, you typically give them something to do. Typical 'while' activities focus on **communication strategies** to become more proficient at that communication type. To check if they are practising those strategies, which is ideally also the goal of doing this skills practice, they need to find answers to questions.

The saying ***practice makes perfect*** applies here: several rounds of 'while' activities are common. For example, when students *first* listen to/read a text, they need to find out general information, the gist of the text or only one single piece of information (scanning). A *second* listening/reading round can then focus on more detailed information. Only when students are already familiar with the text, the focus can be more language-oriented – taking a closer look at grammar/vocabulary/rhetorical devices/structure markers…

After every round there is some room for questions, general observation, comparing and/or checking answers. When you focus on strategy use, do not simply check the answers but also ask students to **explain how** they managed to find/do it. Students often explain those strategies in a way that their classmates understand it more easily. Moreover, **repetition** is another key concept in teaching: important information cannot be repeated too often. If you are teaching students how to write a better text, using draft versions and adding structure markers, you will have to practise and repeat the process a number of times before you can begin to expect students to use the strategy autonomously. This process may take several years, some curricula do not even go as far as to say the students should use the strategy spontaneously. This is one example of why vertical learning trajectories are essential: you should know what your students have already done so that you can continue their learning process and strategy development where they left off. At the same it is important to know what students will be doing in the years to come.

NOTE: Give the instructions for each 'while' activity *before* the students get started. It is very hard to concentrate when someone is interrupting you while speaking/ writing/ reading/ listening to tell you

what you should *also* do. Some students will not even hear you, others will have to start all over again…

4.1.3 Post

When students have practised enough (for now), you have arrived at the 'post' phase. In the post-phase, students reflect on or summarise what they have been doing, provide feedback or do follow-up activities.

- **Self-evaluation** tools come in handy here: they do not have to be elaborate, they simply have to make the students think and/or realise how well they have reached the learning goal they were set. Normally, that learning goal is a part of your lesson objectives.

- **Summarise** what you have been doing together with the students: this is a way to check if the students remember anything and if they feel like they have learned something during this lesson. Teachers and students can and should be able to use their fingers to illustrate e.g. the different steps in a stepwise approach ⌷OBJ⌷

- This is also where students are given **general and/or individual feedback** on their specific skills development. Self-evaluation is an important part of this, but some students are over-confident, others too insecure to make accurate observations. **Peer observations** are valuable here, especially when it comes to speaking and writing. Provide students with a peer feedback sheet (see example on Blackboard) and explain what they should pay attention to. As a teacher it is impossible to see, hear and read everything. However, as you walk around during skills practice, you will pick up on things students are struggling with. If several students experience similar difficulties, deal with these when you give general feedback. Never forget to **appreciate student effort**. Rome was not built in a day, small improvements and willingness to learn should not go unnoticed.

- **Follow-up activities** can take any shape or form you want. After reading/watching a text, it may be time to have a short discussion. After writing, it is time for others to read your work, give feedback and rewrite. Ideally there is a logical link between the skills practice and the follow-up activity. Students should now understand and/or possess the necessary language tools to do what comes next.

4.2 Accuracy vs fluency

Proficient language users are both accurate and fluent in their communication. Accuracy and fluency are not easy to acquire, especially not at the same time. That is why it is a good idea to make it clear at the start of skills practice, in the pre-phase, which of the two the students should focus on.

When **fluency** is the learning objective, teacher and learners are concentrating on the **message**. Successful communication, using different skills, is what matters and language mistakes are temporarily overlooked.

When the focus is on **accuracy**, on the other hand, teacher and learners are concentrating on the **correctness** of the language: correct sentence build, appropriate vocabulary use (register), pronunciation, correct grammar. When students are trying to get it right, they are usually less fluent communicators. In addition, when the focus is on accuracy, ongoing correction and feedback is necessary, also while students are practicing. Try to do so in an unobtrusive and encouraging manner, of course, so that students do not lose heart.

4.3 Strategy use and modelling

The best way to make our students more proficient communicators, is to make them aware of all the different communication strategies they can use to make it easier for them. Typical stumbling blocks for students who have difficulty reading is that they want to read the whole text and understand every word. When reading or listening to a text, they stop reading/listening when they encounter a word they do not understand and cannot continue. When they are speaking or writing and translating in their heads and they do not know the exact translation, the conversation or the writing simply stops. For these students, communication strategies are a lifesaver. The attainment targets and curricula spell them out for you, skill by skill.

× Look up the strategies mentioned in the attainment targets for your target group. Be sure to incorporate at least one strategy practice exercise in your lesson plan!

Strategies can be more or less abstract. Asking students how many climbers died in the Himalayas in the first half of 2019 should automatically make them scan for numbers in the article. Turn it into a little competition (who can find it first) and you can make sure they do not start reading the whole text. Telling them to infer the meaning of unknown words from their context is less clear. Why can they not simply use the dictionary on their smartphones to find out? Explicit teaching, a good illustration of why using the strategy is useful, **modelling the strategy**, combined with plenty of practice is the best way to go.

× Match the steps of strategy teaching with the real-life examples of teaching students how to become predictive readers. The steps are already in the correct order.

1 The teacher explicitly describes the strategy.	**A** The students receive a handout with a new article. On the handout they need to write down four predictions and what 'clue' they are based on. They also have to indicate whether their predictions were correct after reading the text.
2 The teacher or a student models the strategy.	**B** 'When you are reading a text, it helps when you make predictions. About what you think the text is about, about what will happen next...'
3 Students work together (in pairs, in	**C** The teacher now shows the article's title, date and source as well. In pairs, the students predict in more detail what the article will be about.

small groups) to practise the strategy.	After a few minutes the teacher hands out the article on paper and the students check their predictions. Afterwards they discuss together how the reading went.
4 Students use the strategy more and more on their own initiative.	**D** The students receive a new text to read, the teacher reminds them that good readers make predictions, but leaves the initiative up to them.
5 Students automatically and independently use the strategy.	**E** The teacher projects an online newspaper article about the deadliest Mount Everest climbing season. The text is blurred. 'The first thing I see is a picture of people on a mountain, why do you think that is, X, what does that tell you about the text? … Indeed, pictures help to predict what a text is about. We will find out if X's guess was correct.'

1 +	2 +	3 +	4 +	5 +

Working together with other language teachers will stand you in good stead when it comes to teaching strategy use. Communication strategies feature in every language teaching curriculum. Students learn strategies when they go to primary school, but somehow forget to use them later on in different subjects. Point out that these strategies always come in handy.

Heavy traffic of mountain climbers near the peak of Mt Everest © Nirmal Purja, 2019-05-22

5 DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS: READING / WRITTEN RECEPTION

"Reading is important, because if you can read, you can learn anything about everything and everything about anything." (T. DePaola)

When teaching skills, mind the difference between "practising" a certain skill (e.g. by having students read an informative text about the topic of today's class) and "teaching" a certain skill. This is definitely a pitfall for English classes, since coursebooks often have an abundance of reading materials. If reading is the focus of the class, you will want to elaborate more on reading strategies than if reading the text is just an introduction to another topic or skill. You want to make learners aware of how they read, how they execute the given task and how they could potentially do that better.

5.1 READING SKILLS

The process of reading implies

- Decoding letters … to understand words

- Using context … to interpret words

- Connecting words … to make sense of the whole

'The "construction" of meaning that occurs in reading is a combination of "bottom-up" processes (decoding and understanding words, phrases and sentences in the text) and "top-down" ones (our expectations, previous knowledge constructs (schemata) of the text content and genre).' (Ur 1996: 140-141) Developing reading skills should be less about decoding letters/translating words, and more about getting engaged and gathering meaning. Reading is an activity with a certain purpose, not a goal in itself. We do not read just to be able to read. **We read for a reason**.

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS

- scan reading (aka scanning)

- skim or gist reading (aka skimming)

- extensive reading (for pleasure)

- intensive reading (for detailed comprehension)

Combining several of the above reading strategies as different tasks for the same reading text offers a nice and practicable opportunity for differentiated teaching!

scanning	skimming
'to read something and look for specific information' (Hughes et al 2011: 85)	'to read for the main ideas' (Hughes et al 2011: 85)
elementary, intermediate and advanced students	elementary, intermediate and advanced students
Task: 'Find the sentence with the word … in it.' (elementary)	Task: 'Find the sentence that tells us that …', 'Find the sentence from which we know that …' (elementary, intermediate)

	Task: oral summary, written précis (advanced)

Whether readers scan or skim depends on what kind of text they are reading and what they want to get out of it. This, in its turn, depends on the task set by the teacher.

extensive reading	intensive reading
For pleasure	For detailed comprehension
intermediate and advanced learners	advanced learners
Task: Series of questions: Who?, What?, Where?, Why?	Task: 'Provide a title', 'Continue', 'Respond', etc (Ur 1996: 146) Task: 'Why did the author use…', 'What does the author mean with…?', 'Which element is typical of the author's style?'

```
THE DIMENSIONS OF QUESTIONS USED TO HELP PUPILS
TO UNDERSTAND WRITTEN TEXTS BETTER

I   DEPTH OF UNDERSTANDING

    1  of plain sense within the text
    2  grammatical relationships within the text
    3  lexical relationships within the text
    4  logical relationships within the text
    5  rhetorical relationships within the text
    6  relationships between the author and the text — attitude,
       purpose, etc.
    7  relationships between the reader and the text — reactions,
       prejudices, projections, etc.
    8  evaluation and acceptance

II  STRUCTURAL COMPLEXITY

         Type of question              Type of minimal response

    (a)  General                       Yes/No
    (b)  Wh—?                          One word/short phrase
    (c)  Alternative, 'or'             One word/short phrase/
                                       clause/sentence
    (d)  Why?/What does . . .          Clause/sentence/paragraph
         mean?/How does . . .
         work?
    (e)  Declarative statement         True/False
    (f)  Multiple-choice questions     Non-linguistic (tick, cross,
                                       underlining, etc.)

The cross-multiplication of these two dimensions gives some 48
different types of questions which can be used to help pupils to
read with greater understanding.
```

(Broughton et al 1993: 104)

5.2 STAGING A READING LESSON

Reading skills lessons typically consist of three parts: (1) before reading, (2) while reading, and (3) after reading. This does not mean that every reading lesson is more of the same: **variation** is always key.

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Activating knowledge is key. You can briefly introduce the text yourself or point the students in the right direction and put them in the right mood by trying to trigger them to make them feel interested in reading the text. You can do this by

-        brainstorming based on the headline

-        using clues about text layout

- using visuals/realia/personal experiences/…

Always give your students a **reading purpose**: make clear why you expect students to read the text and what they will do with it afterwards. The strategies students will use depend on your instructions. You can make them as explicit as you like. Beginners benefit from the teacher naming and explaining the strategy they have to use, while more advanced readers can slowly start figuring those out independently.

Finally, **set a timeline and an activity to be done when ready**. Reading typically is a skill that divides students, especially when reading longer texts. Experienced readers take ten minutes for an article and the accompanying questions, while slow readers could take up your entire lesson. When teaching more advanced learners, differentiation is key.

However, we have to point out that it is also possible to have your students start reading without any preliminary knowledge. For more advanced learners, defining their reading goal, strategies and objectives by themselves is a valuable reading skill.

WHILE-READING ACTIVITIES

While-reading tasks can serve various purposes:

- some tasks are designed to assist your students while reading and/or elicit a reading strategy (e.g. select a headline, match pictures with paragraphs, find specific information, highlight crucial content, complete a text structure diagram using key sentences from the text, use context for difficult words, predict how the text will continue, etc).

- some tasks focus on content, understanding the text. Both factual answers and questions which require students to read between the lines can be used here.

- some tasks focus on critical reading: discovering a hidden agenda, comparing news articles on the same topic…

Do not forget to give your students some idea of how long they have and how to set about the task. Encourage teamwork before you elicit their answers

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

After students have read and understood the text, they can reflect on various elements, depending on the task you set them:

- their reading progress (*what went well, what do I need to practise…*)

- the content of the text (*what do you think about…? how would you feel if…?*)

The results can be put in writing, speaking and even listening, e.g. by watching a clip of the author of the text discussing it. The attainment targets often make combinations of skills. For example: students have to be able to discuss the text in a spoken interaction. Both their understanding of the text and their capability of expressing it orally will be assessed.

Follow-up activities are absolutely essential. Do not just read a text for the sake of reading it. Granted, the follow-up can be concise, to the point and only take a couple of minutes, but still necessary. A discussion (*have you ever? what would you do if…?*), a role play or writing task (a reader's letter, provide an (alternative) ending…) can make the reading more personal and/or memorable.

5.3 REASONS FOR TEACHING READING

- Reading skills serve academic, professional and business needs

Teachers often prepare students for further education or a job, and being able to process written information by reading is essential. This can be somewhat academic (higher education), more professional (e.g. reading a shipping manifesto) or related to their business (correspondence with foreign business partners).

- Reading helps language acquisition

Exposing students to various kinds of reading materials by ways of Deep-end Approach is based on the belief that grammar is acquired unconsciously during the performance on the communicative situations, so it would be useless to teach grammar previously and explicitly (Thornbury 1999). While this approach might be controversial, history proves that reading helps you acquire a language.

- Reading texts is beneficial to writing texts

Reading and listening are the two receptive skills. 'There is a great deal of overlap in the methodology used in developing' them (Watkins 2005: 57). At the same time, however, teaching reading and writing are potentially bound up with each other as well. 'Reading texts also provide good models for English writing' (Harmer 1999: 68).

- Reading texts fosters inspiring, free communication (Watkins 2005: 68)

Although TED-talks have become the standard for thinkers (great and small) to express their thoughts, the majority of them have put their thoughts in writing first, inspiring people all over the world with various texts, poems, stories, articles, plays, essays, columns, letters,…, continually stimulating critical thinking, inspiring people to open their minds.

5.4 MATERIALS FOR READING

- Text type

The main pitfall for teachers is always relying on informative or argumentative texts from sources with easy access, such as newspaper websites. There is a wide variety of types of texts available, so do not let yourself be tempted to always rely on the same text type.

- Authentic reading material

Try to use authentic and contemporary materials as much as you can. Include timetables, graphs, pie charts, online quizzes, tutorials, advertisements, signs, shopping lists, recipes… The internet is a sheer endless treasure trove for English teachers!

- Relevant reading material

Outdated articles that refer to mp3-players are a no-go. Bear in mind that what was hip and happening three years ago is considered 'cringe' by today's youngsters. Also, is consulting a printed train timetable a relevant task when most travellers would use the app? Make your reading activities task- and learner-based.

5.5 MAKING TEXTS READER-FRIENDLY

Do not underestimate the **presentation of the text**: it should grab the reader's attention (illustrations, title…) and use a large, clean type, preferably with a spacious layout. There are various ways in which you can make a text more accessible for a reader:

- Changing the font

- Changing the font size

- Adding more spacing between lines and/or paragraphs

- Adding line numbers (for every five lines)

Besides the presentation, there is the **content** of the text to consider. You can delete irrelevant segments from the text, substitute difficult words with easier ones, change unknown cultural references to elements more relevant for the reader or even start rewriting entire paragraphs.

Adding a **vocabulary list** to the text (or before the reading) is often a way in which users make a text more accessible. However, this can be a tricky thing to do. Which words are you (not) going to include? Will you translate them or explain them in English, risking confusing the reader even more? Does the word mean something else in the context of the text than when you put it separately?

'Learners do not need to understand every word (they are unlikely to do this in real life situations) but if there is too much that cannot be understood, learners are likely to become demotivated quite quickly.' (Harmer 1999: 58)

Lastly, consider readers suffering from **dyslexia**, an impediment that can quite consistently hinder reading, especially for texts in small print and an unclear font.

Besides all these examples and arguments, **there is a lot to say for NOT making a text reader-friendly**. After all, you forfeit authenticity when you start working on the presentation or even the content of the text. In a real-life situation, readers often have to deal with the text without any changes as well. Besides enlarging the size (e.g. on a smartphone) there is not a lot that can be done. Again, variation is key.

'If there are new words in the text that the learners are unlikely to know, the teacher may also choose to pre-teach a few of them so that the students don't get frustrated and disheartened while reading. However, […] students need practice in dealing with texts where they don't know every word' (Watkins 2005: 59)

6 TEACHING LITERATURE

'What we are interested in is engaging the students interactively with the text, with fellow students, and with the teacher in the performance of tasks involving literary texts. In so doing, students are obliged to pay careful attention to the text itself and to generate language in the process of completing the task. Any enhanced understanding or literary insight with students may acquire as spin-off from this approach we regard as a bonus.'

Source: Maley, Alan and Duff, Alan: Resource books for teachers: Literature. Oxford English.

6.1 WHY DO WE TEACH LITERATURE?

Essentially there are three types of justification for using literary texts: linguistic, methodological and motivational.

a.   In terms of the language, literary texts offer genuine samples of a very wide range of styles, registers, and text-types at many levels of difficulty. For this reason alone they are worthy of consideration.

b.   The fact that literary texts are, by their very essence, open to multiple interpretation means that only rarely will two readers' understanding of or reaction to a given text be identical. This ready-made opinion gap between one individual's interpretation and another's can be bridged by genuine interaction.

c.   Literary texts are non-trivial in the sense that they deal with matters which concerned the writer enough to make him or her write about them. In this they are unlike many other forms of language teaching inputs, which frequently trivialize experience in the service of pedagogy. This 'genuine feel' of literary texts is a powerful motivator, especially when allied to the fact that literary texts so often touch on themes to which learners can bring a personal response from their own experience.

To which we could add that, if the literary text you chose does not offer opportunities for the latter, it is maybe not a wise choice.

6.2 WHAT DO WE CONSIDER 'LITERATURE'?

When trying to decide what to read in your classroom, think about the following:

- Connection to the world that pupils know and live in

- Level of difficulty: balance between success and challenge

- Artistic-literary value

- Popularity of the book

- Getting to know literary heritage

- Do not rule out graphic novels, comic books and audiobooks!

6.3 GUIDELINES FOR LITERATURE READING

- For enjoyable reading, unknown words should either be pre-taught or not be relevant for basic understanding

- Engage sequence should not limit students' interpretations, but only facilitate understanding

- Teachers reading aloud make literary texts more comprehensible (elementary learners)

- Form and meaning of texts are more important than grammar or vocabulary

- Support reading

Before reading: set the stage. Decide how much information you want your readers to have. For some stories it might be important not to spoil the plot, for other stories the reader needs background to appreciate/understand it. Needless to say that a confused student is much more likely to give up than someone who understands.

During reading: consider options of activities during the reading process. Why not divide up the reading in separate parts and read difficult segments together? Or opt for independent reading and keep the activities for afterwards.

After reading: always have your students reflect on what they have read. How did the story make them feel? How did the content relate to their own lives? Did they sympathise with any of the characters?

Activities

Reading for the sake of reading is to be avoided.

- Activities 'on or about' literature: Book club meetings, review writing, favourite story contest, classroom discussion, WebQuests…

- Activities 'out of' literature: Letter to/interview with character, role play, who would play who in the movie version,…

7 DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS: LISTENING / ORAL RECEPTION

"For ESL and EFL students, listening to recorded materials is often like juggling many balls. (...)
In order to master listening comprehension, students need a great deal of practice.
They also need you, their teacher, to train them." (V.Nicolic)

SOME VIEWS ON LISTENING

	I AGREE	I DISAGREE
Listening texts are often very easy.		
Listening is often only practised for tests.		
Listening skills do not need much training.		
Listening and writing do not go well together.		
Listening activities are stressful.		
Listening questions can be answered in Dutch.		
Listening texts should only be played once.		
All listening texts should have visuals.		

EXPLORATION ASSIGNMENT

'What is the Dutch reach', 'The Why Factor: Why does nature calm anxiety' and 'Sons of Maxwell: United Breaks Guitars' can all be used in our listening lessons. However, some might be more suitable for classroom use than others. It all depends on the text characteristics, most of which are listed below.

TEXT CHARACTERISTICS
SUBJECT
LANGUAGE USE SITUATION
BACKGROUND NOISE
VISUAL SUPPORT
STRUCTURE /COHERENCE
COMPLEXITY
LENGTH
PACE
FLUENCY

VOCABULARY
REGISTER
…

7.1 REASONS FOR TEACHING LISTENING

Teachers should be aware that listening is the language modality that is **used most frequently.** If your students do not understand what you are saying, they will have a hard time following your instructions, for example. Furthermore, contrary to what a generation of Netflix-watchers may believe, listening is not passive, but **requires an active engagement.** Teaching listening is more than selecting a fantastically funny film clip and having students find a comfortable seat. Why do we teach listening?

1.   Students hear different **varieties and accents**. It also helps learners develop an ability to **identify the differences** among sounds.
'It is during audio/video listening activities that a large variety of language can be dwelled into. For instance, colloquialism, localized slang, reduced forms and even certain popular idioms are often ignored in written texts. Listening to these and gradually getting a hang of such nuances is essential for the learner to be able to confidently and fluently communicate in the real world.' (Peggy Sharma)

2.   **'Students realize the value of listening.** Listening makes up a great percentage of a student's day, both in and out of school. Expanding their views of listening and the benefits of using good listening skills can impact how they use listening. For instance, listening precisely to verbal instructions has a direct impact on a student's success in the classroom. They know exactly what they are to do as a result of being able to perform this type of listening.' (Michael F. Opitz)

3.   Listening helps students acquire (more) **language subconsciously**. It can help them to improve pronunciation, to link spoken to written word, to understand intonation and the natural flow of words… (Harmer 1999: 97-98)

4.   'Students learn to **listen for a variety of purposes.** There are many purposes for listening, such as to determine a speaker's intended message, being able to thoughtfully respond to a speaker's message, and to appreciate music. […] Teaching students how to listen is far different from simply expecting them to develop this complex language art by listening for longer periods with no specific focus.' (Michael F. Opitz)

5.   'For many students, **note-taking while listening is an increasingly important skill** because they might have to attend academic lectures or workplace presentations and meetings in which they have to listen to extended speech and take notes.' (John Hughes 2014: 100)

7.2 GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING LISTENING

Students who have to perform listening comprehension tasks in a foreign language face many challenges. Researchers have identified those typical learner difficulties, which have in turn inspired a number of tips and tricks we now use in our TEFL practice.

DIFFICULTIES WHILE LISTENING

Why is listening so much more difficult than reading to many students? Anderson (2015) introduced a three-phase model of listening comprehension, distinguishing between **perceptual processing** (segmenting the audio stream into words), **parsing** (assigning assigned semantic and structural value to words) and **utilisation** (linking new information to prior knowledge). Her research shows that foreign language students report the following difficulties while listening:

- they do not recognize the words;

- they neglect information;

- they find themselves unable to segment the stream of speech;

- they miss the beginning of the text;

- they experience concentration problems.

In a similar vein, Bloomfield et al (2010) describe a number of typical difficulties that students might face in any listening task:

- the speech they hear disappears quickly;

- it may be hard for students to adapt quickly to the speed and accent of the speaker;

- they may find it hard to figure out where words begin and end;

- they may encounter disfluencies, hesitations, and false starts that may not resemble written language.

Furthermore, Vandergrift (2004: 4–5) points out that, unlike native speakers, L2 listeners 'need to consciously focus on details of what they hear, and given the **limitations of working memory** and the speed of speech, comprehension suffers.' Vandergrift (2006) therefore stresses the importance of **a holistic, learner-oriented approach** to L2 listening education in which listeners are allowed to benefit from the interaction with their peers in order to develop their listening competence. In this approach, 'teachers need to nurture self-regulated learning and promote peer dialogue so that learners can learn to listen in a holistic manner' (Vandergrift & Goh 2012: 82).

TIPS AND TRICKS

1.   **Promote student interaction**
Field (2008) advocates listening education which offers students a forum of communicative practice. Field also suggests there is a need to revise the current approach of traditional teaching of L2 listening, and more in particular, to increase peer interaction and to give learners greater control of the listening comprehension processes they engage in.

●   Try open-ended listening instead of comprehension questions: play a short recording slightly above their level, then ask students to confer in pairs about what they have understood so far. Play the recording again, switch up the pairs, then let them confer again etc.

●   Incorporate collaborative listening into your task design: let students work in pairs or small groups to interpret a spoken message, as it mirrors many real-life listening situations.

Note: Without pre-set tasks listening texts need to be very motivating and stimulating by themselves.

2.   **Differentiation**
The cognitive (over)load while listening widely differs between learners: the easier they can process, parse and utilize the information, the more they will be able to do with it. Writing while listening further stretches the working memory to its limits. Language learners at beginner level have a hard enough time focusing on what they are hearing. Pre-recorded announcements or telephone messages with clearly defined contexts and listening purposes (Harmer 1999: 98, Ur 1996: 108) are favoured. Very often their answers can be restricted to highlighting/ordering/ticking off information and/or writing down words in telegram style. More advanced learners should be able answer the questions on a listening text with well-turned sentences.

3.   **Listening rounds**

In real life, listening to the same text does not often happen: the news changes every hour, a conversation is not literally repeated, announcements come and go… The beauty of listening in a learning environment is that texts can easily be repeated. The use of several listening rounds is recommended. Typically, on **first hearing** the text, **global** understanding or finding out one specific piece of information is the goal. This reflects what happens in real life, e.g. when you listen to the weather forecast and only want to know if you need to take an umbrella with you. In **subsequent hearing(s)**, students can listen for specific **details** (well-set tasks), using strategies (inferencing…) (Harmer 1999: 99, Watkins 2005: 65), or typical/new language.

Notes:

- Hearings always go **from global to specific** (understanding).

- Not all texts should be repeated or even be repeatable: informal talk with speaker visibility and single exposure, fast and natural native speech should be understood too.

4. **Video vs audio**

In this day and age, both video and audio files are readily available for classroom use. Video is typically richer than audio: learners do not only hear the information, they can use visual input to help them process information (movements, body language, context…). Subtitles can also be put to good use, typically *after* the first listening round, as it can help learners with their perceptual processing, linking sounds to the written, spelled words.

For some listening tasks, however, video is simply not an option. Phone calls (business English), announcements through a speaker system, radio programmes, podcasts… should be listened to authentically, without added video. Transcripts can be useful in the same way subtitles are.

5. **Pre-, while and post-listening**

- Pre-listening: the warm-up stage to engage learners, convey the context and expectations from the activity. **Minimal teacher input but maximum elicitation is recommended.** Avoid sharing the text or the transcript of the passage being listened to at this stage, as learners might start reading instead of listening, thus defeating the purpose of the lesson. Brainstorming and discussions related to the topic, guessing or describing the listening context (in detail) e.g. based on a still from the video or a photograph (formulating listening hypotheses). This is also the stage where you teach any vocabulary that you think will cause your students difficulty, but which is essential for understanding the listening. Bear in mind that pre-teaching vocabulary can be counter-productive, as students wait for those specific words rather than listening more freely.

- While listening: the actual listening stage, possibly divided into several listening rounds. You typically listen to the complete text first, uninterrupted, for global listening (first listening round). As soon as students have a fair general idea of the topic/text, they can focus on more detailed content information. As a teacher, you can pause the recording at appropriate points in the next listening round(s), e.g. to check if there was confusion among the learners about what was said, to practise strategy use, to zoom in on specific language use ('How does the text formulate?', structure markers, fillers, etc.)… Relistening (while reading the transcript) and various written and oral accompanying tasks (true/false questions, cloze tests, matching answers, peer discussions, extending a story…) are done while learners are listening or right after a listening round. Tasks should not turn into memory testing and not involve too much writing:

22 Listening
A First read the questions below. Then listen to *X marks the spot (3)*. **Take notes.** There are pauses.

1 What happened during the Age of Discovery? _____

2 What does Dr O'Reilly say about map authenticity? _____

3 In what three ways does the treasure map play a role in books? _____

(Kost et al 2013: 80)

Also bear in mind that **students do not need to get everything or all details being discussed in a text**. It may be a good idea to mention that every once in a while as well. Texts are preferably authentic, if you think a text is too difficult for your learners, adapt the task. Students should not lose confidence in their abilities, but neither should they be deprived of rich, authentic language use. Challenging texts tend to lend themselves for strategy practice: 'learners remain focused even though they do not understand everything', 'learners can hypothesise', 'learners can deduce the meaning of unknown words from their context' etc.

-        Post-listening: follow-up, recycling, further activation of and/or reflection on the new aspects of language. Post-listening 'may be in the form of a game, a discussion or a re-enactment of a role play/conversation they might have listened to. Higher level learners can discuss the merits and demerits of the views expressed in the audio. Listening and speaking are inherently taught together, but beginners should be given more listening than speaking practice. […] This undoubtedly helps build the student's confidence and improves pronunciation.' (Peggy Sharma)

6.   **Vary listening activities**

'Variety is the spice of life'. The attainment targets tell you to vary listening texts: text types, topics, length… basically all text characteristics. Yet if you always ask your students to take notes, then answer true/false or multiple choice questions, fill in the gaps, 'how is it said in the text' – questions, listening activities will soon lose their appeal, and fail to motivate and engage the learners. Try to keep your learners on their toes and spark their curiosity by being (slightly) unpredictable in your choice of activities.

Examples of listening comprehension activities: see Ur (1996: 112-114), ETpedia, and the worldwide web.

7.3 TASK-BASED LISTENING / INTEGRATED LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

As English teachers, we try to bring the real world into our classroom, using realistic situations, authentic content and real-life tasks. The example below, taken from Macmillan's Open Mind Advanced ticks many boxes: it not only integrates reading, listening and writing, but it also mimics a situation in which these advanced students (typically third level aso) might find themselves really soon. To top it off, this assignment requires the students to think (critically), take notes and then put what they heard and thought of in a persuasive email, with its own typical, formal characteristics. The listening part of this lesson (see Blackboard) is a major help for the final task. Lessons in which solely the listening skill is practised, are often less authentic. Task-based and/or integrated listening feels more authentic and gives learners a clear learning outcome, which is in turn more motivating.

WRITING: a persuasive email

A »🎧 **1.11** Read the notice on a university website. Then listen to the conversation. What points do the students make in favour of and against the proposal?

> **NOTICE TO STUDENTS WITH CREDIT CARDS**
>
> There is a proposal for a new law that would allow parents to monitor their children's online credit card purchases as long as their children are in university and under 21. We want to know your opinion, so please write to us at: theuopinions@theu.edu

B Write an email to the website explaining what you think the effects of the proposed law will be. Try to persuade readers to agree with you.

Macmillan, Open Mind Advanced p35

7.4 LANGUAGE SELECTION: ENGLISH OR MOTHER TONGUE?

The listening materials you use when you teach listening are, of course, all in English. What about translation, though? Is there any room for mother tongue usage in the English listening classroom?

'There is, however, [since the communicative "revolution" of the 1970s] one outstanding issue dating back to that era which is still liable to cause dissensions, namely translation, both in the sense of a classroom activity comparable to conversation of composition, and in the specialized pedagogical sense of using the mother tongue for the teaching of meaning in foreign or second language lessons. [...] [T]he basic position of ELT has hardly changed for a hundred years: try to avoid switching between languages, but obviously you will have to translate if you want to make sure that the learners understand what they are doing.' (Howatt/Widdowson 2009: 259)

Facilitating tips and tricks: (longer) pauses after announcements, visual support, no reaction to L1 questions, not every word needs to be understood (Watkins 2005: 20-21, Harmer 1999: 130)

'Some insightful research has shown that as learners gain familiarity with a task, their use of the L1 drops dramatically. Other research shows that use of the L1 simply dissipates as learners gain successive control over output in the L2.' (VanPatten 2003: 80)

> **Main idea**: maximum learner exposure to English, both for educational purposes and to show that you trust pupils to understand English. Learners' L1 can serve as reassurance or for explanations (e.g. exercises, tasks).

Example: to show that they grasp the learning content, students need to answer questions in English on the content of a listening exercise, using the new vocabulary they learned in previous lessons, and not in their mother tongue.

8 DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS: SPEAKING / SPOKEN PRODUCTION AND INTERACTION

"Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment." (B. Franklin)

	DIALOGIC (spoken interaction)	MONOLOGIC (speaking)
What do learners often find easy with this skill?		
Which challenges do learners face?		
Which challenges do teachers face?		
What kind of activities do you associate with this skill?		

8.1 TEACHING SPEAKING

Speaking mainly involves Activate elements (cf ESA): 'the students are using any and all the language at their command to perform some kind of oral task.' (Harmer 1999: 87)

Of all skills, speaking is the most in need of a safe environment, where mistakes are allowed. Speaking can be the most daunting of all skills: it immediately becomes rather obvious what and how you can or cannot orally communicate. Preparing your students thoroughly before they start talking, coaching them while they are practising, and providing them with room for reflection and proper feedback afterwards is therefore very important.

PRE-SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

Before the speaking activity you try to interest students in the task. You make sure they know why they are doing the activity (speaking purpose), who it is meant to be done with/for (audience), and you activate their relevant knowledge. You can show them an example and brainstorm about contents and/or useful vocabulary at this point. If necessary, students can jot down (part of) what they are going to say. Make sure students have a clear idea of what you actually expect (focus on accuracy or fluency?) and how to set about the task. Do not fail to mention how long they are supposed to talk!

Especially with ritualistic texts such as ordering food or drinks, pre-speaking activities may also involve other skills activities (e.g. reading, listening) based on sample texts or phrases, as in the examples on the last pages of this chapter.

WHILE-SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

Ideally, students get the opportunity to practise their speaking before they do the activity/task 'for real'. At this stage, you can answer students' questions and/or encourage them to correct mistakes you hear, elaborate on parts of their dialogue, check pronunciation, etc. Do not overdo it, though: be subtle in your approach. A good and natural way to provide students with feedback at this point is by using communication strategies yourself: repeating things you do not understand, "what do you mean by that?", nodding, raising your eyebrows…

Try to keep the entire class engaged during speaking activities: listening to, for instance, ten similar dialogues, especially when you still have to 'perform' yourself, is not easy for your average student. Peer feedback sheets, note-taking, a student who times the attempts… are tried and tested methods to help students keep their focus. Do not interrupt the speaking activity while students are speaking 'for real'!

POST-SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

After the speaking activity it is time to reflect and to provide your students with feedback on how they did. Always start on a positive note: what went well, what did the student(s) do better than before? Do not simply list all the mistakes your students made: be selective and encouraging. Of course you are not the only person who can give valuable feedback: peer and self-evaluation are often a good starting point or even a valid addition to your expert opinion. Allow students some time to let the feedback sink in. You can decide to organize further practice or provide extra exercises if necessary.

'You set the tone for all classroom behaviour through your own reactions to learner participation, the way you encourage the learners and deal with their problems. Most learners will not want to participate if you say "No! Wrong!" every time they make a mistake or "Come on! Come on!" every time they hesitate.' (Davies/Pearse 2000: 13)

8.2 DEVELOPING DIALOGIC SPEAKING SKILLS

The following are a few basics when designing tasks to help students develop their dialogic speaking skills, i.e. in spoken conversations.

× An activity can be set at different stages

e.g. from half a dialogue given (one role instead of two) or a dialogue with key words to freer speech, for which language input is provided separately, for example on a handout. Gradually, content trumps form/language.

e.g. from routine exchanges (Practise) to unpredictable exchanges (Production), for example a conversation with the doctor vs a casual conversation about the news.

× Conversation can generally be about 14 communication themes, defined in the CEFR:

personal identification; house and home, environment; daily life; free time, entertainment; travel; relations with other people; health and body care; education; shopping; food and drink; services; places; language; weather (CEFR p 51-52)

Check your curriculum for more information on what semantic fields are suitable for which level.

× The difference between topic- and task-based speaking is important when designing a language task, especially when checking your objectives. An activity where students have a conversation about a familiar topic is completely different from a conversation where they call a hotel to inquire after a lost wallet.

× Learner-centred content (on personal and subject level) that pupils can draw on for realistic speaking makes a task more interesting, fun, relevant and doable.

Checking in with friends	Saying how you feel
Are you OK?	Yeah, I'm fine. / Not really. I feel <u>awful</u>.
Are you feeling better?	Yeah, I'm starting to. / No, I feel worse. I need <u>to go home</u>.
Is anything wrong?	No, everything's OK. / Actually, I'm feeling pretty <u>sick</u>.

7 **Listen.** How does Myriam check in on her friend? Write the phrases you hear. TR: 20

8 **Read and complete the dialogue.**

Yuto: Hey, Aiko. _____

Aiko: Actually, _____

Yuto: That's too bad! Do you want to go to the nurse?

Aiko: That might be a good idea. _____

Yuto: Come on, I'll walk with you.
(*A little while later . . .*)

Aiko: Hi, Yuto. Thanks for your help earlier.

Yuto: No problem. _____

Aiko: Yeah, _____ I think
that by tomorrow, I'll feel just fine.
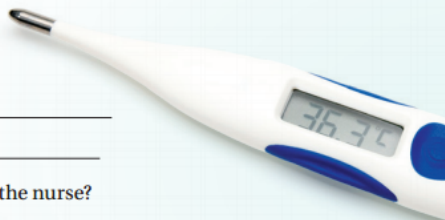
9 **Work in pairs.** Play Tic-Tac-Talk. Choose X or O. Then choose a square, and use the words on that square to check in on your friend. Mark your letter (X or O) for a correct sentence. Then your friend chooses a square and responds to your question. Try to get three in a row.

tired	need	better
OK	go home	worse
wrong	feel	sick

Is anything wrong?

Actually, I'm feeling pretty tired.

10 **Work in groups.** Why is it important to talk to friends about how you feel? Do you ever feel like you don't want to tell a friend how you feel physically and emotionally? How could you politely express this?

From: Impact (National Geographic Learning, 2010)

× Communication strategies are sometimes even more important than being able to have a fluent conversation. For example, asking to repeat, phrases for (dis)agreeing or apologizing, fillers, turn taking rules, etc.

'A mistake some teachers make is to think that, once a piece of language has been studied [E<u>S</u>A], a good speaking activity will immediately cement it in students' minds. [...] Today's speaking activity may be provoking students into using language they first learnt some time ago.' (Harmer 1999: 95)

Language for making a point	
Expressing opinion	**Examples**
I think (that)...	I think you should go now.
My view is (that)...	My view is that the project will fail.
In my opinion, ...	In my opinion, the firm can succeed.
Persuading	
I can assure you (that)...	I can assure you that we've done everything we can.
Making a statement	
The fact is (that)...	The fact is, he's a great performer.
The point is (that)...	The point is, we don't know if they're being honest.
Other expressions	
You're missing the point (can sound a bit rude)	You're missing the point - why do you never listen properly to what I'm saying?
Look, ... (can sound quite aggressive)	Look, everyone thinks it's a bad idea.
Note: 'that' is optional after *I think.., my view is..., I can assure you..., the fact is...* and *the point is....*	

(www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/radio/specials/1756_how_to_discuss/page3.shtml)

8.3 Developing monologic speaking skills (oral production)

Often, monologic speaking skills are reduced to informative 'presentations'. Students come in front of the group and give information about a given topic and have a lengthy Powerpoint ready. Meanwhile, the listeners sit quietly and await their turn. To speed things up, the teacher often has made this into a group work, so it takes up less time.

Consider the following though: 'The ability to speak at length is one which adult, more advanced or academic students will perhaps need and therefore needs cultivating; for other types of classes it may be less important.' (Ur 1996: 129) Try to imagine a situation (non-academic) in which you had to deliver a monologue in a foreign language about a given topic, and you will have to admit that this does not happen very often.

More important skills to develop include:

- argumentative speaking (e.g. convincing your host parents to delay your curfew)

- prescriptive speaking (e.g. giving instructions to a co-worker that is new to the job and only speaks English)

- narrative speaking (e.g. telling a scary story to new friends you made on holiday)

Sustained speech has its rules/conventions: introductory statements (topic, reason), linking/structuring phrases (next, secondly), closing remarks (in a nutshell, …). The speaker has to pay attention to 'guiding' listeners, structuring information…

Besides these, a public speaker also needs to have several qualities in order to grasp and keep the audience's attention. Prosody, tone, posture, melody, facial expression, eye contact… These elements are not necessarily connected to using correct English but form an indelible part of the speaking activity.

Facilitating tips and tricks

- organise pair work

It is much less daunting than a plenary speaking activity. Depending on the activity you are working on, it is also a much more authentic setting. Describing a crime you witnessed to a police officer also includes sitting down before a desk, with no-one listening but the officer.

- have written preparations first

Of course, it all depends on the student group, but it might be advisable not to allow students to have their preparation with them while speaking (to keep them from reading or sticking too closely to their notes). A good way to avoid this is to provide them with little slips of paper that they can use, but are not allowed to exceed, thereby forcing them to limit the amount of words they use. Students are taught to work with speaking plans for other subjects too. Offer the same lay-out as the teacher of the other subjects for the speaking plan to enhance content/structure.

- have students use visual support

Many students instinctively turn to Powerpoint when starting a speaking assignment. However, point your students towards other applications or tools that come in handy, or have them use the whiteboard (or blackboard) or a large poster.

- make expectations explicit

More insecure students are prone to ask peers or the teacher for every single word they do not know (potentially causing disruptive behaviour), so make clear what you expect from the speaker. What is

the expected content, level of language, timing, and especially, what are your criteria for assessment?

- record the material

Recording students' tasks is relatively easy nowadays, as many have a high-quality camera and microphone on their smartphones. Teachers can easily set up a tripod and record the student talking, but make sure to get their permission first. By taking away the "live" aspect, assessment or evaluation also becomes much easier, and the possibilities for feedback increase. As a teacher you can rewind, pause, listen again, or even fast forward if necessary, providing more detailed information for the student.

Why not have students record themselves? They have a multitude of examples online, in which speakers practice monologic speaking, both in video (vlogs, TED-talks) and audio (podcasts). Students record themselves on their smartphones, video or audio, and upload the results at the end of the lesson. Granted, it may take you only one lesson to wrap up the speaking activity, but it will take more time to assess or evaluate these tasks. But it is much more productive than booking three or four lessons for 'speaking' and having the other students wait until the bell rings.

- give second chances

Having students record themselves also gives them the opportunity to start again. Public speaking (even to a device) is said to be the biggest fear that people all over the world share, so do not be too strict, and give them the opportunity to try again. Also, when students mess up, get feedback, improve and try again, that is called learning.

- provide stock phrases, examples and models (scaffolding)Example of scaffolding monologic speaking skills:

EXPRESSING AN OPINION

5 Look at photos A and B again. Do you think either (or both) would make a good advert? Why?

6 a 🔊 Listen to the rest of the conversation and answer the questions.
1 Why does the station manager, Mr Douglas, ask questions?
2 Which photo does he prefer in the end?

b Summarise Ikram and Ella's answers to Mr Douglas' questions.
1 How is life different for teenagers now compared to the past?
2 How do teenagers have fun nowadays?
3 How are teenagers now different from teenagers in the past?
4 Does advertising work on teenagers?

7 a Look at the *Phrases2know*. Write (E) if they express an opinion and (J) if they justify an opinion.

Phrases **2** know

Expressing and justifying your opinions

[E] **In my opinion,** teenagers do the same things that they have always done.
[ ] **If you ask me,** the internet has changed life for teenagers.
[ ] **To my mind,** teenagers have to cope with more pressure these days.
[ ] **The way I see it,** teenagers like funny and interesting adverts.
[ ] **Don't forget that** teenagers are naturally curious.
[ ] **You have to bear in mind that** it's difficult to find a job these days.
[ ] **The main reason is** it's interesting and funny

b Use the words in brackets and the *Phrases2know* to express the opinions. If necessary, change the ideas to reflect your opinion and try to justify it.

1 (ask) listening to live music is better than listening to music on the radio

If you ask me, listening to live music is better than listening to music on the radio. The main reason is that it's exciting to see the band.

2 (opinion) life is much easier for teenagers than it was in the past

3 (mind) social networking sites are a good way to keep in touch with your friends

8 Give your own answers to questions 1–4 in exercise 6b. Use the *Phrases2know*.

From: Real Life Upper Intermediate (Pearson, 2013)

Example of scaffolding dialogic speaking skills:

6.11 At the restaurant

Work in groups of two or three and prepare a restaurant scene. One is the waiter and one or two are the customers. Make use of the functions in your TB pp. 148-149.

- The waiter is used to tables being booked in advance.
- The guests did not book in advance.
- There is a table left, but in the middle of the restaurant.
- The guests accept. They order drinks: wine and sparkling water and a three-course dinner (starter, main dish and dessert).
- The bottle of wine smells of the cork and the meat on one of the plates is too rare.
- The waiter reacts appropriately.
- The waiter asks if the guests are enjoying their meal.
- The diners express appreciation.
- After the meal, the guests ask for the bill.

Write some notes here to help your memory. Do not write out the entire scene.

Functions

Ordering in a restaurant

1 Taking orders

Would you care for a drink before your meal?	Yes, that would be nice.
What would you like to drink?	A beer, please.
Something to drink? What can I bring you?	A glass of wine, please.
Perhaps I could offer you the aperitif of the house?	What is the aperitif?
Would you like lager or British beer?	Lager, please.

Are you ready to order?	Yes, I'll have …
Have you chosen yet?	Not yet. We haven't decided yet.
May I take your orders?	

Would you like anything else?	Yes. I would like …
Anything else?	No, thank you.

2 Ordering food and drinks

Can we see the menu, please?	
We'd like to order (now).	
May we see the wine list, please?	

I'll have / I'll take	the soup of the day / the prawn cocktail	for a starter.
I think I'll try / I'd like	a sirloin steak / ice-cream	as my main course. / for dessert.
For me just	some Stilton cheese / some fizzy water,	please.

How would you like your steak,	madam? / miss? / sir?	I'll have it	rare, / medium-rare, / well-done,	please.

3 Asking for appreciation

I hope you're enjoying your meal.
Is everything to your satisfaction?
Is everything all right?

4 Complaining and dealing with complaints

Waiter,	the wine	smells rather sour, I'm afraid.	Oh, I'm sorry. I'll tell the manager. I'll see what I can do.
		tastes of the cork. Can you bring another glass / bottle, please?	Does it? Certainly. I'll bring another glass / bottle.
	the meat	is too rare for me.	OK. I'll tell the chef. I'll be back in a minute.
		is rather tough, I must say.	Is it? We haven't had any complaints so far.

5 Asking for the bill

Will you bring / May I have / Can we have / Could we have	the bill,	please?
The bill, please?		

Prepare a restaurant scene.

WB ex. 6.11

New Contact 5 (Wolters Plantyn, 2017)

8.4 DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN FLUENCY AND ACCURACY IN SPEAKING ACTIVITIES

'Fluency, in ELT, does not necessarily mean being able to speak like a native speaker, but means instead having the ability to produce reasonably large amounts of language fairly quickly – it is characterised by the ability to 'keep going' and being able to get the message across effectively without undue pauses and hesitations. [… M]any researchers feel that developing an ability to communicate is more likely to lead to accuracy than the other way round. Therefore, in some

approaches, such as task based learning, the initial focus will be on communication, and then there may be a period of reflection which focuses on accuracy.' (Watkins 2005: 83-84)

If there is one skill where communication must happen on the spot, and where you rarely get second chances, it is speaking and spoken interaction. Therefore, as a teacher it is good not to stress accuracy too much. The added challenge of nerves, peer pressure and the importance of non-verbal communication, makes it extra difficult.

Guidelines for obtaining fluency:

-        fluency activity after an accuracy focus (for instance, pre-teach vocabulary needed in the speaking task)

-        group discussions (with peers) before a 'reporting back' stage (with plenary discussion) (Watkins 2005: 84-86)

-        well-chosen topics that are familiar/appealing/engrossing automatically lead to fluency; so do task-based activities

-        A good way to get past nerves and heightened stress is using two recognizable signs, one saying 'go for it' and the other 'be careful', and using them whenever you are working on fluency ('go for it') or accuracy ('be careful').

'The question of student errors during practice is often hotly debated. A behavourist would argue that by making mistakes the learner is practising the wrong things and developing undesirable habits: therefore learners should never be put into the position of making errors. A mentalist view assumes that errors are inevitable, that learners at any given point of their growing competence have command of an interim grammar which is by definition imperfect, that we actually learn from our mistakes. **There is truth in both arguments**.' (Broughton et al 1993: 46-47)

9 DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS: WRITING AND WRITTEN INTERACTION

If you ask language teachers what they think about teaching writing, you will probably end up with as many opinions as there are teachers. What are your initial thoughts? Do you agree with the following statements or not?

	I AGREE	I DISAGREE
Teachers should set writing tasks for homework.		
Emails are the most useful kind of writing to teach these days.		
Students should be allowed to work together when they write.		
Teachers should encourage students to use tools to improve their writing.		
It discourages students when they receive their written work back, all covered in red ink.		
Teachers should encourage students to interact in a written way.		

Teaching writing is required of any language teacher. Please write down what you think:

×   What could a teacher's task of developing writing / written interaction skills consist of?

×   Try and define the **characteristics of an effective writer**.

9.1 REASONS FOR TEACHING WRITING SKILLS

1.   Writing is a skill that is highly required nowadays. Many students will **need** to learn to write texts in English in their lives, e.g. for work, studies, examinations, social correspondence… They may need to learn to write a variety of text types.

2.   In **written interaction,** participating in the interaction is crucial. Tools like mentimeter, joined brainstorms on a collaborate board or chat sessions in a shared Google Drive document during group work are ways to practise this skill in class. Similar to the spoken interaction, students need to be aware of the register that is appropriate in the specific situation. Strategies for written interaction include asking for clarification and rephrasing.

3.   **Writing is hard**. Effective writers possess a large number of skills to produce good writing: (a) correct grammar, (b) wide range of vocabulary, (c) accurate punctuation, (d) correct layout, (e) correct register, (f) accurate spelling, (g) a good range of sentence and text structures, (h) imagination, (i) planning, (j) drafting, (k) proofreading, (l) communication… Students need to practice all of the above (and possibly more).

4.   Checking what you write is not a skill that comes naturally to most people these days. Autocorrect is everywhere and people will probably understand the message anyway. It is useful to

have students proofread each other's and their own work. Drafting and redrafting raises **awareness of what is required in a finished piece of writing**.

5.　　**Google Translate** and most other translation engines are not yet entirely reliable. Especially with full paragraphs, or even full sentences, fatal flaws frequently occur. It pays off when students can write decent texts without dubious 'engine support'. DeepL (deepl.com), however, barely makes any mistakes, even when paragraphs or texts as a whole are entered into the translation box. If students are simply encouraged to do that copy-pasting thing, it goes without saying that this method entirely defeats your writing instruction and your intention to help students write their own decent English texts.

9.2

Hand writing and mechanics

Grammar and vocabulary

Paragraph organization

Cohesion

Coherence
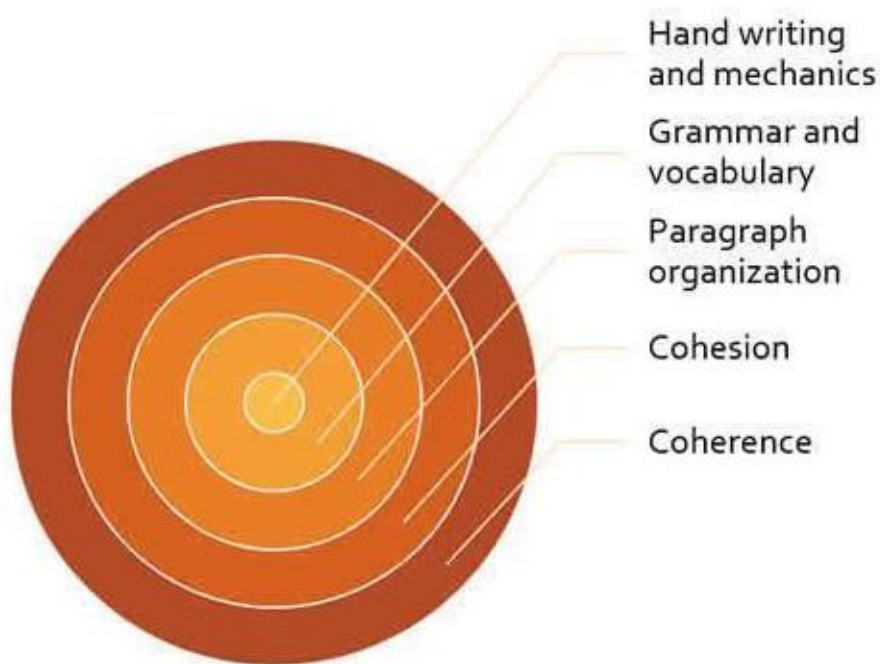
Levels of writing. © MyEnglishPages.com

Gᴜɪᴅᴇʟɪɴᴇs ғᴏʀ ᴛᴇᴀᴄʜɪɴɢ ᴡʀɪᴛɪɴɢ

'[W]riting can help learning. Even at a simple level, learners who copy new language from the board […] are more likely to remember it than those who don't.' (Watkins 2005: 71)

Developing English writing skills entails *language development*: the process of writing (= constructing language consciously) stimulates L2-learning. It also entails *language reinforcement*: 'The visual demonstration of language construction is invaluable for both our understanding of how it all fits together and as an aid to committing the new language to memory.' (Harmer 1999: 79)

To train students' writing skills, they need to learn certain rules and strategies for writing different text types, study spelling and punctuation, and become familiar with the use of writing tools.

Writing as a means differs from writing as an end (Ur 1996: 162). Clarify that – if necessary – when your students are practising writing the language. Often students need to write down vocabulary, grammar rules, a short dictation, answers to reading or listening tests… in English. This is called '**writing as a means**'. On the other hand, '**writing as an end**' clearly and explicitly focuses on (an

aspect of) the writing skill: practising (with the intention of overlearning) spelling, writing an email, a brochure… A combination of both is of course possible, e.g. when students write a written response to a text they read/heard.

Always ask yourself the question: **are my students writing for content and/or writing for form?** (Ur 1996: 163) Expressing ideas or communicating a message (**content**) is the main purpose of almost all writing (and speaking). In the example from Cengage Learning's *Impact 3* (see next page) the students need to compare their personalities with that of a family member. Conveying the content of the written text (contrasting ideas) will be important first. It is of course also important that they use appropriate language to compare and contrast those personalities, which is why 'useful phrases' are explicitly mentioned (attention to form: linguistic requirements). Because much stricter formal requirements apply to a written text than to a spoken one, **form** demands explicit attention too. Specific *linguistic elements* need to be brought to the attention of learners: useful phrases, linking words, structure markers…, as well as *orthographic regulations* (e.g. full verb forms in formal writing, when and where to write capital letters… and *stylistic text requirements*. Layout conventions may need to be taught as well. When teaching writing it is important to maintain a fair balance between content and form when defining text requirements and assessing written work.

Students who have to write something in a foreign language face many challenges, as they are not yet 'effective writers'. They may already lack effective writing skills in their mother tongue, which makes writing in English so much more difficult. Typical learner difficulties have once again inspired a number of tips and tricks we now use in our TESOL practice.

33 **Read the model.** Work in pairs to identify the parts of the writing. How does the writer compare and contrast? Underline the words or phrases.

I come from a large family, and I share personality traits with several family members. But it's clear to me that I'm most like my grandfather, although we're different in some ways, too.

My grandfather and I both like to spend time outdoors. We both enjoy riding our bikes and watching sports. We're adventurous, too. I really like to go fishing with my grandfather. We'll catch our dinner together, then cook and eat it at our campsite. We both love nature. We're alike in that way. We also enjoy working in his garden to grow fruits and vegetables.

It's a different story when winter comes. Unlike my grandfather, I love being outside in the snow. I like to have snowball fights with my friends, but he likes to sit by the fire and read. Sometimes he and I play cards, although I don't really enjoy that very much. I'm too energetic to sit for so long! On the other hand, when we play one of my video games, I have fun because I'm competitive. My grandfather isn't competitive at all. He's also sort of slow!

But it doesn't really matter to me what we do together. I like being with my grandfather and spending time with him. We're a good fit!

34 **Work in pairs.** How are the writer and his grandfather alike? How are they different? Do you think they're more alike than different? Explain.

35 **Write.** Compare and contrast your personality with that of a family member.

(Impact 3, p 21)

9.3 Difficulties

'For many learners, the time to think things through, to produce language in a slower way, is invaluable.' (Harmer 1999: 79) However, writing is hard and does not come easily to most students. Your teaching will improve the more you are aware of the difficulties your students face.

1. They are on their own. They often do not know how to help themselves when they are left to their own devices.

2. Topics fail to inspire. It seems impossible to be genuinely communicative and/or to have fun with the writing assignment. They really do experience what is called 'writer's block'.

3. Red-ink syndrome has demotivated them. Their writing efforts have been returned to them with every mistake highlighted, which has resulted in a (great) sense of failure.

4. They have no idea how they can improve their writing skills.

5. They run out of time: they fail to plan and organise their writing, e.g. time is wasted on layout, single sentences, coming up with a decent title…

6. They gradually lose sight of the (long) instruction and therefore do not execute the assignment correctly.

7. They have no idea how to make good use of translation engines/a thesaurus/online dictionaries and tools. They fail to vary their word use or pinpoint what they want to say.

8. They turn to AI to write their texts instead… and then try to fool their teachers, only fooling themselves, of course.

9.4 Tips and tricks

Some of the difficulties your students experience are quite easy to solve:

1. Let students **collaborate** when they write (longer) texts **in class**. They can find support from each other and the teacher. Added bonus: it halves the amount of feedback the teacher eventually needs to write on their work.

2. Whenever it is feasible, leave the students some room to **choose the topic** of the text they need to produce (differentiation!). It is so much easier to write a text about something you are interested in and/or passionate about, which will be reflected in the quality of their written work. If choice is not an option, make sure you **provide** enough **prompts** (e.g. charts, 3 items that must be discussed…) the students can work with.

3. **Consider being selective**

▪ about *what* you mark, marking positively, or reducing the word count of written tasks so that students can focus on quality rather than quantity. A clear writing focus is always helpful. (See also: writing for content vs writing for form)

▪ *when* you mark. Giving feedback throughout the writing process (self- and/or peer-assessment, checking for typically made mistakes, returning a first version with only written feedback…) will have greater impact and enhance learning.

▪ *how* you mark. Using a correction code reduces the amount of ink and stimulates students to find out exactly what is not quite right.

4. Do not simply hand back graded writing assignments at the end of class and leave it at that. There lies great power in giving **good feedback, feed-forward and feed-up**. (For more information, see chapter VIII on evaluation and assessment.)

5.   **Explicitly teach writing strategies and subskills**. How does an effective writer go about this? Is there a model text you can use? First make a mindmap, then make a draft version etc… and help them organise the writing process from generating ideas to delivering a polished, finished writing product. Some activities that can help you with this (Dudley 2018:74-75; Hughes 2014: 124):
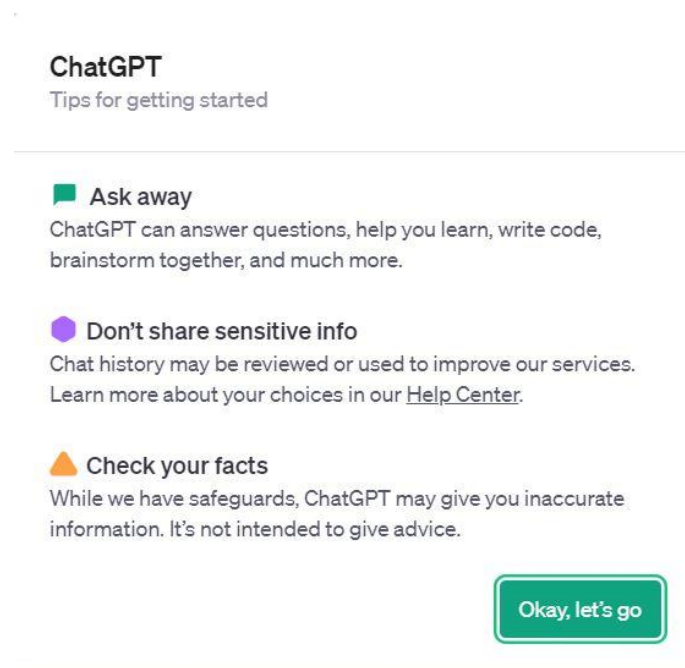
▪   turn a finished composition into a plan;

▪   ask them to submit a plan only;

▪   demonstrate free-writing techniques (= to write as quickly as possible without stopping and focusing on content, not form, to gather as many ideas as possible) (Hedge 1988: 44);

▪   turn a finished draft into a jigsaw puzzle to be changed and improved;

▪   ask them to upgrade the vocabulary of a finished draft (*very interesting, very good, very big, nice, old…*);

▪   remove all punctuation and capital letters from a text and get students to rewrite it;

▪   do register identification exercises, e.g. by matching less formal and more formal words (*tell/inform, try/endeavour…*).

Foresee enough time in your own planning to do this comfortably.

6.   **Help them to figure out (long) written instructions**. Analyse an example together: what exactly do they need to do? Which register/structure/type of text/… is required?

7.   **Teach them how to use** translation engines/online dictionaries/a thesaurus/**tools** such as grammarly… for their own benefit.

8.   **Show them the benefits and limitations of AI in class**. Let them write their text, then ask ChatGPT to improve it, then let them analyse the new text and find the differences. Let AI produce a model text, something to aspire to, so that students can distill evaluation criteria for a good end product and have an idea of what and how to write. AI can never cite sources or be used for proper research: let students figure that out on their own or by showing them the picture below (shown when you create your own account).

ChatGPT

Tips for getting started

🚩 **Ask away**
ChatGPT can answer questions, help you learn, write code, brainstorm together, and much more.

🟣 **Don't share sensitive info**
Chat history may be reviewed or used to improve our services. Learn more about your choices in our Help Center.

🔺 **Check your facts**
While we have safeguards, ChatGPT may give you inaccurate information. It's not intended to give advice.

Okay, let's go

The AI app 'Hello History' allows students to interact with more than 400 historical figures: "Our AI-powered experiences offer users the chance to have conversations with those who have shaped our world, and to gain insight into their lives, thoughts, and beliefs." https://www.hellohistory.ai/about-us

Clearly, AI is in our students' and also in our futures. Let's meet this challenge head-on!

Further tips when it comes to teaching writing:

9.   Differentiate and set **made-to-measure** writing tasks.

The writing task should be made to measure not only regarding language. Other differentiation measures are:

▪   amount of pre-teaching

▪   group work

▪   text length

▪   guidance on final form (picture/word prompts)

▪   amount of time available

… and, as always, think about your students and cast a critical eye on textbook writing exercises:

BOX 11.3:   SOME CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF TEXTBOOK WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Would my students find the activity motivating, stimulating and interesting to do?
2. Is it of an appropriate level for them? Or would they find it too easy/difficult/childish/sophisticated?
3. Is the kind of writing relevant to their needs?
4. Would I need to do some preliminary teaching in preparation for this activity?
5. In general, do I like this activity? Would I use it?

© Cambridge University Press 1996

(Ur 1996: 164)

10.   Do not hesitate to **use technology tools and online spaces** to develop your students' writing skills. (Hockley 2017: 38-39)

▪   Set up a social network for the class and have students write for a real audience, e.g. a captioned selfie. Even if students only produce short sentences, they are still practising contextualised, communicative and interesting writing.

▪   Set up a class blog or wiki to which all of your students contribute. With their work potentially visible to the world, students will probably spend more time reviewing and correcting their work.

▪   Fill in online forms (e.g. application forms for actual organisations) without actually sending the form but taking screenshots instead, Google Forms, surveys (e.g. with SurveyMonkey) etc.

▪   Create mind maps with one of the many free online mind-mapping tools.

11.   **Encourage creative writing**.

▪   Story or plot generators generate the basic elements with which to write a story.

▪   Fan fiction, e.g. tell students to team up and produce a short fan fiction story. They first choose two characters they like from their favourite book or film (not necessarily from the same one).

Then they imagine those characters meeting somewhere: where are they? What would they say to each other? What would they do?...

- Comic creator sites or apps are an engaging way to encourage lower-level students to write short texts. Check out https://www.makebeliefscomix.com/ for starters.

- BookCreator (https://bookcreator.com/) allows your students to easily design visually interesting books of all shapes and sizes, with as much or as little text as you like. Scan the QR-code to take a look.

- gemini.google.com

12. **Variation, variation, variation...**

Setting a writing task implies that pupils have enough language at their command that is required for the task: everyday language suffices to write a postcard, chat conversations or informal messages, specific vocabulary is needed to write a report or a job application form. For and against essays, opinion articles, instructions, CVs, business correspondence, emails, short stories, newspaper articles... may all find a place in your teaching practice, depending on the audience you are working with. Another endless source of variation can be found in the types of exercises you offer your students. These writing fluency activities are suggested by Hughes (2014: 128-129):

- Email dialogues: A writes, B replies etc.

- Write the missing text parts: give each pair 5 sections of an 8-section text. They put the parts in the correct order and write the missing sections in their own words. Afterwards they compare with the original.

- Instructions for a paper aeroplane: groups of students are asked to turn a sheet of paper into a paper plane. Once tried and tested, they write a set of instructions so that another group can make the exact same plane.

- Pass the paper: put the students in a circle with a blank page and a pen each. They all write the first line of a text (*Once upon a time / Dear Sir/Madam, /...*), then pass it on to the person next to them, who reads it and writes an appropriate second line etc. You can finish with the students receiving their original page and ask them to redraft or correct the text to produce a final version.

- The Pixar Code for story writing: this six-line structure creates the basic outline of a good story (think *Shrek* or *Toy Story*). It is a useful way to get the students started.

*Once upon a time*_____

Every day _____

One day _____

Because of that, _____

Because of that, _____

Until finally _____

- Sound effects: play a few random sounds (door slamming, siren wailing, applause...) to your students a few times while they take notes. Explain the sounds come from something that happened in town late last night. Ask them to imagine what has happened (in pairs) and to write a headline and an article about the events.

9.5 Pre-, while and post-writing

Unless you are dealing with highly proficient and self-regulating language learners, any larger writing task is a three-step process that requires explanation and guidance:

1.   Pre-writing: Preparation and planning

The teacher organises preparatory **activities** generating **content**: e.g. distributing and analysing a model text, a class discussion or a brainstorm and/or free-writing session about the topic. The student needs to answer two preliminary **questions**: What will the purpose of this text be? Who is the reader of this text?

2.   While writing: Writing tips for the student

Use a clear, given checklist with things to consider while (re)writing.

That checklist includes a focus on **content** (making sure that the information is conveyed in an accessible and comprehensible manner) and usually also on **form** (making sure that linguistic and stylistic standards are met). This is an example from Track 'n Trace 5, p. 46, which the students can use to check their written work while and/or right after writing.

c   Reflect on your list by filling in the checklist.

Checklist: writing a list of rules	Yes	I think so	No
1 Content			
• I wrote 10 rules.	☐	☐	☐
• I have a good mix of things that are allowed and not allowed at school.	☐	☐	☐
2 Language			
• I used modal auxiliary verbs correctly.	☐	☐	☐
• I used correct spelling and punctuation.	☐	☐	☐
3 Tools to revise and edit			
• If you allow it, they can use (digital) tools to support them while writing: a dictionary, a spell check, a model text, a mindmap… (check your curricula; to make the writing process more authentic the use of tools is encouraged).	☐	☐	☐
• Decide whether they can use the vocabulary lists from their student's books. It can also be a good idea for students to use a (personal) list of words they find difficult to spell and/or 'frequently made mistakes' while they write.	☐	☐	☐
• Decide and inform them when and how they can use AI to improve their writing. As a first draft or as a spelling checker?			
• 'When the composition has been written, the process is by no means finished. No serious writer lets his manuscript go forward without revision, and usually he asks someone else to comment on it.' (Broughton et al 1993: 127)	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
4 (Peer) Feedback	☐	☐	☐

3.   Post-writing: (Re)reading, revising and rewriting

This is the time when students give and/or receive feedback, feed-forward and feed-up on their (peers) written product(s). Feedback is not only given by a teacher, peer evaluation and/or self-monitoring can be at least as valuable. At this point, (clarifications about) text content can be discussed, texts are read and/or compared to find a common standard, and based on that some teaching up to e.g. improve text structuring, coherence, paragraphing, choice of words, grammatical correctness (= accuracy) may happen.

Revising and rewriting (see Step 2: while writing) are part and parcel of the writing process. You could ask your students to hand in different drafts (steps) to focus on and demonstrate the work and effort one has to put into the writing process. You can use the uploadzones in smartschool, different folders in Google classroom, …. (without actually marking the texts at every stage) to store all these versions. Determine the revising steps while writing beforehand and while teaching this skill focus on re-writing and improving the quality of their work instead of marking a huge pile of poorly written texts.

Encourage students to embrace revision and rewriting as integral parts of the writing process. Instead of marking every draft, guide students through incremental revisions, focusing on specific aspects of their writing at each stage. Use tools like uploadzones in smartschool or folders in Google Classroom to track their progress. Clearly define the revising steps beforehand and emphasize the importance of reworking and improving the quality of their work. This approach will help students develop a deeper understanding of the writing process and produce more polished and effective pieces.

-      Should learners rewrite, incorporating official teacher corrections?

'It makes sense to see the first version as provisional, and to regard the rewritten, final version as "the" assignment, the one that is submitted for formal assessment. This helps to motivate learners to rewrite and to appreciate the value of doing so.'

-      Should we let students give feedback on each other's work?

'In general, yes, peer-correction can be a time-saving and useful technique; also, critical reading for style, content and language accuracy is a valuable exercise in itself. […] The question of personal relationships [between pupils], trust and willingness to accept criticism and help from one another remains.' (Ur 1996: 171-172)

9.6 TASK-BASED AND INTEGRATED WRITING[1]

Task-based activities present opportunities for learners to practise their writing skills in meaningful contexts that often mimic real-life tasks and situations (see chapter I on task-based language teaching). Those task-based writing activities typically involve more than only writing, several skills are integrated into the entire task. It usually starts with some input from reading and/or listening. To complete the task-based writing activity, learners are then required to write something.

Some examples:

▪   Writing telephone messages: in pairs, students listen to phone messages left on the answering machine for their English-speaking guest. They can listen as many times as they like. Then they write a note to their guest summarising the messages and highlighting any actions he/ she needs to take.
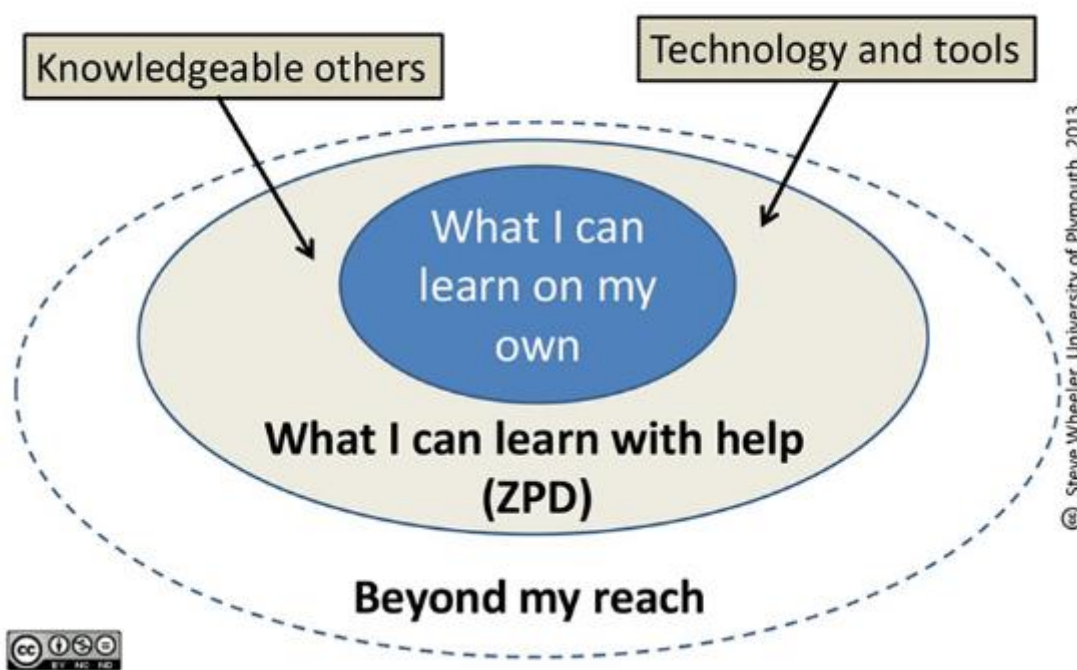
---

[1] This section is entirely based on Tudor-Craig (2015).

▪   Applying for a job: students work in groups of three and decide which one of them will be applying for a job. They then discuss the kind of job he/she would like. After that, they look through online job advertisements to find a job to suit the job hunter. Together they write a letter applying for the job.

▪   Conducting and reporting on class research: in pairs, students choose a subject that they want to do class research on (e.g. favourite music, family, food…). They write a questionnaire with 5 questions and give it to 10 classmates to fill in. They have to read the completed questionnaires and write a short report of their findings.

Task-based learning motivates students because the tasks are real, interactive and require them to work in groups. Task-based learning can also easily include differentiation (readiness, content, process, interests, learning profile…) and can be cross-curricular.

10 Scaffolding: Supporting learners' language acquisition

ZPD and scaffolding

Knowledgeable others

Technology and tools

What I can learn on my own

What I can learn with help (ZPD)

Beyond my reach

Lev Vygotsky's 1978 concept of the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD) means: to bridge the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving, you need help/guidance from, or collaboration with someone who knows more about it than you, a 'more knowledgeable other'. Technology and tools can be helpful too nowadays, although scientific research is not yet conclusive about that. (Carhill-Poza: 2017; Abdullah et al.: 2013)

Scaffolding is a didactic concept not specific to language learning, think 'taalgericht vakonderwijs', for example. It builds on a number of insights regarding students' learning processes: (1) interaction adds value to the learning process, (2) new learning content is better understood and sticks better if it links up with previously existing knowledge, (3) language supports thinking and learning, (4) high expectations of students pay off, and (5) students need a variety of (language) learning strategies. (Hayer & Meestringa, 2015: 45-46) Here are a few definitions of scaffolding:

- Scaffolding (Wood, Bruner & Ross: 1976) can be considered support that helps learners reach their potential level of performance.
Scaffolding has three main features: (a) adaptivity or contingency, (b) fading of support over time, and (c) transfer of responsibility for a task or for learning to the student (Van de Pol, Volman & Beishuizen: 2010). (Van de Pol et al.: 2014)

- 'Scaffolding is breaking up the learning into chunks and then providing a tool, or structure, with each chunk.' (Alber: 2014)

▪ 'Scaffolding refers to a variety of instructional techniques used to move students progressively toward stronger understanding and, ultimately, greater independence in the learning process.' (www.edglossary.org/scaffolding)

▪ 'Scaffolding is not just any form of support that is offered to students. It has to be the support that helps learners construct knowledge and thinking rather than remembering simple facts.' (Hammond & Gibbons: 2005)

Scaffolding is *not the same as differentiation*: scaffolding is *what comes first*. For example: in a lesson on reading skills you provide the necessary scaffolding by using reading strategies (skimming, scanning…), dealing with (carefully selected) unknown vocabulary before reading, dividing the text into parts and having students work together to find answers to questions. If you differentiate in that same lesson, you assign text parts according to students' proficiency levels or have students solve different sets of questions or…

Scaffolding, as is illustrated by the previous example, does not prevent differentiation from happening. On the contrary, it can ease you into it.

10.1 WHY IS ATTENTION TO SCAFFOLDING IMPORTANT?

× Where do these examples go wrong?

○ Read this ten-page science article, write a detailed essay on the topic it explores, and turn it in by Friday.

○ Today we are going to talk about climate change. What do you think?

○ Watch this video. Afterwards you will receive an answer sheet to see what you have understood / remembered about the topic.

Learning Outcome

Learning Activities

Feedback & Assessment
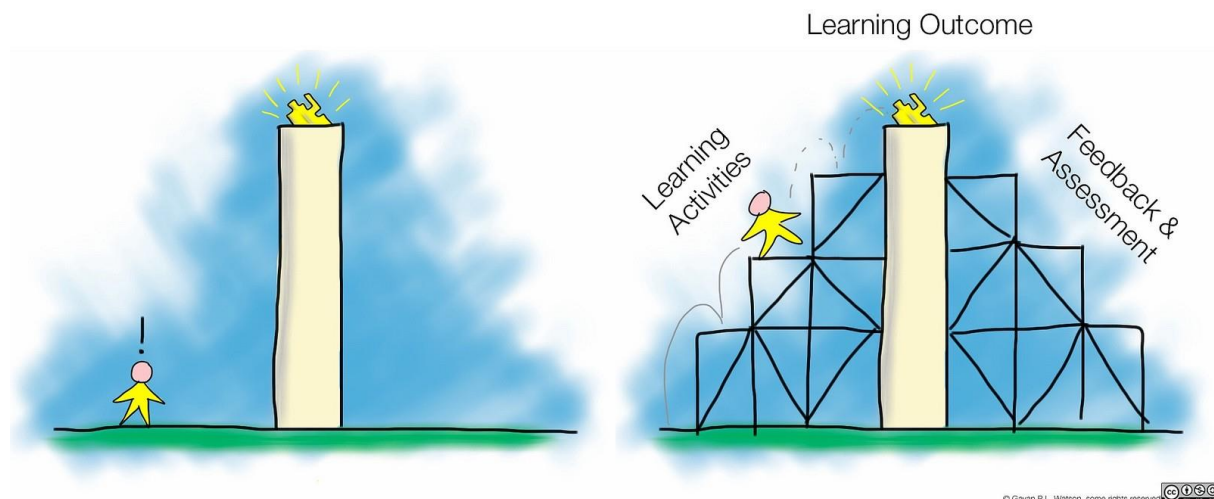
Research findings

Scaffolding has become a fixture in didactic action research. What follows are some findings and outcomes in more recently published studies.

Visual Mnemonic for the Concept of a Sweatshop

A hot factory where people worked

sweatshop

Low wages $

Long hours ⊘

Dangerous conditions ☠
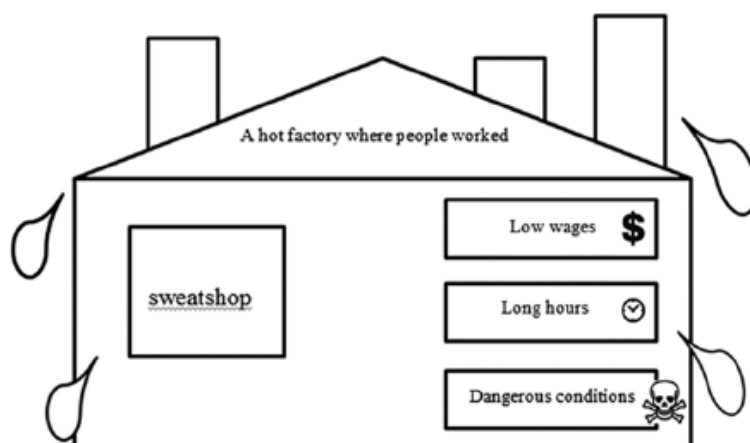
- Teachers can scaffold instruction for English language learners with learning disorders by building vocabulary, making explicit connections to background knowledge, and providing ample opportunities to be engaged with the content while at the same time building language skills. (Miller: 2016)

- While reading, students experience deficiencies in their reading skills such as restricted vocabulary and structural knowledge that affect their comprehension and threaten their motivation. (…) there was a significant improvement in learners' comprehension when they used scaffolding techniques like simplifying the language, asking [questions] and using visuals. (Shirmohammadi & Salehi: 2017)

- Good language learners know how to use language-learning strategies, in particular listening comprehension strategies. In the same fashion, the students who know how to use strategies are good language learners. (…) it is recommended that listening comprehension strategy awareness training should start on day one of language programs. (Kök: 2018)

Instructional support in the form of well-planned lessons based on the teacher's understanding of the standards, students' needs, and research in second-language writing that demystify academic writing and provide a foundation for more demanding forms of academic literacy are critical in meeting the literacy challenges of English learners. (Lee: 2018)

10.2 HOW TO SCAFFOLD LEARNING

General pointers

- stepwise instructions - modelling strategies - making strategies explicit - feedback - feedforward - using rubrics for evaluation - allowing the use of helpful tools during skills practice	- designing and following clear learning trajectories - activating previous knowledge - giving learners time to talk and process their learning - pre-teaching vocabulary - using peer feedback - cooperative learning	- offering visual input - giving plenty of examples - explaining something in different ways - formative evaluation - revision and repetition - offering linguistic support …

Starting point

How can you know how much or which scaffolding you should provide for your students? Sadly, there is no magic wand you can wave to make everything just right for every student.

Some **guidelines** do exist:

'In general, the more difficult a task, the more concrete the scaffolding should be. The less advanced a student's developmental level, the more concrete the scaffolding should be.' (Shirmohammadi & Salehi: 2017)

Another easy trick to put you on the right track: imagine that you yourself are a student of a language you are not proficient in and you have to do all the things you have planned in your lesson in that language. What would you find difficult? What makes it harder to motivate you to do the exercises? Which help/tools would come in handy? What would make it easier for you? …

  × Which scaffolding would you provide for your class(es) to make sure all of your students manage to do this exercise well?
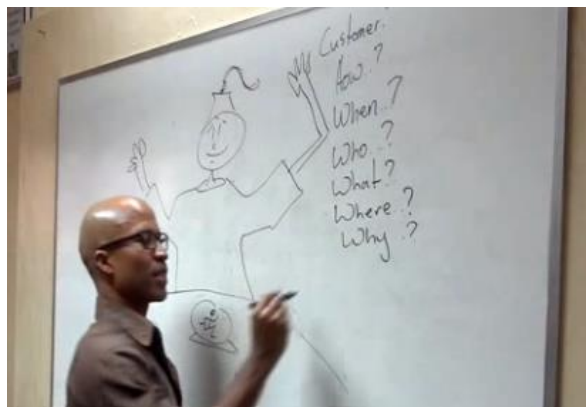
SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

CLOTHING and FASHION

- Find all eight differences in the pictures.

Types of scaffolding

In 2013 Don Johnson demonstrated different types of scaffolding that come in handy in language classes at the Burkina English Teaching Association meeting in Burkina Faso. Find the weblink on Blackboard

-        *visual scaffolding*:
drawing, pictures, graphic organisers…

-        *contextual scaffolding*:
familiarizing with context, checking understanding…

-        *textual scaffolding*:
providing language input

-        *emotional scaffolding*:
safe environment, 'comfort', 'it seems like it is fun'…

-        *social scaffolding*:
(small) group work, cooperation

-        **practical scaffolding**:
availability of tools, space, time…

Tips and tricks

All teachers are language teachers: these tips are as useful for your future colleagues as they are for you. In schools, language teachers often 'drive' the school's language policy (taalbeleid[2]) – they are typically also the ones who advise and support their colleagues with their insights regarding scaffolding and language learning strategies.

-        SCAFFOLDING READING

The well-known Flemish OVUR-strategy is 'hard to beat'. A great advantage of OVUR is that our students have known and used this strategy since primary school. Other reading strategies easily fit into this OVUR-structure, mostly by further developing, refining and/or specifying it, which makes it easier for students to add the new strategies to their pre-existing knowledge.

---

[2] For more information, check www.taalbeleid.org

This stepwise approach to effective reading from Track 'n Trace 5 (2018: 299) illustrates that.

HOW TO read a text more effectively

BEFORE READING 1

The basics

Look at the picture(s).

Read the title(s) first.

Who wrote this?   **Who** is the text meant for?

Why did he/she write it?

Ask yourself

What do you need to do with the text?

Why do you have to read it?   **What** type of questions will you get?

2 WHILE READING

Global reading

Try to answer **the WH-questions**:
who / what / where / how / why / when?

Reading for details

Look for **context clues**.

Look for **keywords**, synonyms or related words.

Look for **numbers** if a year, an amount or a date is asked for.

Use **a highlighter** or a pencil to flag up the information you need.

AFTER READING 3

Check your understanding

If possible, **reread** difficult passages.

Have you understood the **main points**?

Have you **completed** the task?

What would you do **differently next time**?

- SCAFFOLDING LISTENING (Nicolic 2008:20)

SCAFFOLD YOUR WAY INTO LISTENING

Problems	Suggestions
1 The listening passage is above the students' linguistic level.	• Create a very simple task (eg circle the words that you hear, circle the topic, listen for one or two pieces of information only, complete the sentence that describes something you hear, etc).
2 The students are likely to have trouble with the new vocabulary.	• Create pre-listening activities to assist the students with new vocabulary. • Introduce the new vocabulary while discussing the topic and write the words on the board.
3 Students understand the words but not the overall meaning.	• Share background knowledge through pre-listening activities. • Teach listening strategies (guessing, predicting, focusing on the words and information students know, focusing on the tone, self-monitoring, focusing only on what is said clearly or the important information, etc).
4 Students cannot divide fast speech into words.	• Get the students to transcribe a short segment of the recorded text. • Teach pronunciation (reductions, blending, etc) based on the listening passage. • Use cloze exercises to help the students identify reductions (white out the blended words on the transcript of the text they'll be listening to). • Before listening, have the students study a short text with similar pronunciation changes and identify where comprehension problems due to pronunciation may occur.
5 Students cannot keep up with a lot of information.	• Chunk the text (stop the recording and allow time for processing). • Give the students time to think about the text or to discuss it in groups. • Encourage the students to take notes (key words only).
6 Students find it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time.	• Schedule listening at a time in your class when the students are at their best. • Chunk the text. • Structure the tasks so that each new task during each new round of listening is more complex than the one before.
7 Students think that they have to understand every word they hear.	• Structure the task so that it does not require complete understanding of the text in order to do it. • Show the students that understanding every word is not necessary to complete the task. For example, give them a text and have them underline only the words they understand, then see if they can guess the meaning. A basic-level student might underline the following, 'When _Terry Fox_ was _eighteen years old_, he was diagnosed with bone cancer and his _leg_ had to be amputated to prevent the cancer from spreading.'

-

Observe that youtube clips are scaffolding-friendly:

▪   you can slow down or speed up youtube clips (settings: playback speed);

▪   you can start clips at exactly the second you want them to start, by adding the starting time to the url: "&t=2m5s" makes the video start 2 minutes and 5 seconds in;

▪   you can show and/or provide subtitles – always check existing subtitles first, though.

-       SCAFFOLDING SPEAKING

When practising speaking skills your **classroom culture** plays a vital part. As a teacher, make sure you come to class feeling relaxed and well-prepared. 'It's important the teacher is organised at the beginning of the lesson, but it's also important that the students feel relaxed. If the teacher is relaxed and the teacher feels part of the lesson and is leading by example, then the students will feel relaxed and they will feel more inclined to participate.'

Also, the **subject** of the speaking exercise deserves a fair part of your attention: 'Choose contexts very carefully. The language of ordering food and drink can be practised in a fast food context if students never go to restaurants. Slightly change the situation to get their interest as the language they practise will be the same. Learners should always be able to identify with the topic and have experience of it.' (Clare Lavery) Students often find it difficult to get started with a given topic. Allow enough time for gathering ideas and planning the speaking assignment, students can usually help each other out.

Think about **grouping** beforehand: do you let your students talk to their neighbours, or do you work with ability groups, more/less inhibited speakers, … Talking in small groups is less intimidating than speaking to the entire class. Moreover, students can give each other tips, feedback, and – why not? – compliments.

Provide the necessary **language input**, either before or after the speaking activity. Structures you expect students to already know, can be activated through modelling. You can use volunteers for that, show a video… So that students know better what to expect. A slide filled with key words, a couple of example sentences, question words, a skeleton conversation/speech outline… all facilitate speaking in a foreign language. Give them enough **time** to practise in a controlled way.

Speaking strategies need to be practised in a controlled environment first. Fillers (instead of 'wacht' or 'he'), compensation strategies (descriptions such as 'the thing that…, the place where…, a person who…), asking people to repeat what they said or to talk at a slower pace need modelling, and/or even drilling, so that students actually start to use them in their English speech. In addition, the students need sufficient time 'to self-correct, finish a sentence, reply to a question etc. Do not invade their 'thinking time'.' (Clare Lavery) **Body language** is of course important too (posture, gestures, eye contact).
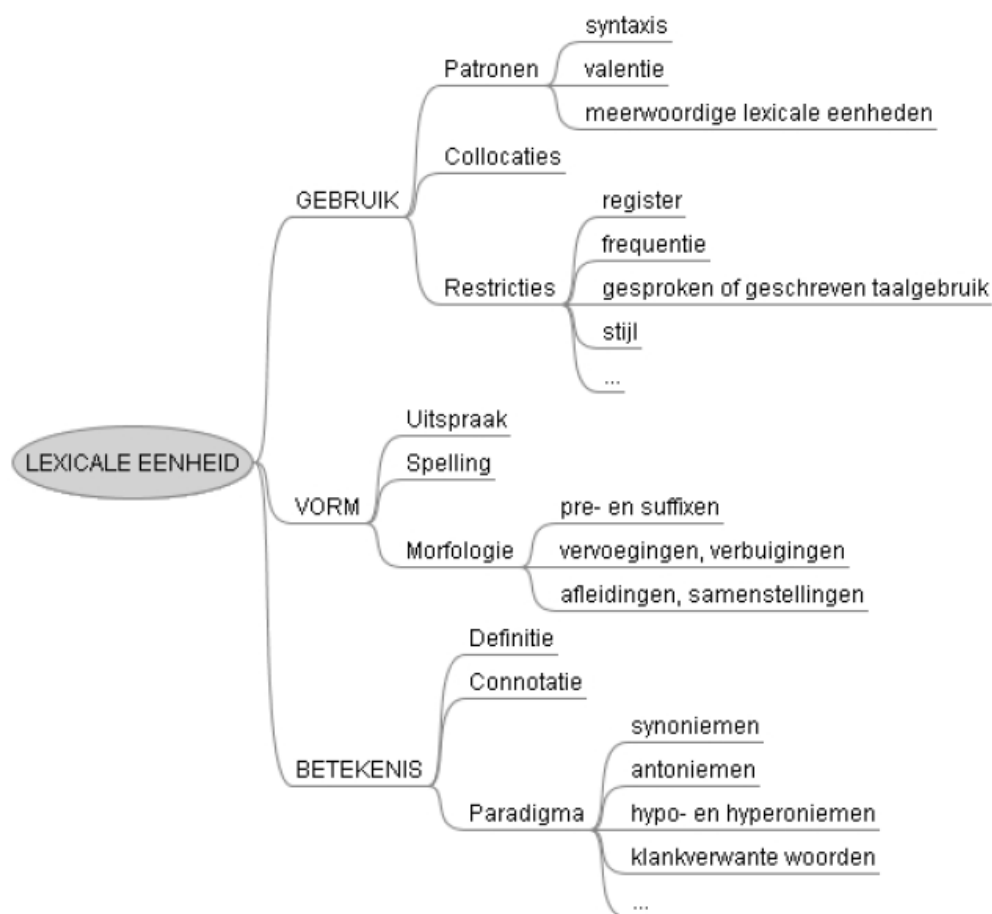
An **evaluation** rubric clarifies exactly what is expected from students. Filming students while they are speaking and then letting them watch themselves to give themselves feedback, taps into enormous potential for learning: 'Video-taping is an invaluable method of helping students to see where their strengths and weaknesses lie.' (Amy Lightfoot)

- SCAFFOLDING WRITING (Lee 2018: 100)

Writing is the most challenging mode of communication for many English learners. The following is a condensed list of research findings selected for their applicability to classroom practice and their relevance to a wide range of English learners in different age groups and classroom settings:

▪ Create a visual context for students when writing (Konomi, 2014). Use pictures, photos, and videos to facilitate presentations of difficult concepts.

▪ Simplify complex writing tasks into manageable steps and stages. (Cumming & Riazi, 2000)

▪ Create writing lessons that build up to a concept or skill to help learners overcome the cognitive overload of writing. Sequencing small tasks and showing the relation between tasks is more important than any single task itself. (Gibbons, 2015)

▪ Model writing skills and processes explicitly. (Carrasquillo, Kucer, & Abrams, 2004)

▪ Use writing templates, sentence frames, and other linguistic support systems. (Cotterall & Cohen, 2003)

▪ Provide quality verbal and written teacher feedback on students' written work. (Hayati & Ziyaeimehr, 2011)

- SCAFFOLDING VOCABULARY

Track 'n Trace 5 (2018 p 99)

10.3 SCAFFOLDING EVALUATION

Evaluation is an integral part of your teaching practice. For students it is a great help if your assessments are clear and consistent, and didactically sound, of course.

Tiny tweaks can make your evaluation clearer and easier for students, especially when it comes to language and layout. A second pair of eyes is of course always helpful to detect possible pitfalls, but this checklist should put you on the right track.

Layout
o   School header and grading are included on the first page
o   Each page is uncluttered
o   The grades distribution is clear
o   Pages and questions are numbered logically
o   Question, illustration and answering space are on the same page
o   There is enough room to write an answer
o   There is room for (self)reflection and (teacher) feedback
Language
o   The language used is at the expected level of proficiency of the students
o   There are no abbreviations used in the questions (unless they are known/explained)
o   Instructions are concrete and transparent

- o   Compound questions are split into single, separate questions

- o   Questions preferably do NOT contain negations / referrals

- o   Questions are spelled correctly

- o   Questions offer extra support, i.e. writing frames, glossaries...

11 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Language teaching is essentially all about communication. When deciding on a communicative task for the students, teachers also draw up a list of the elements the students need in order to be able to execute the task up to a high standard. Those elements taught are known as functional skills, i.e. knowledge/skills/attitudes students need to have in order to execute the given task.

'Vocabulary is not an end in itself. A rich vocabulary makes the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing easier to perform.' (Paul Nation)

Learning a language can in a way be likened to building a house.

   ×   Which part(s) of the house would be vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation, according to you? Why?

'When your working memory is not loaded with hesitation about the correct spelling, pronunciation and contextual use of the words, you can concentrate fully on higher level aspects of language such as using precise sentence structures and appropriate expressions for the type of conversation that is going on.' (Timo-Pekka 2013)

11.1 VOCABULARY

I know words, I have the best words.
(Donald J. Trump)
It is clear that a large and rich vocabulary is the hallmark of an educated individual.
(Beck et al. 2013: 1)

Most learners know that they need vocabulary to learn a foreign language, but how many words do they need to get by? The sheer number of words to study can be disheartening. Vocabulary is not that hard to teach, but it can be really hard work to actually learn it. Of course, nowadays modern technology can supply words in mere seconds, so why even bother studying? The good news is that teaching vocabulary in class can be highly effective and when done correctly, it can save learners quite a lot of time and effort. Unfortunately, it can also do the opposite.

Consider the following situation, taken from Ur (1996: 26):

Teacher:	Who knows the meaning of the word disappointment? *(Puzzled looks; a student hesitantly puts up his hand)* Yes?
Student 1:	Write a point?
Teacher:	No… anyone else? *(silence)* Come on, think everybody, try again!

Student 2:	Lose a point?
Teacher:	No, it has nothing to do with points. Try again. It has something to do with feelings.
(After another few guesses, the last of which, after broad hints from the teacher, comes fairly near, the teacher finally gives the correct definition.)	

- × What is the **goal** of this practice activity?
- × How far is it **achieved**?
- × What makes the activity **effective or ineffective**?
- × What would you **suggest** to this teacher?

'The reason to avoid the "Who can tell me what X means?" question is that most often students begin to guess the meaning, and incorrect guesses pile up as the teacher calls on more students… Two consequences are likely, first, valuable time … is wasted; second, and more problematic, is that students will remember those incorrect associations and have a harder time learning what the word actually means.' (Beck et al. 2013: 42)

Guidelines for teaching vocabulary

In this section we give you rules of thumb you need to be a great vocabulary teacher. It starts with vocabulary selection, after that there is the 'explanation' issue, followed by practical vocabulary teaching tips.

1. Which vocabulary?

How does a teacher select the vocabulary they want their language learners to know? Where do they start? The government does not give any, let alone an exhaustive, list of words every teacher should cover in their classes.

Tick (✔) or cross (X) the options you would find useful for your teaching practice.

	I would teach words that are **easy** to teach and can be explained easily.
	I would teach words that learners may **need** for an upcoming activity.
	I would teach words that learners ask about and **want to know**.
	I would teach words that learners will find **useful** in their daily lives.
	I would teach words that are very **frequent** in English.
	I would teach the words that appear in the learners' **coursebook**.

Paul Nation (2006: 494) says that '[t]he most frequent 2000 words of English, which include most of the function words, are the essential widely used words of the language. They are important no matter what use is made of the language, and they cover a large proportion of spoken and written text.' **Frequency** is therefore a good starting point. Most dictionaries indicate word frequency in some way. As soon as learners know those high frequency words, they need to begin learning low frequency vocabulary. That is when vocabulary learning strategies come into their own and need extra attention in your teaching practice.

Learners find most of the high-frequency vocabulary **useful**: they will encounter those words in their favourite series, they will be able to use them in conversations etc. It is good for your learners' **motivation** as well if (a) your learners want to know them, (b) they feel they need them in one way or another. They may or may not be easy to teach or explain. Typical topics that are **relevant** to teenagers now or in their immediate future are family, home, appearance, personality, sports,

school, work, relationships, shopping, money, travelling, tourism…

Textbook authors are aware of all that. They carefully determine when and how they present vocabulary to learners of different ages and proficiency levels. Still, they write language learning materials for generic learners. When you decide to go along with their word lists, remember that you are teaching a specific set of learners: adding, adapting, replacing and omitting may be necessary. Authors typically find nearly all the new words they present important enough to become a part of a learner's **active vocabulary** (not only understanding, but also actively using the words in written and spoken language tasks). If you do not think your students will ever feel the need to actively use those words, feel free to label them **receptive vocabulary** (it is enough if they understand the words when they come across them) and teach them as such.

In Belgium government guidelines regarding modern language education are based on the **Common European Framework of Reference** (CEFR). It is not exactly copied, but the original CEFR with all its tips and tricks and evaluation grids can easily be downloaded from the Internet. Minimal CEFR levels that are targeted in the new Flemish curriculum:

Tweede graad	D	D/A	A
Luisteren/lezen	B1	A2+	A1+
Spreken/mondelinge Interactie	B1	A2+	A1+
Schrijven/schriftelijke Interactie	B1	A2+	A1

Derde graad	D	D/A	A
Luisteren/lezen	B1+	B1	A2
Spreken/mondelinge Interactie	B1+	B1	A2
Schrijven/schriftelijke Interactie	B1+	B1	A1+

(De Paepe 2022)

|		**A1**	**A2**	**B1**	**B2**	**C1**	**C2**
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	**Listening**	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K	**Spoken Interaction**	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken Production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions,	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective

I N G			my educational background and my present or most recent job.	briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	**Writing**	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well- structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

2. Vocabulary explained

You probably know from experience that words often go in one ear, then out the other, as Dave Spencer visually illustrated below. How can you teach and explain vocabulary so that words 'stick' more easily?
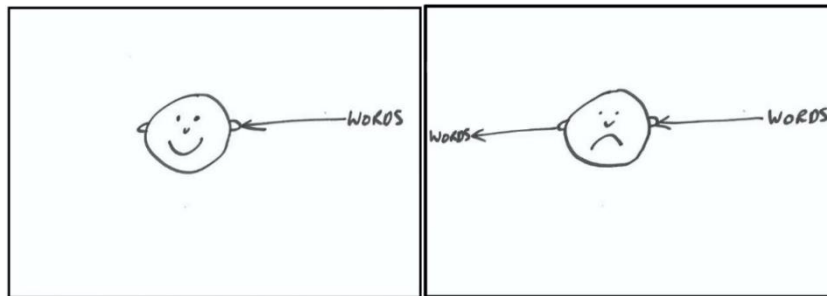
How would you teach…
(1) police, (2) freedom-fighter, (3) kid, (4) huge, (5) bus, (6) enjoy, (7) childish,
(8) make vs do in expressions (+ profit/business/contacts), (9) gloves, (10) often, (11) windowsill, (12) swimming, (13) furniture, (14) transparency, (15) beep,
(16) leap year, (17) frequent?

Not all of those words need an explanation or definition from a teacher. Some words are easy to **mime** or **draw**, sometimes you can simply **point** out the objects, find a **picture** (google images is your classroom friend!) or imitate the **sound**. Give **examples** when you are dealing with hyponyms/hyperonyms, point out resemblances with **other languages** if the words are transparent (from French/Dutch…). Translate if absolutely necessary and/or to avoid confusion.

Apart from its **meaning**, a vocabulary item has plenty of aspects that may need teaching. You can see those in the mindmap. Restrictions in **use** (formal, informal, offensive…) must be at least mentioned when a new item is introduced. Using (meaning or sound) **associations** for vocabulary teaching enforces internalization and learning and supports learners' mental lexicon.

'I don't know what … means, could you explain it to me, please?' is a question that students regularly ask their teacher.

× Would you automatically provide the answer?

It is extremely useful for learners if they learn to 'see' the **form** systems behind vocabulary items. Suffixes such as –ly or -er, prefixes such as un-, compound nouns and adjectives, phrasal verbs, dependent prepositions, collocations… need to be pointed out and practised until learners start to notice them themselves when they encounter unknown vocabulary items. Remember that **you are** **_NOT_ a walking dictionary**: encourage **strategy use** (e.g. inferring meaning from context, does it look like a word I know? etc. (brains), looking up words in a dictionary (books or Internet), etc.)

If you do explain the vocabulary yourself, **develop student-friendly explanations**. Dictionary definitions tend to be concise, rather complicated or sometimes even vague. What is it that students need to know (meaning, form, use) and explain that in everyday language, ideally also including a clear and memorable example. Try to actively involve students with using the meanings right away (personalisation!).

Reuse vocab items in order to get them internalized: 'research shows that the number of "encounters" with a word is likely to affect how well it is learned. New words need to be practised not

just in one lesson but to be "recycled" over a series of lessons to give the best opportunities for learning.' (Watkins 2005: 36)

'It is better to teach vocabulary in **separated, spaced sessions** than to teach it all at once. In other words, words will be learnt better if, for example, they are taught briefly at the beginning of a lesson, reviewed later in the same lesson, and again in the next than if the same total amount of time is used for learning the words all at once. This needs careful lesson-planning, but will repay the effort.' (Ur 1996: 63)

3. Practise, learn, store, use and recycle… and other tips

You have probably noticed by now that vocabulary instruction and most of all vocabulary learning can be trickier than it seems. New words are linked to words already acquired. This is why a language learner with a larger vocabulary has more words to link new words and background knowledge to (Casteleyn et al. 2022: 65). Research has also shown that multiple encounters are required before a word is really known. Frequent and varied encounters with the (new) vocabulary and engaging learning activities are key to help those words become a useful part of the student's repertoire (Beck et al. 2013: 83).
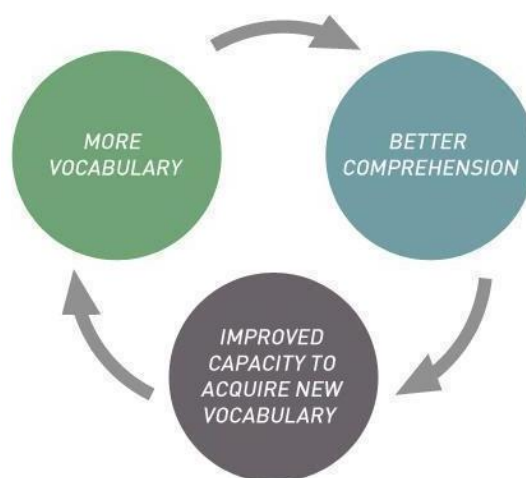
1. **Approach high and low frequency words differently**. 'High frequency words deserve a lot of attention from teachers. When these are all known, teachers should concentrate on training the learners to use strategies for learning and dealing with low frequency words.' (Laufer et al. 2005: 5)

2. **Get students actively involved in their vocabulary practice.** Provide opportunities for students to use the words, to explore facets of word meaning, to consider relationships among words in your English classes. Let them discuss situations, anecdotes, contexts in which they might come across those words, let them look up their own examples (songs, series, games…) etc. Individuals' word knowledge is stored in networks of connected ideas: the more connections are built, the greater the chances that words will set off associations and allow the learner to derive more meaning from contexts. (Beck et al. 2013: 83-85)

3. **Don't be afraid to differentiate when teaching/practising vocabulary.** Chances are you have quick and slow vocabulary learners, and even learners with learning difficulties in your vocabulary class. Determine the core vocabulary and plan for possible extra instruction, translation, comparison activities and strategy use on those words while more proficient learners use that time to learn more words and/or have extra practice. Furthermore, some vocabulary exercise types (crossword puzzles, wordsearches, jumbled words) are extremely challenging for dyslexic learners: take that into account as well.

4. **Words are remembered much better after an additional stage of intentional memorization**. Vocabulary tests are a way to encourage students to do this. (Laufer et al. 2005: 4) It is of course vital to consider the kind of vocabulary learning that is the goal: active or receptive use, collocation knowledge, restrictions, hyponyms… and to communicate that to your learners

beforehand! **Teach your students a mnemonic system**, how to use ICT-tools to their advantage etc. Learning words by heart in a meaningful context can be easier than learning them alphabetically from a list.

5. **Recycle words that have been introduced earlier**. Everyone is likely to forget words that are not repeatedly encountered or used. A winning way to do this, is to put older and newer vocabulary together in a (timed) game such as jeopardy, taboo, true/false 'beat the clock', sorting activities of words that belong together…

6. **Use a variety of activities aimed at fluency development.** It is important that students become more fluent at using what they already know. Fluency techniques that work are for example the *4/3/2 technique for speaking* (https://www.ielts-master.com/ielts-speaking-becoming-fluent-with-the-4-3-2-technique/),
speed reading, ten-minute writing, listening to easy stories… (Laufer et al. 2005: 6)

7. **Explicitly practise strategies with your students**. Provide extensive training and practice in guessing unknown vocabulary from context. **Do not rely too much on uninstructed vocabulary acquisition**. Words are learned from context, but many natural contexts are not all that informative for deriving word meanings. Some contexts seem to direct students to an incorrect meaning (misdirective contexts), some are of no assistance whatsoever (nondirective contexts), some are informative enough to place the word in a general category (general contexts) and only some actually lead the student to a specific, correct meaning of the word (directive contexts). (Beck et al. 2013: 5-7) **Guessing strategies** are only effective if students know 98% of the surrounding vocabulary. (Laufer et al. 2005: 3)

STRATEGY

Tips for using context to understand words

- Look for a definition in nearby sentences.
  e.g. The Gherkin is a real **eyesore** for the London skyline. *I don't like how it looks, it's plain ugly.*
  → We know now that an eyesore is something that looks ugly.

- Sometimes examples are given in the text which can make you understand the word.
  e.g. He lives in a very **remote** area of Australia. *They have to drive an hour to get to the supermarket.* → Driving an hour to the supermarket is quite long, so remote means far away.

- Look for synonyms or antonyms.
  e.g. They lived in a very **remote** and *distant* area of Australia.

- The grammatical function of the word can give you some information too. Is it a noun, an adjective or a verb?

- If you can't find any tips in the context look at the word itself. What is the root? Are there affixes that you can recognize?
  e.g. Eyesore = eye + sore → eyes are organs which make you see + sore is something that hurts = something that hurts our eyes.

Always on Track 6 p. 26

LEARNING FROM CONTEXT

Word fields

Group words together that belong to the same word field:
e.g. outdoor hobbies vs indoor hobbies

Make a **word list**, a word web, an image list ...

Understand the definition

Look for examples: do a simple online search and you'll see the word in many different examples or contexts.

Look up unfamiliar words: make sure you understand the definitions of all your new words.

Mind the prefixes and suffixes

e.g.   beauty   →   beaut*ician*
         act   →   act*or*/act*ress*
                 OR
         act   →   *re*act → act*ion*

LEARNING FROM REPETITION

Write **individual words** down or use the words in your own sentences.

Read through your **list** or look through your word webs. Cover up one half and go through the other half.

Use **flash cards**. They are an easy way to review your vocabulary and to separate words into different categories.

Say the **word out loud** a few times. You can even record yourself or explain the words to other people.

Keep the (difficult) words visible: write them on **sticky notes** and hang them around your room.

LEARNING BY USING MEMORY TRICKS

Visual memory? Draw a picture.

Auditory memory? Replace the words in a song.

Use **mnemonic devices**. A mnemonic device is a word/sentence that helps you remember something.
e.g. We hear with our ear.

Create associations.
e.g. Assign a word to each of your friends based on their personalities.

Track 'n Trace 5 p. 99

4. Types of vocabulary exercises

As teachers, what can we do to maximise the quantity and quality of our students' learning of lexis taught in the classroom? … We should encourage them to use recently-learnt language as soon and as much as possible within the safe confines of the classroom first. (Joanna Stirling)

Emotion, stories and personalization give language a better chance of reaching longer-term memory because of their impact on the student. Short-term memorization is a key stepping stone to longer-term memory because, according to Gairns and Redman (1986), around 70% of what we forget is forgotten in the first 24 hours after initial learning. (Dummet 2018) Plenty of practice, as varied as possible, might do the trick. This is where vocabulary exercises and activities that are didactically sound and spark the student's interest come into play.

Good vocabulary exercises typically combine a number of the following qualities:
(1) they are authentic,
(2) they are useful/functional,
(3) they are neither too easy nor too difficult (Vygotsky),
(4) they are timed right,
(5) they combine different aspects of the vocabulary (meaning, form, use),
(6) they focus on strategies,
(7) they motivate the students (creative, personal input, lay-out, illustrations…).

When you design your own vocabulary exercises, pay sufficient attention to **lay-out**: font, size, possibility to cover a solved exercise to redo it, illustrations…

Typical exercises to introduce new vocabulary - which often focus on vocabulary strategies as well - are either reading or listening exercises:

Reading	noticing (words in bold, highlighted…)	completing collocations	find in the text…	matching
Listening	cloze / gap-fill	find in the text…	matching	
Strategies	deriving meaning from context	deriving meaning from form	looking up words in a dictionary	

Other exercises to practise vocabulary later on in the course come in all shapes and sizes, basically 'the sky is the limit'. You can find some inspiration below.

1. Exercises where students need to recognise the correct answer: noticing, true/false, multiple choice, matching, gap-fill with options to choose from…

2. Exercises where students have to produce answers themselves, using the new vocabulary: gap-fill, short answer questions, speaking exercises (discussions, games…), writing exercises (notes, comments, tweets, diary fragments…)

3. Exercises on knowledge level, transfer level, communicative level

4. Exercises focusing on specific aspects of the new vocabulary:
   Form
   - Pronunciation: rhyme (gap-fill poems, writing song lyrics…), intonation and stress patterns…

- Spelling: complete the phrases with the missing letters, write down the words you hear, hangman, unscrambling words, word searches, crossword puzzles
- Morphology: verb forms, derivations, compound nouns, pre- and suffixes (domino blocks, matching, write down as many words as you can starting from …, charades, choosing the correct option based on the context…)

Meaning
- Definitions, illustrations, matching exercises, crossword puzzles, taboo, literal vs figurative meaning, connotations
- Brainstorm, association exercises, synonyms and antonyms, find the odd one out, grouping exercises, hyponyms, hypernyms, homonyms, words that look alike, false friends…

Use
- Word patterns (-ing or infinitive; position of adverbs…), collocations, phrasal verbs…
- Restrictions and constraints: register, spoken or written, dialect …

5. Classical vocabulary exercises can easily be transformed into more activating exercises:
   - Matching exercises: memory games, walk around and find your match, crossword puzzles
   - Fill-in exercises: A/B-exercises
   - Find in the text: competition in groups
   - Complete the table: poster/post-it race
   - Complete the text: now make it 'funny' using opposites/rhyme…

6. Vocabulary games tend to motivate students: 'I go on holiday and I bring/pack…', Kim (one thing disappears), mime, total physical response (head shoulders knees and toes), scrabble, who/what is it, happy families… the possibilities are endless. These are also ideal to fill a spare moment at the end of class and a good way to recycle and refresh vocabulary without it being too obvious.

5. Make students learn more vocabulary
'To attain really good proficiency, students need to learn masses of vocabulary outside of class.'
(Seth Lindstromberg 2004: 143)

It is impossible to learn all the vocabulary you need during English classes. Encourage learners to take responsibility for their own vocabulary learning. 'If students know what vocabulary to learn and how to learn it, their learning can be much more effective than if they are reliant on teacher prepared exercises and material.' (Laufer et al 2005: 6)

- *Have the students read something new every day:* Instagram captions, (fake) news on social media, memes, stories… Research shows that most people increase their vocabulary by reading!
- *Have the student write something every day:* it helps to consolidate word knowledge and it ensures that you become more aware of orthography.

- *Have the students watch films and series with subtitles/closed captions*: it is usually a fun activity they already do and they see and hear vocabulary in context.

- *Have the students listen (and sing along) to music*: music is stored in a special part of the brain and things you learn with music stick more easily. Singing along is fun pronunciation practice too.

11.2 PRONUNCIATION

*It is worth spending time on pronunciation early in the learning of a language
because later remedial work on pronunciation requires much more effort.*
(Paul Nation 2014: 35)

The younger learners are when they learn a language, the better the chances that they will develop native-like pronunciation. 'Most older learners may need to be satisfied with a comprehensible accented pronunciation, although extra effort can result in improvement.' (Nation 2014: 34)

×   When did you start to learn English?

×   Where would you situate your English pronunciation on the scale from 'comprehensible' to 'native'? Why?

More advanced learners still benefit from explicit pronunciation practice as well. Understanding and using correct pronunciation in fluent speech is a key part of language learning.

1. Reasons for teaching pronunciation

*Learning to pronounce the language in a clear way is a very important learning goal.
Clear pronunciation will help you to be better understood by native speakers,
and they will also appreciate your efforts. (Nation 2014: 34)*

'Overall, pronunciation is probably the one area of language that receives least attention in the classroom. …[T]here is a physical aspect to teaching pronunciation which makes it highly challenging to teach and learn.' (Hughes 2014: 189)

Communicative language teaching implies paying attention to **pronunciation** too. Correct pronunciation is vital for learners' L2 **intelligibility.** Bear in mind, though, that intelligibility relies on the listener understanding the speaker, which can be completely different (and easier) in a classroom context than when it happens with a random person in the street.

It is a **learning objective**: not only should learners get their own pronunciation right, they also have to understand the pronunciation used by other language users. From the moment our students start to learn the language, we should strive to teach them correct pronunciation: clear pronunciation, careful articulation, natural intonation in Standard English is what we are ultimately aiming for.

American English or British English? 'The aim of pronunciation teaching must be that the students can produce English speech which is intelligible in the areas where they will use it. […] only to ensure intelligibility, not to achieve a total set of native-speaker-like variations.' (Broughton et al 1993: 58)

2. What is pronunciation?

pronunciation *noun BrE /prəˌnʌnsiˈeɪʃn/ ; AmE /prəˌnʌnsiˈeɪʃn/*
*1. [uncountable, countable] the way in which a language
or a particular word or sound is pronounced;
2. [singular] the way in which a particular person pronounces the words of a language*
https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/

Pronunciation involves (1) **sounds** (phonology), (2) **stress and rhythm** (prosody), and (3) **intonation**. Only **practice** will teach students about pronunciation. And before that, students need to be able to ('receptively') **recognize speech** (patterns). (Broughton et al 1993: 49)

Sounds

The English language has 44 phonemes or basic sounds, that is about 4 more than Dutch, whereas the average language only has 35. (https://www.ucl.ac.uk/) Some of the English phonemes simply do not exist in our learners' mother tongue(s), which automatically makes them challenging and worth teaching. The best way to do this is to make learners aware of how the mouth produces those phonemes, in order to raise their awareness of how to adjust their own pronunciation.

> **What sounds of English need our attention in pronunciation classes?**
> Make a list of sounds (use both orthographic and broad, phonemic spelling) and add a short explanation stating why each sound should be dealt with in your English classes.

Stress and rhythm

'Words with more than one syllable in English usually have one syllable which is stressed or emphasised more than the other (unstressed) syllable(s). Incorrect stress in a word makes is difficult to understand. In fact, **when students mispronounce a word, getting them to produce the correct word stress can be one of the fastest ways to improve their intelligibility**.' (Hughes 2014: 190)

Many students are also unaware of the typical features of connect speech, where the English seem to 'eat' their sounds, unstressed syllables and seemingly even words (weak forms). Examples are the 'loss' of sounds (elision), for example 'and' turning into 'n' in 'bread and butter'; the 'addition' of sounds like /r/, /w/ and /j/ (intrusion), following a predictable pattern, for example, 'I /j/ always do'; the linking of the final consonant and the initial vowel, unless there is punctuation that stops it. (Millin 2015)

Intonation

As you can see in the illustration below, English has more or less double the pitch range of Dutch. This may feel like exaggeration to both yourself and your students, but it does make a speaker sound far more authentic when they explore the full range in their speech. A teaching trick would be to really focus on this exaggeration and to let students run a bit wild with it. The exaggerated intonation, when recorded, will show them that it actually sounds good.

(Collins/Vandenbergen 2000: 80)

'Obviously, there may be differences in the intonation range exploited (the distance between the lowest and the highest note in pitch variation). These differences exist among individuals (or even with one individual on different occasions), but may also be characteristic of the way in which a given language makes use of intonation. An instance in point is the difference between RP English and Dutch. Whereas in Dutch the interval between pitch movements ranges from 4 to 8 semitones (i.e.

between one third and two thirds of an octave) [...], English has a range of about 12 semitones (i.e. a full octave) and needs reference to three levels of description (High, Mid and Low). The English M-level roughly corresponds to the Dutch High level [...]. When shifting from Dutch to English, it is therefore imperative that one should extend one's intonation range.' (Goossens 1996: 3)

3. Guidelines for teaching pronunciation

Until students come to value pronunciation practice activities,
there will be little point in doing them,
so take the time to discuss the value of practising pronunciation before you make any decisions about
the best way to teach it to your students. (Edmund Dudley)

---

10 tips for building confidence with pronunciation

1. Establish a supportive classroom environment
2. Provide plenty of low-pressure activities for deliberate practice, don't try to fix things instantly
3. Encourage students to be authentic – it is entirely natural to retain some influence of their L1
4. Get students to record themselves
5. Do self-evaluation
6. Break the silence – provide some background noise while they practise (e.g. https://coffitivity.com/)
7. Get students to listen carefully to connected speech chunks
8. Get students to read L1 texts with English-like pronunciation
9. Take phoneme selfies
10. Praise effort

Dudley (2018: 110-111)

'Pronunciation teaching should almost certainly be included in other types of lesson, but in many cases separate lessons may be useful as well.' (Watkins 2005: 49-50)

'A useful guide is the precept "**little and often**".' (Broughton et al 1993: 62)

'Probably the deliberate teaching of pronunciation is less essential than, say, the teaching of grammar or vocabulary, but this does not mean it should not be done at all. I would recommend occasional short sessions directing learners' attention to and giving practice in aspects of pronunciation that are clearly problematic for them, as well as casual correction in the course of other activities.' (Ur 1996: 55)

- **Master the pronunciation aspect(s) you are teaching**. If you do not get it right yourself, you will find it harder to assist your students in their learning process. If you are too shy to model the sound(s) yourself, either find a good recording or improve your confidence levels by thorough practice. Macmillan Education ELT has put an instructive video series with expert Adrian Underhill on YouTube to help language teachers to teach pronunciation in a clear, learner-friendly way.

- **Present sounds in a contrastive way**. 'The deliberate study of pronunciation should involve first of all finding out what the difficult sounds are. This will largely depend on the differences between

your first language and the language you are learning.' (Nation 2014: 35) Think for example of opposition to other English sounds or sounds from L1 and minimal pairs such as 'bed' vs. 'bet'.

- **Give learners the opportunity to say the word (sequence) several times (imitation).** Choral drilling, where the teacher models the language and the learners repeat, makes learners feel safe while they are learning new language. Even if their pronunciation is not perfect, they repeat with the group and can practice safely.

- Make pronunciation visual (and conscious):
  e.g. The magic 'e' changes words by lengthening the preceding vowels.

bat – bat**e**	mat – mat**e**	mill – mil**e**
cat – Kat**e**	rat – rat**e**	rot – rot**e**
fat – fat**e**	tat – Tat**e**	luck – Luk**e**
hat – hat**e**	pet – Pet**e**	

  e.g. **An 'e' at the end of a word makes the vowel say its name.**
  (= vowel pronounced as in alphabet) (Kenworthy 1996: 104)

Pronunciation
Regular past tense verb endings: -ed endings

A 🎧 2–43 **Listen and repeat.**

1. They stay<u>ed</u> in a great place.   /d/
2. I check<u>ed</u> my emails in the hotel.   /t/
3. We visit<u>ed</u> a museum.   /id/

B 🎧 2–44 **Listen.** Circle the correct sounds.

1. We watched a movie on the airplane.   /d/   /t/   /id/
2. He invited me to a picnic.   /d/   /t/   /id/
3. She shared her photos.   /d/   /t/   /id/
4. I liked Australia.   /d/   /t/   /id/
5. We wanted to go to England.   /d/   /t/   /id/
6. They hiked in the mountains.   /d/   /t/   /id/

C **Work with a partner.** Take turns to read the sentences in **B**.

(Time Zones 1, p 113)

- If you decide to use **phonetic symbols**, only teach the ones for problematic sounds (Watkins 2005: 50, Broughton et al 1993: 62). If you teach your pupils explicitly and systematically the links between letters and sounds, the so-called 'phonics' approach, this has more effect than if you teach your pupils to read whole words without immediately picking out the sounds and letters, the so-called 'whole language' approach (Casteleyn et al. 2022: 82).

- **Do not blend pronunciation activities with skills practice**: treat them as separate entities in your lesson plan. There is nothing wrong with having students prepare and read a text out loud for pronunciation purposes, but do not expect them to focus on text comprehension at the same time.

- **Encourage your students to practise their pronunciation on their own.** Similar to teaching vocabulary, there is only so much you can do about learners' pronunciation in class. There are

excellent free resources available for self-study:

- LearnEnglish Sounds Right (free app from the British Council)
- Sounds: The Pronunciation App (from Macmillan)
- http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/features/pronunciation

To practise pronunciation of entire words, guide them to the speaker buttons in online **English dictionaries**, where they can choose between American and British English, for example when you are teaching new vocabulary in class. To practise full sentences and even texts, introduce them to **oddcast** 'text to speech' (https://www.oddcast.com/technologies/tts/), where they can also select speakers of different varieties of English.

EXTRA: Taking care of your vocal cords

[A]voiding vocal fatigue is actually a simple thing. The adoption of a few good habits can improve both vocal health and use of voice. … The voice is a teacher's most important tool – it's worth investing in. (http://www.gtcs.org.uk)

'**Voice care is an issue of major concern to teachers and trainee teachers.** The nature of the job, coupled with a frequent lack of voice training, means that teachers are at considerably greater risk than most other groups of employees of experiencing vocal problems at some point in their careers. Statistics from Voice Care UK have shown that **teachers are eight times more likely to suffer from voice-related health conditions than other professions**. Newly-qualified teachers are at even greater risk, with 50 per cent … suffering voice loss during their first year in teaching, according to a study carried out by Greenwich University.' (https://neu.org.uk/advice/voice-care-teachers)

The voice is a teacher's cherished instrument, so taking good care of it should be self-evident. Learn to use it correctly – take deep breaths, ensure you have good posture and project your voice from your midriff. Regularly sip water, stop talking and be quiet every now and then, and if you know you are going to speak English with its full intonation range for longer stretches of time, do some warm-up exercises first.

11.3 SPELLING

English is different. A single sound may take a dozen or more forms when written down. … There have been many (unsuccessful) attempts to regularize English spelling, and for over a hundred years, advocates of reform have claimed, jokingly, that you could spell fish with the (non-existent) word ghoti. (https://www.macmillandictionary.com/learn/spelling/tips)

1. The problem with English spelling

English spelling is notoriously difficult (Hughes 2014: 124)

'In most languages there is a fairly clear correspondence between sounds and symbols: certain letters or combinations of letters are pronounced in certain ways, and if there are variations, these are governed by consistent rules […]. There are, of course, languages where there are many exceptions to such rules, many words whose pronunciation could not be logically predicted from their spelling, and vice versa – English being an example.' (Ur 1996: 56)

Still, English spelling is not entirely random. There are some regular patterns to be discovered (and taught!) and it can often be traced back to the three main sources English words come from: Germanic, the classic languages and other loanwords.

As a consequence, an English teacher will have to spend more time training spelling than another L2 colleague.

Notes:
1. **American English spelling** (as well as its vocabulary and pronunciation) slightly differs from British English. Point out differences whenever relevant.

2. Modern **spellcheckers** may seem wonderful, but you cannot always rely on them: as long as you have written a valid word, they do not complain. 'A sentence like 'I sore a plain' (I saw a plane) will get the green light from most spellcheckers.' (Macmillan)

British			
-our	-tre	-nce	-elled, -elling
colour	theatre	defence	travelled, travelling
labour	centre	offence	cancelled, cancelling
humour	metre	licence	labelled, labelling
American			
-or	-ter	-nse	-eled, -eling
color	theater	defense	traveled, traveling
labor	center	offense	canceled, canceling
humor	meter	license	labeled, labeling

2. Guidelines for teaching spelling

- **Devote regular time to spelling and point out features** such as silent letters, funny endings, consistencies like affixes etc.

- **Read**… the more they see correct spelling, the more confident your learners will be when they need to write correctly spelled words. Be careful with (too many) spelling jokes – **make sure you show correct spelling as often as you can**.

- **Reading aloud** can help students to connect written syllables, words, phrases, sentences with their spoken counterparts. That is also why it can be useful to work with so called 'tapescripts', music lyrics (mind copyright!) and spoken versions of reading texts to listen and read simultaneously.

- **Do discrimination exercises**: English minimal pairs (only 1 sound-letter combination differs), word list with L1 and English words sharing the same spelling (+ reading aloud). Be careful, though: this approach might just as well increase the level of confusion in students (Boers 2011: 7-8).

- Play **spelling games:** for example hangman can be an excellent activity when there is time to fill at the end of a (vocabulary?) lesson.

- **Dictation** of words or word pairs or sentences (Ur 1996: 58) can also help students to become more aware of the (non-)relation between what they hear and what they write. **Note**: you can NEVER expect students to write down words correctly if they do not know or understand them properly. For less advanced students **visual input** or assistance is vital.

- Teach your students how to use their **spellchecker** and why it cannot be entirely trusted. The same goes for online correction tools like Grammarly (American English) to correct their written texts.

- **Use your students' commonly misspelled words in class**. You can write a mix of about 10 correctly and incorrectly spelled words on the board and get the students to discuss which 5 of them are wrong. Write both the correct and incorrect spellings of the words on the board and ask students to pick the correct ones and cross out the others (so that they do not get the wrong spelling imprinted in their brains). Or type the incorrectly spelled words into a word cloud tool to create a word cloud to show to your students. Ask students to correct the mistakes in each word, then check the correct spellings with the class. Finally, create a new word cloud, with the correctly spelled versions of the same words. Print it out and put it on the wall and/or distribute it to your students. By seeing the correct spelling regularly, it will remind them how to spell those words in the future.

   (ETpedia, Hockly 2017: 58; Hughes 2014: 124)

- **Make spelling visual (and conscious)**. Encourage your students to look for spelling patterns, for example in word lists where words with similar patterns are listed.

e.g. plural -s or -es? **FOXY words often have the ending '-es' in the plural.**	
shel-**f**	shelves, halves
potat-**o**	potatoes
bo-**x** (and other sibilants: **ch, s, sh, z**)	boxes, beaches
cherr-**y** (after consonants)	cherries, colonies
e.g. /iː/ = <ie> or <ei> ? **i before e , except after c**	
bel**ie**ve, ch**ie**f, f**ie**ld, gr**ie**f, p**ie**ce, sh**ie**ld **cei**ling, de**cei**ve, re**cei**ve, re**cei**pt Exceptions: s**ei**ze, N**ei**l, K**ei**th *(Swan 1995: 559)*	

Remember, it could be worse… When Dr. Johnson compiled his dictionary in 1755, English spelling was all over the place, and there was, he said, 'still great uncertainty among the best critics'. One of his objectives was to pin down a single spelling for each word. He was largely successful, even if (as he said) he often had to 'decide between custom and reason'. (Macmillan)

11.4 CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND ENGLISHES

1. What is cultural background?

Content: the tricky part here is to not stick to high-brow culture from the UK. While it is perfectly reasonable to have a look at the British royal family or the stereotype of the quaint gentleman with the bowler hat and the umbrella, you should not leave it at that.

> Examples: daily life, tourism, history, music, economics, youth culture, language, dining, going out, nature conservation, politics, fashion trends...

Materials: try to use as much authentic material as you can! When you go on holiday, take things with you. The more real-life, the better. Your materials do not even have to be from English-speaking countries!

> Examples: Films, episodes from TV-series, print advertising, music videos, literature, websites, infographs, animated videos, magazines, newspapers, cereal boxes, menus, kid's placemats from restaurants, tourist brochures...

Tasks: the internet nowadays offers many possibilities for authentic tasks, such as pairing students up with pen pals in foreign countries. Not all schools need to have an exchange programme, but try to make use of the opportunities that are all around you.

> Examples: webquest, advertising products, email writing, study tour, eTwinning projects, Skyping, taking part in contests, creative writing, acting, designing...

2. Englishes

It needs no clarification that English as a global language has hundreds, maybe even thousands of varieties. While most teachers try to speak a form of (British) English that for native speakers is difficult to place, we sometimes ignore the rich spectrum of Englishes that is all around us.

It speaks highly of a teacher when you use materials by native speakers that speak the language very clearly, without a trace of a regional accent, or without any specific vocabulary, idiom or grammatical construction. However, in doing this, you also forfeit authenticity, because the majority of the communication in English the students will have in the future will be between non-native speakers, and in an increasingly global world, we can only reasonably expect this to grow.

At the same time, students are genuinely interested in Englishes. Throw in a little Irish lilt, an Australian abbreviation or an idiom from the South of the USA, and you will have their interest. Coursebooks often stick to the difference between British and American, and then mostly limit themselves to a few words, but *there's many opportunities* to bring the matter closer to home, and also include students that have their roots on another continent.

For example:

- Watch an episode from '**MasterChef Australia**', discuss cooking terminology, but pay attention to pronunciation, vocabulary and the Australian tendency to abbreviate everything.

- Watch a clip from 'Bend it like Beckham', discuss **Bangladeshi culture** in the UK, and listen how Jess changes the way she speaks as soon as she leaves the house and starts talking to her friends.

- Discuss **Irish stereotypes**, listen to an Irish folk song and discuss the vocabulary. What is a Wild Rover? Who was Molly Malone? Try a couple of Irish words and pronounce them correctly.

Kachru's model of Englishes

'The *inner circle* refers to the traditional bases of English, where it is the **primary** language: it includes the USA, UK, Ireland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The *outer* or e*xtended circle* involves the earlier phases of the spread of English in non-native settings, where the language has become part of a country's chief institutions, and plays an important "second language" role in a **multilingual setting** […]. The *expanding* or *extending circle* involves those nations which recognize the importance of English as an international language, though they do not have a history of colonization by members of the inner circle, nor have they given English any special administrative status. […] In these areas, English is taught as a foreign language.' (Siemund et al 2012: 13-14)
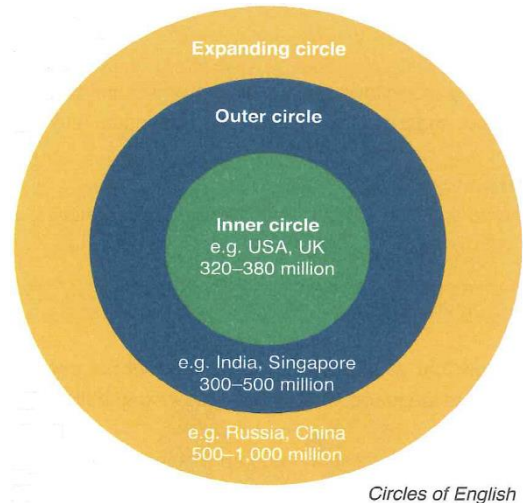
Circles of English

McArthur's model of Englishes

'Tom McArthur is the author of a much-discussed model of World Englishes published in the July issue of *English Today* in 1987. In his model, he proposes that Englishes should be organised into three different circles. At the very centre of the model there is World Standard English, which is an idealized variety of written English. The second circle of the model is allotted to those regional varieties of English that have developed or have started to develop their own standards. The third circle of the model is occupied by those forms of English that are not codified in grammatical and lexicographic descriptions. In other words, these Englishes are not standardised. ' (Siemund et al 2012: 29)

12 GRAMMAR

"No single method of grammar presentation is going to be appropriate for all grammar items,
nor for all learners, nor for all learning contexts." (Scott Thornbury)

Studying or having studied English on an advanced level usually makes someone recognise the feelings in the following images.

×   How are you when it comes to language correctness? Take the online test.

×   How were you taught grammar? What do you remember?

12.1 ENGAGING GRAMMAR TEACHING

The sample lesson presented here is an example of how teachers often teach grammar, in this case the present perfect.

×   Identify the pros and cons of this approach.

Lesson: How not to teach the present perfect tense (intermediate)

STEP 1

The teacher introduces the lesson by telling the class that they are going to have a grammar lesson. They write on the board 'present perfect'. They then explain the rules of formation and use of the present perfect (as in *he has worked...*), including how the present perfect is used to refer to unfinished actions or states or habits that started in the past and continue to the present, a time frame 'up to now', and how it is used to talk about experiences and things that have happened recently.

STEP 2

The teacher asks if the class understands, then distributes the first exercise, which involves completing a grid with the correct forms of the present perfect tense verb in brackets.

	+	-	?
I (to work)	I have worked	I have not worked	Have I worked?
You (to play)			
He (to travel)			
She (to book)			
We (to live)			
They (to spy)			

The students work on this individually and then take turns to write their answers on the board. The teacher points out the double 'l' with 'to travel', the 'd' in 'lived' and the 'ied' with 'to spy'. He then mentions that the students need to know their irregular verbs by heart, which is why he has a crossword puzzle with irregular past participles for them to complete.

STEP 3

In the remaining ten minutes of the lesson, the students play 'Hangman', a vocabulary game to revise the vocabulary they have learnt in the previous lesson. The students guess at the gapped-out letters of the word.

(based on Thornbury 1999: 151-152)

If we want our grammar teaching to be engaging, or at least a good example of how to set about teaching grammar, **what is to be changed?**

First of all, here's a comforting thought from the author providing the sample lesson: 'there are many more options for teaching grammar well than there are for teaching it badly'. (Thornbury 1999: 151)

Secondly, it is good to know that not all students are as excited as you about grammar. Starting your class by saying 'Today we are going to learn all about the present perfect tense!' is not the best way to engage your students, even if your delivery of that sentence is extremely enthusiastic. Why not play Heather Small's song 'Proud' as they enter the class (*What have you done today to make you feel proud?*) and ask your students to make a quick list of 5 things they have done today before entering your classroom (check your phone, leave the house, have breakfast...) and 3 things they still plan/need to do today. Then ask them to compare with their neighbour, giving them the clues 'already' and 'not yet'. Some students may automatically use the present perfect tense – in any case, you will elicit answers from your students by asking questions: 'Lorena, what has your neighbour already done today?' – student's answer – Really, have you already checked your phone twenty times today! Hassan, what is still on your neighbour's to do list, what hasn't he done yet? ..." Or why not give your students a 'find someone who' questionnaire to talk about life experiences, before moving on to the grammar point at hand. That way, students have already encountered meaningful use of the new tense before you explicitly mention it.

'A good lead-in activity is a bit like a good advertisement. It must immediately engage the student, focus attention on the topic, and stimulate interest in what is to come, without pre-empting it too much.' (Paul Dummett, Clandfield & Hughes 2017)

Good and engaging grammar teaching starts with a good 'engage' phase. The rest of your lesson (series) is equally important and requires thorough reflection and planning.

12.2 THORNBURY'S RULES OF THUMB FOR GRAMMAR TEACHING (THORNBURY 1999: 153)

• the rule of context

Teach grammar in context. If you have to take an item out of context in order to draw attention to it, ensure that it is re-contextualized as soon as possible. Similarly, teach grammatical forms in association with their meanings. The choice of one grammatical form over another is always determined by the *meaning* the speaker or writer wishes to convey.

• the rule of use

Teach grammar in order to facilitate the learners' comprehension and production of *real language*, rather than as an end in itself. Always provide opportunities for learners to put the grammar to some *communicative use*.

• the rule of economy

To fulfill the rule of use, be economical. This means economising on presentation time in order to provide maximum practice time. With grammar, *a little can go a long way*.

• the rule of relevance

Teach only the grammar that students have problems with. This means, start off by finding out what they already know. And don't assume that the grammar of English is a wholly different system from the learner's mother tongue. Exploit the common ground.

• the rule of nurture

Teaching doesn't necessarily cause learning - not in any direct way. Instead of teaching grammar, therefore, try to *provide the right conditions* for grammar learning.

• the rule of appropriacy

Interpret all the above rules according to the level, needs, interests, expectations and learning styles of the students. This may mean giving a lot of prominence to grammar, or it may mean never actually teaching grammar at all - in any up-front way. But either way, it is your responsibility as a teacher to know your grammar inside out.

× Which of the rules of thumb is/are violated in the explanation below?

> You can show possession by adding an apostrophe and the letter 's' to a noun or noun phrase, for example: John's mother. This is called the Saxon genitive. In the case of plural nouns ending in -s, possession can be shown simply by adding an apostrophe at the end, for example: my parents' house.
>
> (Clandfield & Hughes 2016:152)

12.3 DEVELOPING ACCURACY AND FLUENCY

The balance every teacher tries to strike is between accuracy and fluency. When those two come together, a language user becomes a proficient user.

When the learning objective is **accuracy**, teacher and learners are concentrating on the correctness of the language. A few criteria for related activities:

Accuracy activities
The texts are usually composed of separate ('discrete') items: sentences or words.
Performance is assessed on how few language mistakes are made.
Texts may be used in any mode (skill), regardless of how they are used in real life (dialogues may be written, written texts used for listening).
Tasks do not usually simulate real-life situations.

(Ur 1996: 103)

When the learning objective is **fluency**, teachers and learners disregard errors in language for the benefit of communication. Getting the message across is key. The main body of today's teaching is communicative, therefore focused on fluency. If you want your learners to use the language both accurately and fluently, it is wise to bear in mind Dillon's Fluency Ramp:
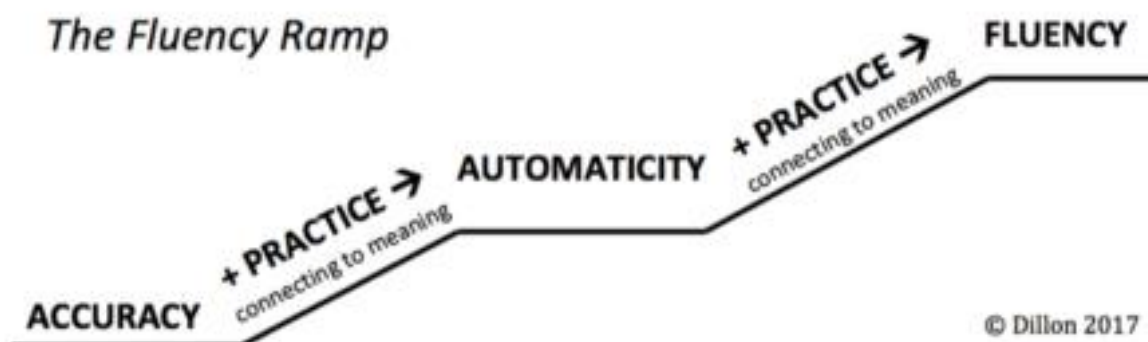
It usually takes a while before new grammar items automatically become a part of a learner's language repertoire. Therefore, as always, repetition is key. When you are teaching new grammar, not simply revising it, provide a substantial amount of accuracy practice to reach the automaticity stage before you move on to fluency activities. When revision is on the agenda, why not turn your lesson into a task-based one? You can find out along the way if (some) students need more accuracy-type exercises or if more challenging tasks are appropriate.

12.4 INDUCTIVE OR DEDUCTIVE APPROACH?

'On the whole older or more analytically-minded learners will benefit more from the use of terminology.' (Ur 1996: 82-83)

Of course, you will use relevant grammatical terminology in your classes, when teaching or revising tenses, for example, for easy reference, but be aware that the ultimate aim of your grammar teaching is for your students to use the grammar when they communicate effectively.

This is one of the major **pitfall**s for most teachers-to-be: since you were taught all the finer points of the English grammar at university, all this terminology is at your fingertips, ready to shower your students with.

×   Are the examples below inductive or deductive?

● Look at the examples of sentences with no article (zero article). Can you make a rule about when we use the zero article?	
● Comparatives (faster than, more intelligent than, busier than, less interesting than, not as interesting as…) are used to describe differences between two people, things or ideas. Write down two differences between (a) Brussels and New York, OR (b) you and your neighbour.	

Both deductive and inductive approaches to teaching grammar have their pros and cons. It is best to combine both approaches in your classroom. Sort the following characteristics into the approach that most applies.

simplicity of use and form – finer points of language – more learner-centred – less time-consuming – correct and complete rules – promotes 'noticing' and learner autonomy	
Inductive approach	Deductive approach

Check your answers here: https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2015/04/24/inductive-and-deductive-grammar-teaching/

'Like grammatical terminology, explicit rules are helpful to older or more analytically-minded learners. […] If the learners can perceive and define the rule themselves quickly and easily, then there is a lot to be said for letting them do so: what they discover themselves they are more likely to remember. But if

they find this difficult, you may waste a lot of valuable class time on sterile and frustrating guessing, or on misleading suggestions; in such cases it is better to provide the information yourself.' (Ur 1996: 83)

12.5 GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING GRAMMAR

Find the right context

Whenever you teach new language materials, make sure you find the right context. It is important that students immediately see or hear the new grammar item in a natural context. The rule of context is Thornbury's very first rule, after all.

Many textbook authors have done this exercise for you: present simple is inextricably linked with 'daily routines', past simple with 'holiday memories', present perfect with 'experiences', second conditional with 'winning the lottery', modal auxiliaries with 'signs and notices'… Feel free to think up alternatives (modals of obligation when going on a trip, present perfect for comparing pictures from different eras of the same place, a morning routine when on holiday etc), but all of the above make it easy for you to immediately offer both form and meaning of the grammatical item.

When you have found a great context to teach the new grammar, do not refrain from taking a more task-based approach. Why not ask the students to speculate about what they would say if they met a famous person from history, then read a text with people answering the same question so that they can highlight examples of second conditional structures and figure out the rules?

Be clear and concise

'For teaching purposes, grammar rules need to be fairly concise because learners are likely to forget lengthy explanations.' (Watkins 2005: 43) Lengthy explanations will not necessarily make the grammar clearer for your students; it will most certainly considerably drop the pace of your class and make your students struggle to remain focused.

'Note that there is often a conflict between "simple" and "accurate"; if you give a completely accurate account of a structure [i.e. a grammatical topic], it may be far from simple; if you simplify, you may not be accurate.' (Ur 1996: 81)

It is often impossible to give a full explanation of the use of certain language items. If you need to simplify the grammar explanation for lower levels (you cannot explain grammar using language that is above the students' level), use phrases such as 'can sometimes be used', 'is used in three basic ways', 'is commonly used'… so that you do not confuse learners when they come across other uses of the grammar.

Thorough lesson planning will guarantee that you keep your grammar teaching clear and concise and that your students will have plenty of time to practise.

Provide visual support

Oral information and a written grammar rule with a few examples will not make any impact and will make it harder for the (new) grammar to stick in students' brains. Adding a visual will immediately help and it does not require you to scroll through thousands of memes (even though a well-chosen meme is hard to beat).

'For a quick and easy presentation of new language, the board is the obvious resource to exploit. Start by building a context. For example, a traveller's suitcase covered in stickers of places she's been provides an easy-to-establish context for the present perfect for experiences. Make sure you include on your board: the affirmative, e.g. a sticker saying 'Mexico' elicits 'She's been to Mexico'; the negative, eg 'She hasn't been to China'; and question forms and short answers, eg 'Has she been to Malaysia? Yes, she has / No she hasn't.' Underline or use a different colour to highlight the structure.(Barber & Jones 2018)

You may be partial to the use of timelines. Again, these may work but only if you keep the visual clear and uncluttered. Ideally, your timeline and well-chosen examples with the new structures will remain on the board throughout the accuracy and automaticity phases of your lesson (series). Thorough lesson planning includes thinking about board layout, or what to put on an overview slide to provide visual support at all times.

Teach grammar that learners make mistakes with (Watkins 2005: 46)

Many of our Flemish EFL learners boast a wealth of (implicit) grammar knowledge. Therefore, grammar teaching can be done selectively, by teaching topics prone to interference errors such as tenses, passive, mass nouns, if-clauses without shall/will...

Teach grammar that learners need

Passive future perfect continuous tense? Mixed conditionals? … Ask yourself the question if your students really need this grammar. Your first clue will always be the curricula, the second your own critical thinking skills. You can use your class time for other things. Teach grammar that helps learners to use the structures they are/will be in need of (Watkins 2005: 46)

English or Dutch? Inductive or deductive?

Always present the (new) grammar in *context*. By definition that means that your learners first encounter the language items in English. When it comes to explaining grammar rules, be as clear and concise as you can – and then it is your call (or in agreement with your colleagues at school) if you wish to (briefly) switch to Dutch to further clarify. Take your *learners* into account: your D learners are less in need of this extra support than A students who have only just started learning English, or a SEN student who really struggles to understand English.

Check 1.4 to make an equally well-informed decision regarding inductive or deductive grammar teaching.

Who is Fearless Freddy?

What does he usually do?

Right now Fearless Freddy is on holiday: what is he doing?

(Fletcher & Munns 2004:15)

×   Which of the guidelines do you recognise in Fearless Freddy's exercise?
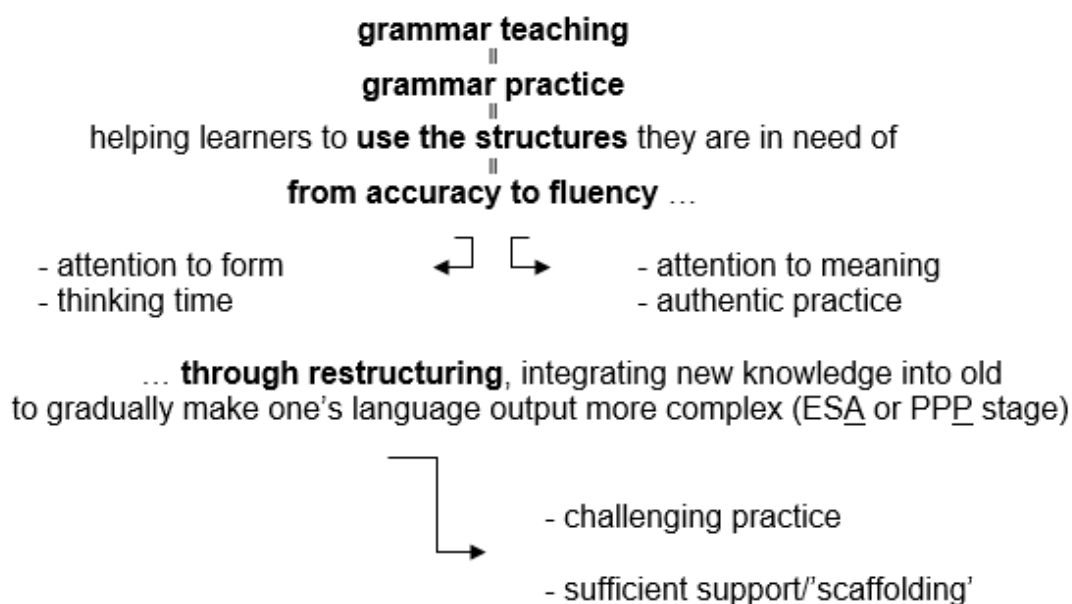

12.6 GRAMMAR PRACTICE

Learning (and teaching) grammar consists of on the one hand learning the form and the meaning of the new structure, and on the other hand putting it into practice.

The good news is that many textbook authors heed 'revision' and 'repetition' advice. If you are teaching students and discover that they are still struggling with grammar that they supposedly already should know and use, you will more often than not discover that (too) little material for controlled grammar practice is available in the textbooks themselves by the time the grammar is revised. Luckily, grammar is taught all over the world and in this digital day and age more exercises (and instruction videos) are only one click away. Always check and do those exercises yourself first:

anyone may have published those, you do not want your students to become even more discouraged because correct answers are considered incorrect by the automatic correction. … Of course, you know by now that grammar in itself is never the goal of an entire lesson series: students have to demonstrate that they can now (accurately) use the grammar in a meaningful, communicative context, as is illustrated by Thornbury:

grammar teaching
=
grammar practice
=
helping learners to **use the structures** they are in need of
=
from accuracy to fluency …

- attention to form   ↵ ↳   - attention to meaning
- thinking time   - authentic practice

… **through restructuring**, integrating new knowledge into old
to gradually make one's language output more complex (ES<u>A</u> or PP<u>P</u> stage)

- challenging practice

- sufficient support/'scaffolding'

(Thornbury 1999: 92-94)

1. TYPES OF GRAMMAR PRACTICE

'They are laid out in sequence: from a very controlled and accuracy-oriented exercise at the beginning to a fluency activity giving opportunities for the free use of the grammar in context at the end. It is not suggested that such a sequence be rigidly followed in classroom teaching, though on the whole the more controlled procedures tend to come earlier; but rather that our lessons should include a fairly representative selection of activities that provide both form-focussed and meaning-focussed practice.' (Ur 1996: 83)

The very first step when learners encounter new grammar is getting them to **notice** it. If you use a reading text, ask them to highlight or underline for example all adjectives and adverbs. If it is a song, you can leave some instances of the new grammar blank for them to fill in. The more memorable their first encounter, the easier it will be for you as their teacher to refer back to it at later instances.

Controlled/accuracy-oriented grammar practice exercises

- Gap-fill exercises

- Multiple choice exercises

- Completing a chart

- Creating sentences from prompts

- Rewriting sentences (so they are true for *you*)

- Contrasting sentences

- Games (board games, what am I doing?)

- Questionnaires

Fluency-oriented grammar practice exercises

- Using the students (and their own photos)

●   Using realia

●   Using critical thinking (Why? How?)

●   Task-based (skills) practice: find the person who lies about their alibi (past continuous tense), how does Harry Styles get to our school from the airport (instructions, imperatives, advice), describe what you will have for breakfast at the Crowne Plaza Hotel breakfast buffet/keep a food diary (quantifiers), have them read/listen to texts in which the new structure is (heavily) used, e.g. "Stop storing your pills in the bathroom cabinet" (article) and a Dafalgan prescription leaflet, after which they give their classmates expert advice on where to keep your medicines and why (jigsaw reading method).

Penny Ur lists **seven types** of grammar practice, from accuracy to fluency. Check the next page for more information.

BOX 6.3: TYPES OF GRAMMAR PRACTICE: FROM ACCURACY TO FLUENCY

Type 1: Awareness
After the learners have been introduced to the structure, (see Unit Four above), they are given opportunities to encounter it within some kind of discourse, and do a task that focusses their attention on its form and/or meaning.

Example: Learners are given extracts from newspaper articles and asked to find and underline all the examples of the past tense that they can find.

Type 2: Controlled drills
Learners produce examples of the structure: these examples are, however, predetermined by the teacher or textbook, and have to conform to very clear, closed-ended cues.

Example: Write or say statements about John, modelled on the following example:

John *drinks tea* but he *doesn't drink* coffee.
a) like: ice cream/cake   b) speak: English/Italian
c) enjoy: playing football/playing chess

Type 3: Meaningful drills
Again the responses are very controlled, but learners can make a limited choice of vocabulary.

Example: Again in order to practise forms of the present simple tense:
Choose someone you know very well, and write down their name. Now compose true statements about them according to the following model:

He/She *likes ice cream*; OR He/She *doesn't like ice cream*.
a) enjoy: playing tennis   b) drink: wine   c) speak: Polish

Type 4: Guided, meaningful practice
Learners form sentences of their own according to a set pattern, but exactly what vocabulary they use is up to them.

Example: Practising conditional clauses, learners are given the cue *If I had a million dollars*, and suggest, in speech or writing, what they *would* do.

Type 5: (Structure-based) free sentence composition
Learners are provided with a visual or situational cue, and invited to compose their own responses; they are directed to use the structure.

Example: A picture showing a number of people doing different things is shown to the class; they describe it using the appropriate tense.

Type 6: (Structure-based) discourse composition
Learners hold a discussion or write a passage according to a given task; they are directed to use at least some examples of the structure within the discourse.

Example: The class is given a dilemma situation ('You have seen a good friend cheating in an important test') and asked to recommend a solution. They are directed to include modals (*might, should, must, can, could*, etc.) in their speech/writing.

Type 7: Free discourse
As in Type 6, but the learners are given no specific direction to use the structure; however, the task situation is such that instances of it are likely to appear.
Example: As in Type 6, but without the final direction.

(Ur 1996:84)

2. HOW TO CORRECT GRAMMAR EXERCISES

It is not unusual that a grammar lesson that started out really well bores students to death by the end of it. Correction of (accuracy) grammar exercises can bring your lesson to a crashing halt, drop the pace and make students lose focus. Again, there is no 'one way' to do this, so here are some options and tips.

- Classical correction (whole-class routine)

Especially when your students have only just learned the new grammar and completed their first exercise without help from the teacher/their neighbour, this can be the best option. You ask students what their answer is (pick names from a box / check that a less confident student has the correct answer before you appoint them /snake through the class …) and ask them to explain why they gave that answer. It is important that students *know* where the answer came from – use the same questions/flow chart/… so that there is no doubt possible about the correct answer.

This takes a while, so do this for *short(er)* exercises, to fix the new grammar and prevent future errors. Do *not* use this method for every single grammar exercise!

- A/B correction keys

Students sit in pairs and each have half the correction key to the exercise. After they have completed their exercise, they can check their answers with their neighbour. If any (wrong or right) answer is unclear, they can alert you. This correction method is especially practical for oral drilling exercises: students take turns asking questions and one of them immediately knows if the correct answer is given.

- Digital correction key

The luxury of having students do their exercises on the computer is not to be underestimated. When they complete an exercise, the computer immediately gives them a score and points out mistakes. For dyslexic students, this can be really frustrating: an answer with a typo, regardless of correct new grammar usage, will also register as a wrong answer. Be sure to remind your students of this beforehand.

You can also turn a workbook exercise into a Kahoot or other digital quiz. After students have done their exercise(s), they can now compete against their classmates. Highly engaging!

- Projecting the correction key

This is a nice and easy way to provide all students with the correct answers. Make sure to always check the exercises beforehand and select/highlight a couple of answers that revise the grammar clearly. Ask some students to explain these. However, if you do this all the time, some students simply sit and wait until the correct solution appears. Others, especially students with spelling difficulties or trouble concentrating, will mimic correction but nothing actually happens.

TIP: ask students to swap their exercise with their neighbour before correction. Students tend to focus more and become more aware of their right and wrong answers. Always check if students understand why a certain answer was wrong – not necessarily with the whole class listening in.

- Teacher correction

If you correct their exercises personally, your students will appreciate that. You will also give yourself a ton of work. Exit tickets typically fall into your lap, so limit the amount of questions there. If you plan an oral correction round (classical correction), be sure to check struggling students' exercises beforehand so that you do not put them on the spot.

TIP: When students do digital exercises at their own pace in online tools such as BookWidgets or in the school's or textbook's digital learning environments, do a quick teacher check afterwards. If the entire class has a weak score, that is a reason to revise and/or re-explain; if only some students have weaker scores and/or were particularly frustrated, you can provide them with your feedback.

For fluency-oriented grammar practice exercises you may feel that the full burden will automatically fall on your shoulders. This is not necessarily the case: have students work in groups of three, with two of them talking. The third one can be the temporary grammar nazi – it is recommended you decide on the groups, of course. For writing practice your students can also learn from each other: have them combine their written texts into one good, shared end product in which the new grammar is used before they hand it in.

Provide a **class correction** based on common mistakes: project learner sentences with and without mistakes and let them find the correct ones, motivating their choice out loud. Or a quick seven online questions to answer on their phones. Or…

The bottom line when it comes to correcting exercises is that (1) it needs to be done and (2) that you vary the way you do it.

12.6 Teaching new grammar

Whenever you teach an entirely new grammar item to your students, there are five stages to (meticulously) plan:
1.   Engage: what will be your students' first, memorable encounter with the new grammar?
2.   Study: either inductively or (briefly) deductively, your students find out about the new grammar rule(s). Use clear, memorable examples to illustrate the rule(s).
3.   Study: accuracy-oriented exercises
4.   Activate: skills practice that includes the new grammar
5.   Assessment

It goes without saying that you need to master the (new) grammar you teach your students. Prepare thoroughly: look up the grammar topic in a grammar reference book, do the exercises you are asking your students to do to find out where confusion may arise. Some students may want to know more details or ask you about exceptions to the (simple) rule you have prepared.

Also, assessment is an ongoing process. Exit tickets are a highly recommended formative assessment method whenever you end a grammar lesson. Ask two or three questions that require answers that use the new grammar, and then also ask them to write down if anything is still unclear. Reading those exit tickets allows you to adapt your next class to your learners' needs. Of course you do not need to wait until the end of the lesson to switch things up and/or provide further explanation or modelling: students' faces showing confusion, disinterest and/or frustration are not to be ignored.

3	Things I Learned Today …
2	Things I Found Interesting …
1	Question I Still Have …

12.7 Differentiated grammar teaching

When you teach not-so-new grammar, you again meticulously plan your lessons. Always provide a good 'engage' activity that helps you to find out how much or how little your students remember. A quick revision of the rule (elicit!) and then a bunch of differentiated exercises to improve accuracy and/or fluency are typically a good idea. However, as some students will probably not need this revision at all, be sure to prepare an extra challenge for them. If you are revising present perfect tense, your more advanced students can watch/read up on a famous person (of their or your choice), and list their achievements (and what they haven't achieved yet) while others are doing fill-in-the-blanks and other exercises at their own pace, with you or their peers at hand to help them out.

Regardless of whether you are teaching new or not-so-new grammar, check your lesson after you have initially planned it. When and where can you predict (some) students will struggle and/or get frustrated? Have you inserted checking questions or a different kind of formative assessment? Have you made sure that you will definitely also include a grammar game before your class ends? What will you drop when everything takes longer than planned? What do you have as an extra up your sleeve when the opposite happens? Provide scaffolding: break the grammar down into smaller chunks and limited, modelled exercises, an extra instruction video you can find in the digital textbook environment or by a youtube teacher…

The **ADI-method** ('Activerende Directe Instructie') differentiates based on the amount of (direct) instruction learners need (cf Tomlinson's **_Readiness_**) to learn the new material, i.e. grammar in this case. At the same time it increases participation levels during class time. First, the teacher explains the new grammar and does a limited number of exercises together with the students. This part can

also be organised as a **flipped classroom** activity: students watch the explanation, do an exercise and ask their questions in class. Next, there is a brief formative assessment: students answer 10 questions and self-correct with the key. Now students are split based on their level (you decide this beforehand): if they have (nearly) every answer correct, they receive a more challenging task in which they need to use the new grammar. If students made a few mistakes in the assessment, they can work on the regular (online?) grammar exercises together with their peers. If they have less than half the assessment right, they join the teacher for extended instruction before they start to work on the exercises, with the teacher or peers from another group close at hand to provide help if needed. Students from the last two groups can immediately correct their exercises with an (online?) answer key, students from the 'expert' group share their work with the class for feedback the next class.

TIP: A grammar topic that needs to be revised, but is not new, can start with a diagnostic (online) exercise that indicates if the student can skip the tutorial and immediately start the basic or even advanced exercises.

Another way to differentiate when teaching grammar, is to provide students with **choice**. As long as students are actively practising the (new) grammar, they can choose which exercise(s) to do next. Make a list with different categories: after students have completed an exercise from category one without making any mistakes, they can choose two exercises from category two or at least one from category three – category two being the level they are supposed to all reach, category three providing extra challenges. Vary the different exercises on offer within each category for optimal student involvement (***Interests*** and ***Learner Profile***).

When correcting assignments or tests you might notice grammar topics some students will have difficulties with and need to revise. Online learning trajectories (leerpaden) offer a lot of possibilities for remedial teaching. You can enable your students to work on these difficulties themselves.

TIP: use the same logical structure: e.g.: (1) start off with a diagnostic test, (2) guide students to a tutorial, (3) suggest where they can find an overview of the theory in their workbook or portfolio or copies or ..., (4) offer them exercises on e.g. formation (+, -, ?), irregular forms and use. Some coursebooks offer tutorials and extra exercises you can assign to indiviual students on their digital platform. You could also divide the work among the teachers of English and use platforms like Moodle.

Bibliography

- Abdullah, M. et al. (2013). "Learning scaffolding model for undergraduate English language learning: bridging formal and informal learning." *The Turkish Journal of Educational Technology, 12.2*, 217-233.
- Alber, R. (2014). "6 scaffolding strategies to use with your students". https://www.edutopia.org/
- Anderson, J. R. (2015). *Cognitive Psychology and Its Implications*, 8th Edition. New York: Worth Publishers.
- Arnold, J. et al (2010). *Spark 2*. Kapellen: Uitgeverij Pelckmans.
- Barber, D. & C. Jones (2018). *ETpedia Grammar. 500 ideas and activities for teaching grammar*. Hove: Pavillion Publishing.
- Barber, D. & C. Jones (2018) "10 Techniques for Teaching Grammar", https://www.myetpedia.com/techniques-for-teaching-english-grammar
- Beck, I.L., McKeown, M.G. & L. Kucan (2013). *Bringing Words to Life. Robust Vocabulary Instruction (2nd edition)*, The Guildford Press: New York.
- Bimmel, P. et al (ed) (2008). *Handboek ontwerpen talen*. Amsterdam: Vossiuspers UvA.
- Boers, F. (2011). *Ben je zeker? Nieuwe en achterhaalde stellingen en praktijken in het vreemdetalenonderwijs*. Leuven, Den Haag: Acco.
- Bogaert, N. & K. Van den Branden (2011). *Handboek taalbeleid secundair onderwijs*. Leuven: Acco.
- Bowen, T. (2010). "Methodology: teaching English spelling" http://www.onestopenglish.com
- British Council (2010). Teaching Speaking Techniques (John Kay). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF7zsz8fi64
- Broughton, G. et al (1993). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. London: Routledge.
- Burrough-Boenisch, J. (2004). *Righting English that's Gone Dutch*. Voorburg: Kemper Conseil Publishing.
- Carhill-Poza, A. (2017). *Re-examining English language teaching and learning for adolescents through technology*. *System, 67,* 111-120.
- Casteleyn, J./Geudens, A./Schraeyen, K./Taelman, H./Trioen, M./Simons, M./Smits, T.F.H. (2022). *Taal in de klas. Zes bouwstenen voor effectieve taaltrajecten.* Leuven: Lannoo Campus.
- Clandfield, L & J. Hughes (2017). *ETpedia Materials writing. 500 ideas for creating English language materials*, Hove: Pavilion Publishing.
- Coe, R., Rauch, C., Kime, S., & Singleton, D. (2020). Great teaching toolkit: Evidence review. Cambridge: Evidence Based Education. Retrieved from: https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-and-training-for-schools/teaching-cambridge-at-your-school/great-teaching-toolkit/
- Collins, B. & Vandenbergen, A.-M. (2000). *Modern English Pronunciation. A Practical Guide for Speakers of Dutch*. Gent: Academia Press.
- Council of Europe (2018). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, www.coe.int
- Craig, C. /Meijer, P./Broekmans, J. (red.) (2013). *From Teacher Thinking to Teachers and Teaching*. Bingley: Emerald Publishing Group.
- Cunningham, Sarah/Bygrave, Jonathan (s.d.). *Real Life Upper-Intermediate Students' Book*. London: Pearson.
- Davies, P. & Pearse, E. (2000). *Success in English Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- De Clercq, E. et al (2018). *Track 'n Trace 5 Leerwerkboek.* Van In: Wommelgem
- Decoster, K. et al (2009). *Spark 1*. Kapellen: Uitgeverij Pelckmans.
- Dellar, H./Walkley, A. (2019). *Roadmap B1+*. Pearson Education Limited.
- De Paepe, A. (2022). "De nieuwe eindtermen MVT vertaald naar de klaspraktijk" (CNO course)
- Dillon, J. (2017) "Fluency ramp" (illustration). Retrieved from https://literacyhow.org/fluency/ (2022-10-20)
- Dubin, F. & Olshtain, E. (1997). *Course Design. Developing Programs and Materials for Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dudley, E. (2018). *ETpedia Teenagers. 500 Teaching Ideas for Teaching English to Teenagers*, Hove: Pavilion Publishing.

- Dummet, P. (2018). "Making learning last: repetition, variation and rehearsal" https://ngl.cengage.com/infocus/index.php/2018/01/19/repetition-variation-rehearsal/
- Ellis, R. *Task-Based Language Teaching and Learning*. Oxford: OUP 2003.
- Ellis, R. (2012). "An options-based approach to doing task-based language teaching". In: Eisenmann, Maria/Summer, Theresa (eds). Basic issues in EFL teaching and learning. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, pp 17–30.
- Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the language classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fletcher, M. & R. Munns (2004). *Timesaver Visual Grammar*. London: Scholastic.
- Frank, C. & Rinvolucri, M. (2007). *Creative Writing. Activities to help students produce meaningful texts*. London: Helbling Languages.
- Goossens, L. (1996). *A functional introduction to the intonation of RP English*. Antwerpen: Universiteit Antwerpen.
- Hadfield, J./Dörnyei, Z. (2014)t. *Motivating Learning*, New York: Routledge.
- Hammond, J. & Gibbons, P. (2005). "Putting scaffolding to work: The contribution of scaffolding in articulating ESL education". *Prospect, 20*, pp 6-30.
- Harmer, J. (1999): *How to Teach English*. Harlow: Longman.
- Hattie, J. (2015a). "What Doesn't Work in Education: the Politics of Distraction", Open Ideas at Pearson. https://visible-learning.org
- Hattie, J. (2015b). "What Works Best in Education: The Politics of Collaborative Expertise", Open Ideas at Pearson. https://www.pearson.com/corporate/hattie/solutions.html
- Hayer, M. & Meestringa, T. (2015): *Handboek taalgericht vakonderwijs.* Bussum: Coutinho.
- Hedge, T. (1988). *Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hird, J. (2015) "Inductive and deductive grammar teaching: what is it, and does it work?", https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2015/04/24/inductive-and-deductive-grammar-teaching/
- Hockly, N. (2017). *ETpedia: Technology. 500 ideas for creating English language materials*, Hove: Pavilion Publishing.
- Hughes, J. (2014). ETpedia. 1,000 Ideas for English Language Teachers, Hove: Pavilion Publishing.
- Hughes, J. (2017). *Personalization: Tiny Steps at the Shallow End or Diving in at the Deep End*, https://ngl.cengage.com/infocus
- Hughes, J., Jones, C. (2011). *Practical Grammar 2*. Andover: Cengage Learning.
- Johnson, B. (2013). "How Do We Know When Students Are Engaged?" https://www.edutopia.org/
- Kagan, S. (2008). "Kagan Structures Simply Put", http://www.kaganonline.com/
- Kenworthy, J. (1996). *Teaching English Pronunciation*. London, New York: Longman.
- Kök, I. (2018). "Relationship between listening comprehension strategy use and listening comprehension proficiency". *International Journal of Listening, 32*, pp 163-179.
- Kost, H. et al (2013). *Stepping Stones. Tweede Fase 5 havo*. Groningen: Noordhoff Uitgevers.
- Kwakernaak, E. (2009). *Didactiek van het vreemdetalenonderwijs*. Bussum: Coutinho.
- Kwakernaak, E. (2015). *Didactiek van het vreemdetalenonderwijs. Voorbeelden vto-Oefeningen*: Engels. Bussum: Coutinho.
- Lammers, et al (s.d.). *Realtime 3 vwo. Engels voor de onderbouw. Student's book*. 's-Hertogenbosch: Malmberg.
- Laufer, B., Meara, P. & P. Nation (2005). "Ten best ideas for teaching vocabulary" in *The Language Teacher 29.7* pp 3-10.
- Laurillard, D. (2012). *Teaching as a Design Science. Building Pedagogical Patterns for Learning and Technology*. New York, London: Routledge.
- Lavigne, A. L. & Good, T. L. (2019). Enhancing teacher education, development, and evaluation: Lessons learned from educational reform. New York: Routledge.
- Lazar, G. (1993). *Literature and Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lee, S. (2018). "Scaffolding evidence-based writing for English learners in three steps". *The Reading Teacher, 72.1*, 99-106.

- Lee, W. R. (1980). "National Syllabuses Construction for Foreign-Language Teaching. Reconciling the Approaches". In: ELTdocuments 108. England: The British Council. pp 81-85.
- Leraar24 (2013). Scaffolding. https://www.leraar24.nl/scaffolding/
- Lindstromberg, S. (2004). *Language Activities for Teenagers*, Cambridge University Press.
- "Macmillan Dictionary's guide to spelling" https://www.macmillandictionary.com/learn/spelling/tips
- Madylus, O. (2015) "Why is writing so hard", Oxford University Press ELT Blog https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2015/02/16/why-is-writing-so-hard/
- Millin, S. (2015). "Advanced Pronunciation", British Council https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/blogs/sandymillin/sandy-millin-advanced-pronunciation
- Morrison McGill, R. (2017) *Mark. Plan. Teach. @teachertoolkit*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Nation, P. (2006). "Language Education – Vocabulary" in *K. Brown (ed.) Encyclopaedia of Language and Linguistics, 2nd Ed.* Oxford: Elsevier. Vol 6: pp 494-499.
- Nation, P. (2014). *What you need to know to learn a foreign language*. Available free from http://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation
- Nicolic, V. (2008). Scaffolding. *English Teaching Professional, 57*, pp 18-22.
- Nieves, K. (2020) "9 new ways to use Flipgrid in the classroom" https://www.edutopia.org/article/9-new-ways-use-flipgrid-classroom
- Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-Based Language Teaching*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Nuthall, G. (2001). The cultural myths and the realities of teaching and learning, Jean Herbison Lecture.
- Nuthall, G. (2007). *The Hidden Lives of Learners*. Wellington: NZCER Press.
- Opitz, M.F. (2016) "5 Reasons Why You Should Teach Listening" http://blog.listenwise.com/2016/12/5-reasons-teach-listening/
- Rhalmi, M. (2018) "How to teach writing skills to ESL and EFL students" https://www.myenglishpages.com/blog/how-to-teach-writing/
- Sagar-Fenton, B./McNeil, L. (2018). "How many words do you need to speak a language?" in *More or Less*, BBC Radio 4 https://www.bbc.com/news/world-44569277
- Scrivener, J. (2005). Learning Teaching. A guidebook for English language teachers. Oxford: Macmillan.
- Sharma, P. "Teaching via listening activities" https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/blogs/peggy-sharma-esl/teaching-listening-activities
- Sharma, P. & B. Barrelt (2018). *Best Practices for Blended Learning*. Hove: Pavilion.
- Seymour, H. K., Aro, M., & Erskine, J. M. (2003). "Foundation literacy acquisition in European orthographies". *British Journal of Psychology, 94*, pp 143-174.
- Siemund, et al (2012). *The Amazing World of Englishes. A Practical Introduction*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Simons, R.J. (1990). *Transfervermogen. Inaugurele rede hoogleraar interdisciplinaire onderwijskunde*. Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen: Nijmegen.
- Sinclair, J. & Coulthard, R.M. (1975). *Towards an Analysis of Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Spencer, D. (2018). "The importance of recycling in vocabulary teaching," Macmillan webinar, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8swZepI7fm0
- Surma, T. et al (2019). Wijze lessen: Twaalf bouwstenen voor effectieve didactiek. Meppel: Ten Brink Uitgevers.
- Surma, T., Sluijsmans, D., & Muijs, D. (2021). Routes van best-evidence richting klaspraktijk: Initiatieven uit Nederland en het Verenigd Koninkrijk. In: Smets, W. & Van den Brande, M. (ed), Meer weten over (effectief) leren: Leraren als onderzoekers. Brussel: Politeia. pp 165-180.
- Stannett, K. (2017). "Get 'em Moving" https://ngl.cengage.com/infocus
- Stannett, K. (2018). "Using Real Life Topics in Your Classroom" https://ngl.cengage.com/infocus
- Stephenson, H. (2018). "Motivation in Your Classroom: Completion" https://ngl.cengage.com/infocus
- Stirling, J. (2003). "Helping Students To Learn the Vocabulary That We Teach Them" http://www.elgweb.net/vocab_article.html
- Swan, M. (1995). *Practical English Usage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Tamulis, A. (2019). "Make a game out of fluency! Gamification for automaticity", Macmillan Education ELT https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjI-l16_6aQ&feature=youtu.be
- *Teacher's Network*. Modern Language Teacher's Association of Victoria, 2013. Web. http://512180702211440368.weebly.com/faqs.html
- Teaching English. Speaking. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/teaching-teens/articles/speaking
- Thornbury, S. (1999). *How to Teach Grammar*. Harlow: Longman.
- Thornbury, S. (2012). "An A to Z of ELT: P is for Personalization", https://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/2012/02/12/p-is-for-personalization/
- Timo-Pekka (2013). "Words will get you far: why is vocabulary acquisition so important in second and foreign language learning?" *Worddive* https://www.worddive.com/blog/words-will-get-you-far-why-is-vocabulary-acquisition-so-important-in-second-and-foreign-language-learning/
- Tudor-Craig, M. (2015) "Teaching Reading and Writing. Task-based learning", British Council. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/unit-9-task-based-learning
- University College London (s.d.). "Introduction to Dutch Linguistics" https://www.ucl.ac.uk/dutchstudies/an/SP_LINKS_UCL_POPUP/SPs_english/linguistics/sound_phonology.html
- Ur, P. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching. Practice and theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van de Pol, J., Volman, M., Oort, F. & Beishuizen, J. (2014). "Teacher Scaffolding in small-group work: an intervention study". *Journal of the Learning Sciences, 23.4*, 600-650.
- Van den Branden, K. (2006). *Task-Based Language Education. From theory to practice.* Cambridge: CUP.
- Vandergrift, L. (2004). "Listening to learn or learning to listen"? *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 3–25.
- Vandergrift, L. & Goh, C. C. M. (2006). *Teaching and Learning Second Language Listening*. New York: Routledge.
- Vandergrift L. (2006). "Second Language Listening: Listening Ability or Language Proficiency?". *Modern Language Journal, 90*(1), 6–18.
- Vandersteegen, R. et al (2016). *On Track 6 Leerwerkboek*. Van In: Wommelgem.
- VanPatten, B. (2003). *From Input to Output. A Teacher's Guide to Second Language Acquisition*. Boston [among others]: McGraw-Hill.
- Vygotsky, L. (1962): *Thought and Language*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
- Warren, A. (2019). "Four Ideas for Motivating Learners" https://ngl.cengage.com/infocus
- Watkins, P. (2005). *Learning to Teach English. A practical introduction for new teachers*. Peaslake: Delta Publishing.
- Wilkins, D.A. (1972). *Linguistics in Language Teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.