

CCEL
CHRISTCHURCH & AUCKLAND

COLLEGE OF
ENGLISH

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY



*Task Based Learning for
Promoting Independent Learning Skills*

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A bit of a recap

Courses

- General English
- English for Academic Purposes
- Business English
- IELTS Exam Preparation
- Cambridge Exam Preparation (PET, FCE, CAE)
- Teacher training TESOL/TKT and CELTA





The thread that runs through all courses is the Independent Learning Programme

ILP

- 5 hours per week
- 3 workshops (vocabulary, writing, speaking, grammar, listening, current affairs)
- 2 hours in SDL (Self Directed Learning)
- Study Guide
- Introduced in 2003

2014 – a Crossroads

Feedback from Teachers

Changing student profile

Can we do it better?

Review

How can we use ILPs to build our IT capacity? Perhaps have the students lead the way and promote its use by Teachers as well as Students



Cycle 1 – 2015 - Staging

| | | |
|---------|--|---|
| Stage 1 | Primer | <p>The teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce the topic - Activate background knowledge. - Help students examining the task - Provide a model (optional – and once these are developed) - Assign roles if students need it |
| Stage 2 | Task | <p>The teacher will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and assist while students are doing the task. - Assist when asked or as required when students are preparing a report on the task and reporting on the task. |
| Stage 3 | Focus on form and reflection on the task | <p>The teacher will help students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Examine the language used during the task - Practice this language - Share and reflect on the task |

Cycle 1 – 2015 - Topics

| Wk | Topic | Task: Level High |
|----|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 | How to be a successful learner. | Provide advice for others on being a successful learner |
| 2 | Free activities/things to do | Make a list of the top 10 free activities/things to do in Chch/Auckland providing additional information about each activity. |
| 3 | Pen Pals | Write to a student from another class or school. Reply to letters/emails a student writes to you. |
| 4 | Tourist guide | You work for the local city as a tour guide, planning weekend trips/activities for groups. Plan a 7 day visit to your country including information/the script about some of the places you will visit, food, accommodation and transport costs and arrangements. |
| 5 | NZ Public holidays | Find out about the most recent or next NZ public holiday and compare it to a similar public holiday in your own country. |

Cycle 1 – 2015 - Example

Topic: Film/Book Review

Task: Write a film or book review for an English-language magazine. Write about the story, the acting/characters, and why it was exciting.

Day 1 Setting up: Task & language input

Sts could talk in pairs/groups about the film or book they are going to write about, telling their partner about the story, acting/characters and why it was exciting.

Sts start the task.

Day 2: Task output

Complete the task.

Prepare to report back/share their completed task to the class.

Share with the class.

Day 3 Reflection: Task & language feedback

Student reflection

How successful was the task?

Did the task communicate what you wanted it to?

What was easy/difficult?

What would you do differently?

Feedback on language (error correction, highlighting of useful language etc.).

Re-perform the task using the feedback & reflection.

2014

Planning:
We...

Reviewed our ILP programme: input from students, teachers and UC colleagues

Outcome of this was to move towards more (independent learning) skills practice than skills getting

2015

Cycle 1 (12 weeks):
We...

Set topics/ tasks/ projects for the cycle

Provided a broad structure to teachers for running the three-day projects (we didn't want to be too prescriptive)

Mixed usual classes - broadly high/low level

Provided a list of possible outcomes for the Tasks/Projects

Reviewed just-taught Tasks/projects and updated for next use (planned for recycling in 2016)

Sought feedback on the programme to date

Feedback

Range of outcomes too narrow (too much perceived emphasis on producing posters)

Structure for delivery too free - Teachers felt they needed more structure

Some feedback on Wi-Fi accessibility

Cycle 2 (12 weeks):
We...

New set of different topics/tasks/projects

Continued with mixed classes - broadly high/low level

More focus on sharing project results within class rather than publicly displaying outputs

Revised teachers' notes

Sought feedback on the programme to date

Feedback

Teachers felt they needed more guidance on how to set up the tasks

Student feedback was around some topics needing to be more real-life and adult

2015

2016

Cycle 3 (12 weeks):
We...

Feedback

Cycle 4 (15 weeks):
We...

Feedback

?

Revised topics

Continued with
mixed classes

Assigned task
writing to individual
teachers across
both schools so
that we could keep
up with demand

Provided more
guidance on setting
up tasks

Sought feedback
on the programme
to date

Students provided
topics

Student feedback
that they wanted
more explicit
language focus

Had input from
external PD
around integrating
Higher Order
Thinking Skills -
skills more and
more needed for
tertiary study and
work

New set of topics
from student
suggestions

New structure for
3 day programme
including more
language focus,
mostly on last day

Explicit reference
and integration of
Higher Thinking
Skills in the set up
and review of
projects

Will seek more
feedback for
revised 2016
programme

?

?

?

ILP Cycle 4: Week 3

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Topic: | Road safety. |
| Thinking skills: | Understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating, creating |
| Thinking Subskills: | Discussing, comparing, predicting, examining, explaining, contrasting, rating, recommending, prioritising, imagining, composing. |
| Language focus: | Vocabulary associated with transport, in particular, driving and driving safely. Language for giving advice and instruction. (modals, imperatives) |
| Language subskills: | Expressing opinions, agreeing/disagreeing, negotiating, reaching consensus. |
| CEFR relevance: (High) | <p>I can understand and exchange complex, detailed information on topics with which I am not personally familiar, pinpointing key areas where further explanation or clarification is needed. (C1)</p> <p>I can take an active part in conversation, expressing clearly my points of view, ideas or feelings naturally with effective turn-taking. (B2)</p> <p>I can sustain my opinions in discussion by providing relevant explanations, arguments and comments. (B2)</p> <p>I can give or ask for personal opinions in an informal discussion with friends, agreeing and disagreeing politely. (B1)</p> <p>I can help to solve practical problems, saying what I think and asking others what they think. (B1)</p> |
| CEFR relevance: (Low) | <p>I can ask and answer simple questions about things in the past. (e.g., yesterday, last week, last year). (A2+)</p> <p>I can ask for and give opinions, agree and disagree, in a simple way (A2+)</p> <p>I can ask and answer simple questions about a past event. (A2)</p> <p>I can explain why I like or dislike something. (A2)</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group discussion on driving experience here in New Zealand and in the students' home country. This could be in the form of timed discussion (e.g. with each partner for 30 seconds before changing partner), a physical outcome (e.g. students who drive move to one side of the room, those who don't to the other, or perhaps students line up in order of who has been driving the longest). Content feedback (approx. time: 15 minutes). |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring students are grouped together appropriately (mixing those with and without experience), students discuss what differences they have noticed between driving in their country and driving in New Zealand. This can be in the form of a pyramid discussion (firstly in pairs, then in groups and finally as a whole class discussion). If needed, the teacher can feed in relevant topics (e.g. road signs, road rules, types of cars etc.) to ensure students have a wide ranging discussion. (approx. time: 10 minutes) |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After discussion, ask students to rank the biggest differences between driving in NZ and in their home country. They will need to reach consensus so make note of the language used (or not used!) (approx. time: 10 minutes). |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language focus: language for giving opinions, agreeing, disagreeing and reaching collective agreement. Depending on the level of your class, these subskills may be new to your students (lower levels) or familiar but perhaps in need of refinement and extension (high levels). (approx. time 10 minutes). |
| 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain that there has been much talk in NZ media recently on the deaths of international visitors in car accidents. Ask students to prioritise and rank the areas of driving they think NZ police should focus on in order to reduce visitor road accidents in NZ. The content for this discussion will come from their ideas at stage 3, the functional language from the language focus at stage 4. Tell them that they should aim for at least 6 priorities. Reach agreement, give feedback on their content and language performance. (approx. time: 15 minutes) |

Possibilities

Any questions?

