



English Language Teaching Methods Informed by Learning Experiences in an Italian Vocational High School

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LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The acquisition of a new language is at the heart of the methods developed in English language teaching. Specifically, teaching the English language to adolescents mirrors the approaches used to teach the English language to adults. From the direct method to teachers as mediators of the foreign language, new developments have contributed to many methods and strategies for language teaching. Within these teaching methods, technology such as software and websites have been useful but there are still areas where technology can never replace a teacher or the structure and methods necessary to foreign language teaching. Textbook usage in language teaching is useful principally for the order and structure offered by a curriculum. The research conducted in this paper dovetails on research of best practices in language teaching as well as technology use in the classroom and the benefits of a blended approach. Chapter one explores the existing methods and strategies used in the history of foreign language teaching and includes innovative techniques and practices. Chapter two goes into more detail of technology as well as textbook use in the foreign language classroom and concludes with a

description of English teaching in the Italian high school setting historically. Chapter three presents the results of research conducted at Cometa High School in Lake Como Italy. The blended learning approach has shown to be the most effective in increasing students' test scores and improving their English language level. Through the results of standardized regional tests as well as teacher created benchmarks based on the European levels of language, looking at trends in scores moving towards a technology-based curriculum, as well as qualitative research results, data was compiled to offer a proposal for a blended learning approach as the most appropriate for the learning of the English language at a secondary school level.

Chapter One

1. Introduction; 2. Methods in Language Learning; 3. Methods in Language Teaching

1. Introduction: Overview of Language Learning Approaches and Philosophy

Educational philosophers such as Vygotsky and Piaget discuss the relationship between cognition and language development in children. They say that as a child comes to understand the world, the language follows (See Lightbown and Spada 2006). Behaviorist approaches in the 1940s and 50s linked the learning of language to learned behaviors such as mimicry or memorization until researchers found that language learning is a more complex process than habit forming. Lightbown and Spada in the introductory chapters of *How Languages*

Are Learned state that the famous linguist Chomsky critiqued the behaviorist approach and came up with an innatist approach which held that children have innate knowledge of certain principles governing all languages, referred to as universal grammar. The cognitive approach stated that there is no mental module devoted to language acquisition but that all learning and thinking is based on the same cognitive processes. Finally, there are sociocultural perspectives in second language learning and teaching which imply that learning a language is the result of social interaction.

In Paulston's book entitled *Teaching English as a Second Language*, she supports the cognitive approach in that concepts do not exist without words and that language is the instrument of thought and human knowledge. In addition, Paulston recognizes that language is used as a need to communicate and transmit emotions (Paulston 1976).

Thornbury, in *About Language*, emphasizes that language and identity development are related in that adolescents that learn a second language have less of an accent because their identity is still malleable.

Moving on from the way languages are learned to the way they are taught, Thornbury in a survey of several thousand former foreign language students were asked to identify the qualities of 'outstanding' language teachers they had been taught by, the quality that was most frequently cited was that the teacher had had 'thorough knowledge of subject matter' (Thornbury 1997). This was a

characteristic quoted more often than, for example, the fact that the teacher was 'fluent in the use of the foreign language' or was 'enthusiastic, animated'.

'It is a matter of concern that so many teachers of English seem to have such a limited knowledge of the language they are teaching' (Thornbury 1997, 68).

Put simply, language awareness is the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively.

Another important aspect of a teacher is that she addresses visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. Teaching activities addressing the learning style of the teacher and the learning style of the students are important.

2. Language Learning Methods: How a Foreign or Second Language is Learned at All Ages

From these general characteristics of teachers as well as the research on the way languages are learned, the actual methods and practices used in language classrooms has tended to be rather “trendy” and come in and out of style based on the various discoveries in language learning research. The earliest language teaching style was the Direct Method, according to Larsen-Freeman (2016), there was no translation allowed in the Direct Method and everything was done in the target language. In the Direct Method, the syllabus is based on topics or situations and not on linguistic structures. For example, one would start teaching the geography of the United States and work backwards to the grammar. In this view, culture is expressed through literature and the literature

is translated into the target language as an exercise to learn the language. Larsen-Freeman (2016) goes on to explain the next trend in language teaching was the Audio Lingual Method. Other authors, such as Celce-Murcia (1991) explain that the Audiolingual Approach was developed by Fries in 1945 and drew heavily on structural linguistics and behavioral psychology (see also Murcia 2001). In this method, going back to Larsen-Freeman, there is no native language used.

With the shift from a behaviorist view to Chomsky's philosophy of language acquisition in the cognitive approach, the Audiolingual method gave way to the Silent Way by Caleb Cattegno (1972). In this method, language is not habit formation but rule formation and people use their own thinking processes to discover the rules of the language they are acquiring. Larsen-Freeman (2016) goes on to explain that to learn is our personal responsibility in "The Silent Way." According to Chomsky (in Lightbown and Spada 2006) to learn is not through repetition but to have a knowledge of underlying abstract rules. In the Silent Way in the classroom, teachers should be subordinated to learning. The method used is that the teacher points to blocks of color to produce vowel sounds. There is a heavy usage of sound color charts and rods (Larsen-Freeman 2016).

According to Celce-Murcia (1991), in the cognitive approach (developed as a reaction to behaviorist features of the Audiolingual Approach, influenced by

cognitive psychology and Chomskyan linguistics), reading and writing are once again as important as listening and speaking.

In the 1970s interest in applying the Cognitive approach to language teaching was inductive (learners discover the rule from examples) and deductive (learners are given the rule and asked to apply it) according to Larsen (2016). In this method, “the student works with the language, the teacher works with the student” (Larsen 2016, 203).

Moving on, Larsen-Freeman (2016) explains a new approach, which is desuggestopedia: an affective- humanistic approach with respect to students’ feelings. Desuggestopedia is a method with the underlying believe that “the reason for our inefficiency in language learning is that we set up psychological barriers...our limitations need to be “de-suggested” (Larsen 2016). For this, the integration of the fine arts, the use of bright colors helps to “desuggest” or help students get over psychological barriers.

Another approach in line with Desuggestopedia is the Community Language Learning. Both stem from a view of teaching language to the whole person (Larsen 2016). The Community Language Learning approach teaches that there is a fear of change inherent in learning a language and of looking like a fool but in this approach, the teacher acts as a counselor and facilitator. There is group work, whole person learning and learning is dynamic and creative. Larsen (2016) next explains the method “Total Physical Response” by Asher (1977), who teaches that the fastest least stressful way to achieve

comprehension is to follow directions uttered by the instructor. Students should understand before they speak so they first watch the teacher acting out things in the target language. In the Communicative Language Approach, there is the interdependence of language and communication.

Content based and task based and participatory approaches all put the sequence of language topics that arise from communicative needs, not from a syllabus. Friere in the 1980s came up with a participatory approach, which begins with content that is meaningful to the students, and any forms that are worked upon emerge from the content. Freire taught education is meaningful to the extent that it engages learners in reflecting on “their relationship with the world in which they live and the means to shape that world” (Friere and Macedo 1987; Auerbach 1992). Larsen (2016) goes on to say that education is not value free, it occurs within a particular context.

Learning Strategy training, cooperative learning, multiple intelligence methods are other new methods. Gardner in 1983 with his theory of multiple intelligences (logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic) changed language teaching to include activities for the various types of learners.

According to Celce-Murcia (1991), prior to the twentieth century, language-teaching methodology was about getting learners to use a language versus getting learners to analyze a language. In the first parts of her book, the author says the goal was to speak and understand instead of learning all of the

grammatical rules. Greek and Latin language learning was characterized by an emphasis on teaching people to use foreign languages. During the Renaissance, a formal study of the grammars of Greek and Latin became popular through the mass production of books made possible by the printing press.

This presented a shift back to utility rather than analysis during the 17th century.

“Johann Amos Comenius, a Czech scholar who published books about teaching techniques between 1631 and 1658, made explicit an inductive approach to learning a foreign language” (Celce Murcia 1991, 4).

In Celce-Murcia’s brief summary of the development of language learning methods, in the 19th century the Direct Method-exclusive use of the target language in the classroom followed the following logic:

“one cannot teach a language, one can only create the conditions for learning to take place” (Celce Murcia 1991, 16).

The Reading Approach (West 1941) – Audiolingual Approach (Fries 1945)
Bloomfield and Skinner 1957, structural linguistics and behavioral psychology)
Silent Way (Gattegno 1976), Community Language Learning (Curran 1976)
Total Physical Response (Asher 1977) Suggestology, Suggestopedia (Lozanov 1978) proved that the lack of flexibility in such methods led some applied linguists (Richards 1984) to seriously question their usefulness and aroused a healthy skepticism among language educators who argue that there is no such thing as the best “method”.

3. Language Teaching Methods and Approaches: A More Recent Look

In more recent research, there is an emphasis on significant learning. The authors cite another language teacher researcher Dee Fink (2003) saying: “learning happens when students change. This change leads to significant learning, according to the author, when there is some permanence of the learning experience. For this type of learning to take place, teachers need to look beyond what students learn to how they learn.” (Dee Fink 2003, 2-4).

A longer excerpt shows how learning goals create significant learning, which is a concept that goes beyond any one teaching or learning method (see Larsen’s methods above), and is a general description of how to teach and learn in the English language classroom:

“Reformulating goals and objectives that are focused, relevant, and lead to a long-lasting learning experience is essential for significant learning according to Dee Fink (2003). Setting learning goals and objectives for students is related to “establishing a direction for learning” (Marzano 2001, 93). Setting general goals helps student focus on what they have to learn in units and lessons. Focusing and maintaining students’ attention on these goals is recommended by Wong and Wong (1998), who advise teachers to review them orally and in writing with students at the beginning of the class and keep them visible. So, for significant learning experiences, the key is integrating learning to the students’ context and letting them apply what they learn to other situations.

Dee Fink's (2002) three stages of significant learning for courses, which are planning, implementing, and evaluating a course. I have chosen those grammar structures I can integrate to our topic, and I have written in terms of what my students will be able to do with those structures and that knowledge. Then, I built more topic driven objectives which I think are more meaningful and significant and in which different grammar issues are implicit. (Teacher research journal)"

Another article from the same University, *How Do EFL Student Teachers Face the Challenge of Using L2 in Public School Classrooms?* by John Jairo Viáfara from the Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia states that the native language should be used in the following situations:

To Check and Support Comprehension (Monitor if students understand what they are told in L2 in relation to what happens in the lesson);

To Teach (explicitly) the Foreign Language;

To Support Classroom Management;

To Bring Meaning to Specific Contexts;

And again states:

Scholars such as Tarone (1981) have widely explained how language learners make use of communication strategies in their attempts to engage in meaningful interaction with others.

One of the most recent methods of language teaching is by Kohler (2002).

Kohler considers mediation as a term understood in various ways associated

with notions of conflict or resolution of difference. She states mediation “is a process of learning to read a new linguistic and cultural system and transfer these meanings to another linguistic and cultural system”. This corresponds with Vygotsky’s theory that learning occurs on both inter-psychological and intra-psychological planes (Vygotsky 1978).

Differentiation in the modern languages classroom, according Cajkler and Addelman (2014) states that teachers can differentiate by selecting a stimulus which can produce different outcomes, by producing differing stimuli, by varying the learning experience they offer their pupils or by expecting a variety of types of responses. They develop banks of differentiated materials to assist in mixed-ability classrooms of all age groups. The key to mixed ability might be in the variety of approach, state the authors. In the chart below, the authors communicate the various ways language communication can be differentiated for mixed ability learners as well as multiple intelligences (Gardner 2011).

Chapter Two

1. *Case study Cometa: Italian Vocational School, History and Overview;*
2. *English as a Foreign Language;*
3. *English and Special Learning Needs in Cometa.*

The educational philosophy of Cometa was taken from the Italian priest Luigi Giussani. His book *The Risk of Education: Discovering Our Ultimate Destiny*, published in 2001 divides the necessity of educating adolescents into categories: authority, risk, verification and tradition.

The tables and charts on the numbers of enrolled students in Cometa are taken from the Oliver Twist website, <http://www.puntocometa.org/home/cosa-facciamo/scuola-e-formazione/scuola-oliver-twist/>, as well as from the school archives and personal files.

The idea of a Mood Board consists of images, text, and samples of objects in a unified composition. It can be based upon a set topic or can be any material chosen at random. A mood board can be used to give a general idea of a topic that you were given, or can be used to show how different something is from the modern day. They may be physical or digital, and can be “extremely effective” presentation tools. In Cometa, mood boards were originally used with Textile students when they were given a “Commissa” or Commission by Erasmo Figini, the founder of the school and together with Rosaria Longoni, the Textile Designer teacher, students realized a mood board to organize and present ideas to clients.

Dyned, an educational computer program used mainly with businesses was also made for use in schools and created in order to develop a comprehensive program in which students can record their voices and hear themselves speak.

Morris, De Pue and Wong developed the idea of Bell-ringers but *The Classroom Management Book* emphasized the importance of bell ringers for consistency and structure in the classroom.

The strategies used to help students with DSA in Cometa are taken from Nijakowska (2013).

In addition to simplifying and shortening tests according to students' diagnosis, it is important that each student creates his or her own formulas and schemes to use for the regional exams.

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CHAPTER I
OVERVIEW OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING
AND LEARNING METHODS

1.1 Introduction

The acquisition of a new language is at the heart of the methods developed in English language teaching. Specifically, teaching the English language to adolescents mirrors the approaches used to teach the English language to adults. From the direct method to teachers as mediators of the foreign language, new developments have contributed to many methods and strategies for language teaching. Within these teaching methods, technology such as software and websites have been useful but this paper presents research that could suggest that there are still areas where technology can never replace a teacher or the structure and methods necessary to foreign language teaching. Textbook usage in language teaching is useful principally for the order and structure offered by a curriculum. The research conducted in this paper dovetails on research of best practices in language teaching, technology use in the classroom, and the benefits of a blended approach. It explores the existing methods and strategies used in the history of foreign language teaching, and includes innovative techniques and practices.

1.1.1 Introduction to language acquisition theories

Early on in the research of language acquisition, as well as second language acquisition, educational philosophers discuss the relationship between cognition and language development in children. Children acquire their first language as they begin to learn and grow in their knowledge of the world in general. These early philosophers were of the idea that a child comes to

understand the world first and then the language follows. This can be seen in children who notice an object and later begin to learn the way to say its name; first comes the conceptual or cognitive representation of the object.

As time went on and new theories of language and second language development were formed, behaviorist approaches in the 1940s and 50s linked the learning of language to learned behaviors such as mimicry or memorization. Researchers found that language learning is a more complex process than habit forming or than simply repeating and memorizing.

As linguists developed their theories with time, the most famous linguist, Noam Chomsky, began to critique the behaviorist approach and came up with a new approach which held that children have innate knowledge of certain principles governing all languages, referred to as universal grammar. This differs from the previously mentioned cognitive or behaviorist approaches in that language development is neither linked to learning about things nor memorization but an inherent or innate capacity built into us for language.

Yet another approach, the cognitive approach, stated that there is no mental space, mechanism or “module” devoted to language acquisition but that all learning and thinking is based on the same cognitive processes. This means that the “innate” approach or the “behavior” approach have fundamentally differing ideas or theories of language development but is quite similar to the early philosophers’ idea of language acquisition.

Finally, there are sociocultural perspectives in second language learning and teaching which imply that learning a language is the result of social interaction. This differs from earlier theories on language and second language acquisition in that, instead of language acquisition being the result of a cognitive process, or a mental operation, the stimulus or impetus for the acquisition of a language is the result of social ties. This would mean that children or adolescents are most able to gain competency in a second language through the use of peer interaction, speaking in the classroom or immersion programs.

Of all these various language acquisition theories, the most up to date research supports the cognitive approach in that concepts do not exist without words and that language is the instrument of thought and human knowledge. The social aspect, the innate aspect of language and a behaviorist approach follow this basic cognitive approach. Language is a vehicle used to communicate and transmit emotions but this is all done on a cognitive level as an instrument of knowledge.

Furthermore, the cognitive approach emphasizes that language and identity development are related. This is clearly seen in adolescents that learn a second language and have less of an accent than adults because their identity is still malleable.

1.1.2 From Language Learning to Language Teaching

Research above shows that there are various schools of thought about how languages are learned: the innatist approach, cognitive, behavior and social. Language teaching needs to cater to each theory or approach to language acquisition by understanding how the mechanism of language acquisition works.

Language teaching theories are less based on research into how the brain works or how we learn language in general, and more based on how humans learn specifically. For example, students were asked to identify the qualities of 'outstanding' language teachers they had been taught by. The quality that was most frequently cited was that the teacher had had 'thorough knowledge of the subject matter'. This was a characteristic quoted more often than, for example, the fact that the teacher was 'fluent in the use of the foreign language' or was 'enthusiastic, animated'. This is important information because being fluent in English or being a charismatic teacher is different then having 'thorough knowledge of the subject matter' in order to teach someone. In other words, the mechanics of the English language, why certain words are used and others not, the exceptions to certain grammar rules, idioms, etc. are all things that effective language teachers need to have knowledge of, even before being perfect language speakers themselves. This is also because a native English speaker, never having to learn English, is perhaps less able to explain the details of the

English language than someone who has studied it and is better able to transmit the reasons behind certain rules of the English language.

'It is a matter of concern that so many teachers of English seem to have such a limited knowledge of the language they are teaching' (Thornbury 2010).

Put simply, language awareness is the knowledge that teachers have of the underlying systems of the language that enables them to teach effectively.

Another important aspect of a language teacher, as is true of teachers in general, is that all learners' needs are addressed: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. "There is no single acceptable way to go about teaching language today" (Freeman 2011).

This is especially important to language learners and teachers because of the above mentioned language acquisition theories. If language learning is a combination of social interaction, an innate ability, cognitive development and behavior, language teaching must target to various learning styles in order to address all the learning needs. Teaching activities addressing the learning style of the teacher and the learning style of the students are important.

1.1.3 A History of English Language Methods

From these general characteristics of teachers as well as the research on the way languages are learned, the actual methods and practices used in language classrooms has tended to be rather "trendy" and come in and out of style based on the various discoveries in language learning research. The earliest language teaching style was the Direct Method. This method was developed in the 19th

century and there was an exclusive use of the target language in the classroom that used the following logic:

“one cannot teach a language, one can only create the conditions for learning to take place” (Kelly 2001, 25).

In this method, there was no translation allowed; everything was done in the target language. The syllabus is based on topics or situations and not on linguistic structures. For example, one would start teaching the geography of the United States and work backwards to the grammar. In this view, culture is expressed through literature and language structures are learned as needed only in order to understand the cultures’ literature. In this method, the idea is that language structures and grammar are not “stand-alones” but must be acquired in context. In order for this to happen, students are presented with the literature of the target language and as many opportunities as possible to learn the target language. One possible flaw of this method is that students need a basic handle on the target language before being totally immersed in it; otherwise they have no storehouse of knowledge in order from which to pull.

The chronologically successive trend in language teaching was the Audio Lingual Method. The Audio Lingual Approach was developed by Fries in 1945 and drew heavily on structural linguistics and behavioral psychology. It was developed during the Second World War in order to teach the American military various languages needed such as German, French and Japanese. In this method, there is a heavy emphasis on audio-aural learning. This method

relies heavily on the assumption that language learning is basically habit formation. The four basic language skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking are taught in the natural order of first language acquisition: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Many of the exercises used in the Audio Lingual approach involve memorization, drills and repeating dialogues. The critique and risk of this method is that it can become “mindless” or “repetitive”. To avoid this, different activities can be integrated that challenge learners and call for more meaningful involvement in the language learning process.

With the shift from a behaviorist view to Chomsky’s philosophy of language acquisition in the cognitive approach, the Audiolingual method gave way to the Silent Way. The Silent Way was designed by Caleb Cattegno and holds that language is not habit formation but rule formation and people use their own thinking processes to discover the rules of the language they are acquiring. Diane Larsen goes on to explain that to learn is our personal responsibility in “The Silent Way.” According to Chomsky, learning does not occur through repetition but through having knowledge of underlying abstract rules. The Silent Way in the classroom implies that teachers should be subordinated to learning. In this method, the teacher points to blocks of color to produce vowel sounds from the students. There is a heavy usage of sound color charts and rods in order to evoke fluency in the students. It is called the Silent Way because the teacher should become invisible to the language learning process

and merely set up the classroom materials in such a way as to encourage and foster learning to happen in a natural way.

According to Celce-Murcia (1991), in the cognitive approach (developed as a reaction to behaviorist features of the Audiolingual Approach, influenced by cognitive psychology in 1967 and Chomskyan linguistics of 1959), reading and writing are just as important skills as listening and speaking.

In the 1970s, interest in applying the Cognitive approach to language teaching was inductive (learners discover the rule from examples) and deductive (learners are given the rule and asked to apply it) according to Diane Larsen. In this method, the student works with the language, the teacher works with the student.

A more recent language teaching method is desuggestopedia: an affective-humanistic approach with respect to students' feelings. Desuggestopedia is a method with the underlying belief that "the reason for our inefficiency in language learning is that we set up psychological barriers...our limitations need to be "de-suggested" (Freeman 2011, 62). For this, the integration of the fine arts and the use of bright colors helps to "de-suggest" or help students get over psychological barriers.

Another approach in line with Desuggestopedia is the Community Language Learning method. Both stem from a view of teaching language to the whole person. The Community Language Learning approach teaches that there is a fear of change inherent in learning a language and of looking like a fool but

that, in this approach, the teacher acts as a counselor and facilitator. There is both group work and individual work. Learning is dynamic and creative and is addressed to the whole person.

Similar in name, developed in the 1960s, is the Communicative Language Teaching approach. In this approach, less emphasis is placed on grammar and more on a tool needed for social situations. The shift in this method came about when the Council of Europe identified the need for English as a language for those immigrating to Common Market countries. For persons immigrating, needing language mainly as a tool to communicate, less emphasis is placed on grammar and more on language needed to communicate. For this, emphasis is placed on using the target language in a given situation such as asking information, ordering at a restaurant or staying in a hotel. For this method, perfect English is not the goal but rather the ability to communicate in the target language, to be understood and to obtain information. In the Communicative Language Approach, there is the interdependence of language and communication.

Another popular method in language teaching is the “Total Physical Response” method, which teaches that the fastest and least stressful way to achieve comprehension is to follow directions uttered by the instructor. In this method, students should understand before they speak so they first watch the teacher acting things out in the target language. An example of TPR would be basing a lesson around “commands” such as “open the window”, “close the door”, etc.

and repeating the words with the action until the words are memorized and correlated to the action by the students. This method builds fluency without repetitive grammar of an over-emphasis on memorization but it is literally an “acting out” of key language phrases in order to learn the target language.

Content based, task based and participatory approaches all put the sequence of language topics in an order that arise from communicative needs, not from a syllabus. The participatory approach was developed in the 1980s and begins with content that is meaningful to the students and any forms that are worked upon emerge from the content. In this method, education is meaningful to the extent that it engages learners in reflecting on their relationship with the world in which they live and the means to shape that world. In these approaches, the underlying philosophy is that education is not value free, it occurs within a particular context. For this, grammar, fluency, reading, writing, speaking and listening cannot be taught without being rooted in a context that gives value and meaning to the world for students.

In addition to specific methods for language teaching, cooperative learning and multiple intelligence methods are ways of engaging multiple learners with various intelligences in one classroom. For example, in cooperative learning, students in an English language classroom are placed in groups and given dialogs or grammar assignments to complete as a group. Using the help of peers and the guidance of a teacher, cooperative learning in the language classroom can be a way to break up the rhythm of grammar and rote lessons in

order to add a positive peer influence to learning and teach students necessary skills of interaction in the target language. The theory of multiple intelligences, developed by Howard Gardner, teaches that there is no one intelligence in any given classroom and that a teacher needs to be able to integrate all types of intelligences in any given lesson. The various intelligences are: logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily kinesthetic, and musical/rhythmic. These intelligences are important aspects of our world and each one should be developed to a certain degree in each child, although one or two might be dominant. This means that where one child might readily memorize a dialog in the target language because of its rhythmical nature, another might need to see it acted out or written due to visual intelligence or spatial intelligence. This method changed language teaching to include activities for the various types of learners.

Prior to the twentieth century, language-teaching methodology was about getting learners to use a language versus getting learners to analyze a language. During this time, the goal was to speak and understand instead of learning all of the grammatical rules. Greek and Latin language learning was characterized by an emphasis on teaching people to use foreign languages. During the Renaissance, a formal study of the grammars of Greek and Latin became popular through the mass production of books made possible by the printing press. This presented a shift back to utility rather than analysis during the 17th century.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, with the development of all the above mentioned approaches to teaching a language; The Reading Approach, the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Approach, the Silent Way, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, Suggestology, Suggestopedia, and Gardner's Theory of Multiple intelligences all proved that the lack of flexibility in such methods led some applied linguists to seriously question their usefulness and aroused a healthy skepticism among language educators who argue that there is no such thing as the best "method".

The ideal method or approach in language teaching would be an integration of several approaches in order to address the multiple types of learners. Using grammar as a vehicle to language, using the target language as much as possible, using colors, actions and group work are all useful strategies in the language classroom. Taken in isolation, any one method of language teaching falls short.

1.2 English Language Learning and Special Needs (Dyslexia)

Students with dyslexia may find it challenging to study a foreign language and get discouraged if there are not certain tools and extra resources available for them. Learning a foreign language may be a satisfactory experience for students with dyslexia but their teacher must carefully take their strengths and needs into account. Although all dyslexic learners are different, and what works for one learner may not work for another, there are some general

principles and guidelines that teachers can keep in mind in order to help all learners.

Dyslexic learners are better able to understand spoken and listening exercises in their own language but tend to struggle with these aspects in a foreign language (Crombie 2003).

The students' learning difficulties in their original language, in this case mostly Italian, usually gives an indication of the difficulties in a foreign language but it is not the only indicator. Other factors that affect students with dyslexia learning a foreign language include self-esteem, attitude, learning style and determination. Encouraging students and giving them a sense of success in a foreign language can be extremely helpful in order to improve self-esteem and show learners that learning a foreign language is possible and feasible. Dyslexic students often face difficulties with the phonology of their original language and therefore "auditory discrimination" or distinguishing different sounds in a foreign language can also cause some problems and may be an area where teachers want to focus with dyslexic students.

Processing time for dyslexic students is longer, especially of language (Ackerman and Dykman 1996). This means that students with dyslexia should not be expected to understand, absorb and process information at the same rate as the rest of the class and slowing down the pace of speaking and listening activities can give dyslexic students time for processing in the early stages of learning a foreign language.

Working memory and short-term memory difficulties that affect dyslexic pupils' learning could be expected to affect foreign language learning. If a young person has difficulty in accessing a word such as "hospital" and instead says, "hospital", this muddling of polysyllabic words which is not unexpected in dyslexic people generally is likely to overlap into the new language.

Short-term memory difficulties make it likely that learning vocabulary too will pose problems for the dyslexic learner. Combined with the extra time required to access words from memory, the pupil may have problems in maintaining concentration for sufficient time to decode, comprehend and respond. This factor of requiring extra time may remain until the pupil reaches the stage of being able to think in the other language.

Pupils who have mild difficulties in learning to read, write and master the phonology of their own language, may find some difficulty in tackling whatever foreign language they choose, but will probably reach a reasonable standard if they persist. At the early stages of learning the new language progress may be quite acceptable. However, as the demands rise, memory may become overloaded, and if the pupils do not understand the necessary strategies and techniques to employ, what was initially a pleasurable experience can become extremely stressful, with the possibility of breakdown not just in learning but also in motivation and self-esteem.

With dyslexic students in English, it is important to provide them with, or help them create on their own, concept maps, images, and tables that help them

organize their thoughts for tests and important homework assignments. Using different colors is also very useful for students with dyslexia in order to differentiate different concepts. Teachers can help dyslexic students, and all students for that matter, by connecting new information with information already covered in order to activate prior knowledge. It is important to activate connections between different subjects as well as divide objectives and goals for individual homework assignments into sub goals. It is also necessary to develop processes of auto-evaluation and learning strategies on the part of the student. As with all students, dyslexic students work well with group or pair work because they are able to speak, interact and listen more frequently than a frontal lesson.

1.2.1 Listening

It is necessary to provide dyslexic students with clear directions, explain difficult words with a definition, use a glossary, and if necessary give an Italian translation of post- listening questions.

1.2.2 Speaking

Important and critical areas for dyslexic students learning English are pronunciation, the choice of vocabulary, verb tense choices, short-term memory and syntax. In speaking activities, it is important that dyslexic students always have a model and use the target language as much as possible in class.

1.2.3 Writing

Critical points in writing include the use of vocabulary and syntax, the choice of punctuation, writing a summary of a text, and editing one's own work. It is important, also in writing, to provide students with a model. A written model or guide can be based off a postcard, brief texts or letters. With writing, teaching mental maps is important in order to give students a mental structure, picture or organization.

1.2.4 *Language Teaching Methods and Approaches: A More Recent Look*

In more recent research, there is an emphasis on “significant learning”. This is the belief that learning happens when students change. This change leads to significant learning, according to one author, when there is some permanence of the learning experience. For this type of learning to take place, teachers need to look beyond what students learn to how they learn.

A longer excerpt shows how learning goals create significant learning, which is a concept that goes beyond any one teaching or learning method and is a general description of how to teach and learn in the English language classroom:

Reformulating goals and objectives that are focused, relevant, and lead to a long-lasting learning experience is essential for significant learning. Setting learning goals and objectives for students is related to “establishing a direction for learning.

Setting general goals helps students focus on what they have to learn in units and lessons. Many language teachers recommend focusing and maintaining students' attention on these goals as an important aspect of growth and development not only in the target language, but also in the student as a whole. It is also important to have teachers review them orally and in writing with students at the beginning of the class and keep them visible. So, for significant learning experiences, the key is integrating learning into the students' context and letting them apply what they learn to other situations. An example of this in a classroom setting is giving students an entry level test in English and asking them to assess at which level they would like to be by the end of the year. Students then review frequently their goals for language learning and make a visible chart of their growth. This learning experience is universal and can be applied to all subjects but is an important benchmark for growth for students.

The following is an excerpt of a language teacher that builds "significant language learning" into her lessons.

Three stages of significant learning for courses are planning, implementing, and evaluating a course. I have chosen those grammar structures I can integrate to our topic, and I have written in terms of what my students will be able to do with those structures and that knowledge. Then, I built more topic driven objectives which I think are more meaningful and significant and in which different grammar issues are implicit.

The above excerpt shows how grammar follows meaning in language learning and teaching. With a grammar structure learned, there must be an objective of how and where that grammar structure will be used for students. An example of this is the fact that many language approaches emphasize the exclusive use of the target language when in reality it is necessary to “set up” this learning experience for students instead of insisting on it all the time. This does not allow students to have the “context” to use their target language. Instead, if students are given the opportunities to use their target language, they will be more prepared and be able to attach more meaning to these learning experiences.

The native language should be used in the following situations, according to several articles written on the topic:

To Check and Support Comprehension (Monitor if students understand what they are told in L2 in relation to what happens in the lesson)

To Teach (explicitly) the Foreign Language

To Support Classroom Management

To Bring Meaning to Specific Contexts

And again states:

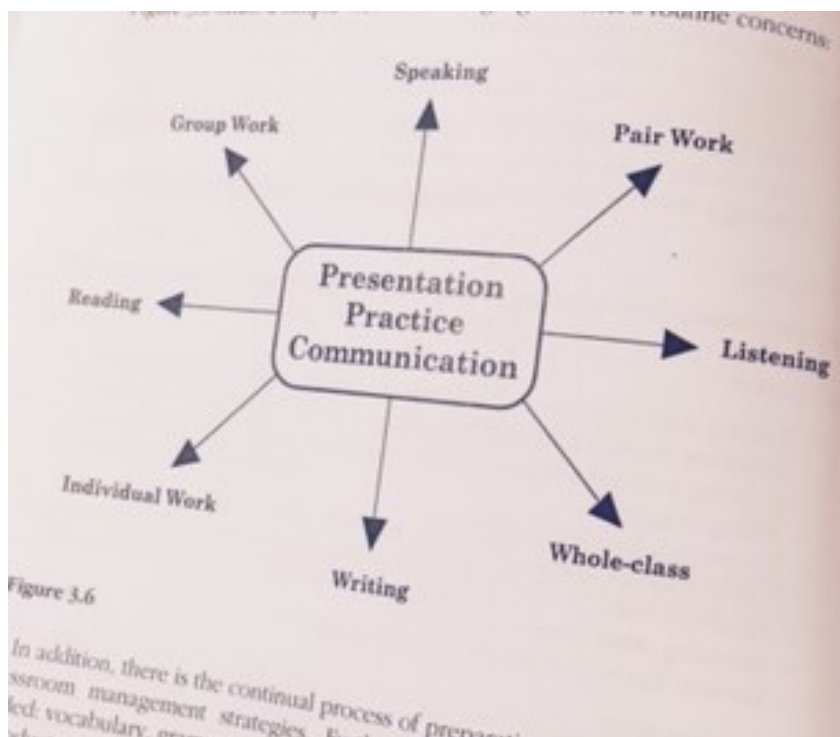
Scholars have widely explained how language learners make use of communication strategies in their attempts to engage in meaningful interaction with others.

One of the most recent methods of language teaching is about teachers as mediators in the foreign language classroom. This method uses mediation as a term understood in various ways associated with notions of conflict or resolution of difference. Mediation “is a process of learning to read a new linguistic and cultural system and transfer these meanings to another linguistic and cultural system”, says the author of this method.

The author of the mediation method teaches that learning occurs on both inter-psychological and intra-psychological planes.

Differentiation in the modern languages classroom signifies that teachers can differentiate by selecting a stimulus which can produce different outcomes, by producing differing stimuli, by varying the learning experience they offer their pupils or by expecting a variety of types of responses. Developers of the mediation method have developed banks of differentiated materials to assist in mixed-ability classrooms of all age groups. The key to mixed ability classrooms might be in the variety of approach, state the authors. In the chart below, the authors communicate the various ways language communication can be differentiated for mixed ability learners as well as multiple intelligences.

Figure 1 English Language Teaching Methods



1.2.5 Teaching English: Techniques, Types of Lessons and Language Analysis

A teaching technique that functions well in the language classroom is to have a more “managerial” role and less of an overt teaching role. Modern language teaching calls for much more facilitating and guiding than upfront explanations and testing because of the subject matter: the language used to teach is also what is being taught.

While students pick up languages by immersion (when they are living and communicating in a place where the language is taught), the language classroom involves self-study and classroom work. There are many types of

teachers from traditional, entertainers, involvers, enablers and explainers. For teachers who take the more traditional role to teaching, he or she does most of the talking and the students' role is primarily to listen and concentrate and perhaps take notes. This process is one in which the students are seen as receptacles and the teachers must fill them up by passing knowledge over to the students.

Teacher rapport with students, within any given teaching method, is extremely important in that teachers create the learning climate for their students by creating a safe, friendly and consistent learning environment.

There are three main qualities of a good teacher, in any subject matter (Scrivener 2010): respect (a positive and non-judgmental regard for another person), empathy (being able to see things from the other person's perspective, as if looking through their eyes) and authenticity (being oneself without hiding behind job titles, roles or masks).

Of all these, according to Rogers and Frelberg (1994), the most important is authenticity in a teacher, or to be yourself. Gaie Houston (1990) says the following:

“The foundation of rapport is to learn yourself enough that you know what style you have and when you are being truthful to yourself”.

The learning cycle involves five steps (see figure)

1. doing something
2. recalling what happened

3. reflecting on that
4. drawing conclusions from the reflection
5. using those conclusions to inform and prepare for future practical experience

Do---→Recall---→Reflect--→Conclude--→Prepare

This is an experiential learning cycle.

1.2.6 English Language Skills: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing

The four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing can be split into two categories of productive skills and receptive skills. However, there is much overlap in the practical implementation of the four skills. For example, if a teacher is reading a text to her students in English, listening skills are being developed as well as speaking skills if there is a discussion on the text. Next, a writing task might be assigned which includes assessment of the ability to follow along by reading the text.

An example of a speaking lesson that requires reading as well is to have students read an article about the U.S. election of 2016. Students must fill out a chart comparing the two candidates on different issues, analyzing and learning new vocabulary words in order to interview each other for a magazine article on the various issues.

It is important that the speaking activity have a clear communicative scope, for example that students are asked to prepare an interview for a magazine and not

for its own sake. It is similarly important that vocabulary is presented in context and students have an opportunity to recognize the new words used in new sentences, not taken out of context.

A sample lesson plan for this lesson includes all the aspects of language analysis: meaning, form, pronunciation and appropriacy as well as every step of the lesson with possible student questions or problems anticipated in order to come up with solutions ahead of time.

Imagine you are a reporter for *Time* magazine writing an article on the U.S. election. Take a survey to give your readers an idea of where people stand on the issues.

- 1. Gather information about what your partner thinks about the issues**
- 2. Interview your classmates and fill in the chart below in order to help you write your article.**

Genre: spoken/written survey

Aim: write a survey for *Time* magazine

A) With a partner:

**Do you agree with Trump, Clinton or neither on the topic of gun control?
Why?**

**Do you agree with Trump, Clinton or neither on the topic of immigration?
Why?**

**Do you agree with Trump, Clinton or neither on the topic of foreign
policy?
Why?**

B) Find someone for each box who....

Agrees with Trump on gun control? Why?	Agrees with Clinton on gun control? Why?
Disagrees with Trump on foreign policy? Why?	Disagrees with Clinton on foreign policy? Why?
Agrees with Trump on immigration? Why?	Agrees with Clinton on immigration? Why?

VOCABULARY PRE-TEACH

Match the vocabulary words in bold to their correct definition.

It was a very **polarizing (1)** issue: people were forced to take two totally different stands, one at the far right and one at the far left.

The **hawkish (2)** stand of the U.S. in many foreign policy decisions meant that they used military, force and interference to achieve their goals (ex. Vietnam, Iraq, etc.)

Michael Jordan **endorses (3)** Nike- he wears their gear and puts his face on the product, showing the world that he is in favor of it.

There were no **loopholes (4)** whatsoever in her plan- no exceptions, no ways to get out of it... it was 100% certain.

The man was feeling **infringed (5)** upon when the government listened to all his phone conversations and read all his messages on whatsapp- he felt they majorly invaded his privacy.

The old witch had become quite **callous (6)** and mean after many years because her heart had hardened and had less and less mercy towards others.

_____ - favoring the use or display of force rather than diplomacy to achieve foreign policy goals.

_____ - insensitive, indifferent, unsympathetic.

_____ - an opening or aperture

_____ -to approve, support or sustain

_____ - violated or transgressed

_____ to divide into sharply opposing factions or political groups

The following is a sample lesson plan used to teach the English language through context. It is a lesson based on the U.S. 2016 elections, getting students to focus on new vocabulary, as well as develop reading and speaking skills.

Name	Katie Kleczek	Lesson Date	Tuesday July 19 th , 2016
TP Number	8	Time	40 minutes

Main Aim: To enable students to practice and develop their reading skills (gist and detailed) and 5 new lexis items in the context of the U.S. 2016 election.

Subsidiary Aim(s): to enable Ss to acquire more confidence in their speaking

skills and lexis, especially related to the 2016 U.S. Election and comparing/contrasting candidates on specific issues through 5 new items.

My personal development aims:

*Giving clearer tasks, organizing and setting up tasks better
Working on Timing, CCQs, and meaning tasks*

PROCEDURE

Time	Stage name and aim	Procedure: What will you do? What will students do?	Interaction	Anticipated problems and solutions e.g. P1 the audio may not work S1 have the transcript ready to read out
5 min	Set context and Lead-in to enable Ss to understand what the topic of the lesson will be about by engaging them in the topic of the lesson (the U.S. Election) and activate their top down process	T gives Ss 2 pictures, one of Hillary Clinton and one of Trump. Exercise: What do you know about each candidate? What do you know about what they think about the main issues? Have Ss say who they would vote for. Instructions + ICQs	T – Ss T – Ss Ss- T S-S S-S	P1= odd number of Ss S1= there will be a group of 3 people P2= same rates same peers S2= change peers P3=Ss don't know anything about Clinton/Trump S3= Use peers to elicit context. They start talking

		<p>Ss work in pairs and rate/discuss the pictures</p> <p>Ss discuss with another partner about their decisions</p>		<p>about them- Issues Trump wants to put out all the immigrants</p>
5 min	<p>Pre-teach if necessary to enable Ss to understand the meaning and hear the sound of difficult words (they might not know but that they'll find in the listening)</p>	<p>T gives handouts of new words IN CONTEXT.</p> <p>Polarizing Loopholes infringed deport callous</p> <p>CCQs to check if Ss have understood</p> <p>T drills the words (+ words in a sentence) to make Ss get more familiar with the sound of the words (that Ss will hear again during the listening) choral drill first, then T nominates few Ss for individual drill T models and drills the 6 sentences</p>	<p>T – Ss Ss-T Ss- T</p>	<p>NOTICING: what do you notice about the words in bold? Polarization Loopholes Circles Hawkish- more aggressive Deport callous Infringed-</p> <p>P1 = a student doesn't know a word S1= T has already taken notes of which words Ss might not know (MFPA if necessary). if the word has not been taken into account by T, and it's relevant for lesson, T asks class first. If no answers are given, T asks CCQs</p>

				P2=Some Ss might not fully understand the meaning of a word S2= T asks CCQs
5 min	<p>Reading for general information</p> <p>to enable Ss to read for a general understanding of the text</p>	<p>Instructions + ICQs</p> <p>T gives processing time to read the question: What 3 election topics does the article talk about? Make a prediction: does it seem the candidates agree or disagree on these topics?</p> <p>T gives Ss the text to read individually and answer the gist question.</p> <p>Ss compare with pairs (discussion) T monitors</p> <p>T gives keys (Ss unfold paper) Ss have a minute to check their answers</p>	<p>T-Ss Ss-T</p> <p>S</p> <p>S</p> <p>Ss-Ss</p> <p>Ss-Ss T</p>	<p>P1= Ss might be distracted by few words they might not know or understand S1= T says to focus on general ideas not on exact words</p> <p>P2= Ss might ask to read again to the extract to check again S2= T says they will be reading again, but this time just to read for overall meaning</p>

10 min	<p>Reading for detailed information</p> <p>to enable Ss to read for a more detailed understanding of the text</p>	<p>Exercise: Read the article one more time. Make notes of the candidate with his/her correct stance on each issue.</p> <p>OR have Ss fill it out themselves, based on the reading OR have strips ready and have Ss match the strips with the headings/candidates.</p> <p>Instructions + ICQs</p> <p>T gives processing time to read the exercise (2 min)</p> <p>Ss do exercise individually while reading Ss compare their answers in pairs (discussion) T monitors</p> <p>T provides keys (Ss unfold paper) (1-2 min) If problems about answers/keys (2-3 min)</p> <p>Introducing- MFP Infinitive clauses/ past participle clauses/ -ing clauses</p>	<p>T-Ss Ss-T</p> <p>S</p> <p>S S-S T</p> <p>S- S</p> <p>T-Ss Ss-T</p>	<p>P1=Ss might not fully understand the (M/F/P/A) of a word S1= if relevant, T opens up to class, then if no feedback T explains again and makes CCQs</p> <p>P2 = Ss ask for some vocabulary S2= if the word is relevant for lesson, T opens up the question to the class.</p>
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5 mins	Noticing Aim: get students looking at and thinking about the meaning of TL	T asks Ss what they notice about target language. Ss say things like :nouns, verbs, talking about the political issues, etc.	T- Ss Ss-ss S	P1=Ss might focus on the FORM instead of the meaning S1= T elicits more meaning based responses from students. P2= Ss might not notice anything S2= T elicits things from Ss.
15 min	Meaning To develop Ss speaking skills And to enable Ss to use the lexis they have learnt during the lesson in a real life context (election issues) Ss have to defend their positions on various relevant political issues.	Instructions + ICQs T gives Ss sentences to fill in the blank with target language, the words from lexis. T gives answer key and has Ss check their answers after comparing with a partner.	T-Ss Ss-T T-Ss Ss-T T	P1= Ss might say they don't agree or disagree S1= T tells Ss to take a definite stance on the issues, also thinking about the situation in Italy. P2= Ss might be unable to complete the exercise in the given time or may finish early S2= Give Ss other issues to discuss, such as education or environment. P3= Ss might debate the issue in a more personal way, it could be a "touchy" subject. S3= remind Ss the goal of the activity is to increase familiarity with the candidates and to improve fluency.

10 min	Form Aim: get Ss to think about and focus on the form of the target language	T writes on WB mistakes noted down while monitoring while Ss are still discussing. Ss have a couple of minutes to work on the corrections. T ask for corrections to whole class T gives audio script + definitions of the most important and difficult words mentioned in the lesson	T Ss-Ss T- Ss Ss-T T	P1= Ss can't correct the mistakes S1= T gives hints, MFPA if necessary P2= problems in pronouncing a word S2=drilling, if it helps, T writes down on board the word + phonetic if needed.
5 mins	Pronunciation Aim: drill Ss on the pronunciation of the target language	Ss are drilled don the pronunciation of the words, seeing the phonetic alphabet and drilling chorally as well as individually. Ss are asked to think about stress and intonation.	T-Ss Ss T-Ss	P1= Ss might say words wrong or might be unable to hear the pronunciation of certain words. S1= T helps Ss with specific pronunciation and drills chorally and individually
5 mins	Controlled Practice Aim: test and check for student understanding of the target language	Ss have a fill in the blanks exercise to test and check for understanding of the target LEXIS. T gives an answer key for the controlled practice.	T- Ss Ss-ss T-Ss S	
5 mins	Semi-Controlled Aim: give Ss more practice with the target	Ss ask each other if they agree/disagree with various stances of candidates using the new vocabulary words.	T-Ss Ss-ss T-Ss	P1= Ss might not be able to use the TL S1= T monitors, clarifies, and helps Ss with the TL during the semi-

	language	T monitors if Ss are using the target language in the correct way. T gives feedback.		controlled practice.
5 mins	Free Practice Aim: get Ss talking and using the target language in a “free way”	Ss walk around the room interviewing their peers; they must fill out every box and talk to every one of their classmates.	T-Ss Ss-Ss	P1= Ss might not use TL in the correct way S1= T encourages Ss to use target language saying there is a better way to say the things they are saying.
5 mins	Error Correction Aim: Correct Ss and help them self-correct in the target language	T monitors and picks up on mistakes used by Ss.	T-Ss Ss-T	Ss might not make many mistakes/ they may be difficult to hear T plays music in order to hear mistakes, T prepares errors or thinks of common mistakes made with this target language ahead of time.

The following section on language analysis takes the new language being introduced to the students and analyzes it based on meaning, form (grammar), appropriateness and pronunciation.

LANGUAGE ANALYSIS

Meaning

Write the TL in its context sentence. What is the meaning of the target language? (Definition)	How will you convey the meaning? (Visual, context, etc.)	How will you check if students understand the meaning? (Concept questions)	What difficulties do you expect students to have with meaning ? What might confuse	What solutions do you have for these potential difficulties/problems with meaning ? <u>In MFPA: before giving solution always open up to class first, then if no feedback:</u>
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<p><u>polarizing</u></p> <p>It has been described as the most <u>polarizing</u> election in decades.</p> <p><u>hawkish</u></p> <p>Clinton is thought to be more <u>hawkish</u> and interventionist than Obama.</p> <p><u>Loopholes</u> Strengthen background</p>	<p>Context</p> <p>Context</p> <p>Context</p> <p>Context</p>	<p>CCQs</p> <p>Is everyone on the same side in this election? NO Do people agree or disagree about the candidates? DISAGREE</p> <p>Is the election dividing people more than it has for a long time? YES</p> <p>CCQs</p> <p>Is Clinton more or less aggressive than Obama? MORE</p> <p>Is Clinton more likely to go to war than Obama? YES</p>	<p>them? What mistakes might they make?</p> <p>Ss might know the Italian word which is really similar but might not understand the use of “polarizing” in context in English</p> <p>Ss might not understand “hawkish” in context and might not understand the meaning through context</p>	<p>T makes example</p> <p>T elicits opposite s</p> <p>T elicits examples.</p> <p>Elicit and highlights meaning through context of the text</p> <p>Highlight the fact that loopholes are the same as openings, give other examples.</p>
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<p>checks and close dangerous loopholes.</p> <p><u>Infringed</u></p> <p>The right of the people shall not be infringed upon, period.</p> <p><u>Callous</u></p> <p>...which opponents say is both insensitive and callous.</p>	<p>Mime + Context</p>	<p>Is Obama's policy more hands-off than Clinton's? YES</p> <p>CCQs Are they areas that are finished? NO Are they areas that are unfinished? YES Are they openings or closings? OPENINGS</p> <p>CCQs Are rights to be taken away? NO Are they to be protected? YES Are rights to belong to the people or the government? THE PEOPLE</p> <p>CCQs Is it nice behavior? NO Is it lacking feeling and</p>	<p>Ss might not understand the meaning in context of loopholes.</p> <p>Ss might struggle to use the word in context and not understand the meaning since the Italian is very different.</p> <p>Ss might not understand the meaning and confuse it with "callo" in Italian, which has a different meaning.</p>	<p>T gives many examples and helps them by eliciting.</p> <p>T gives examples and highlights the fact that "callous" has a different meaning than the Italian word.</p>
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		being “hard or harsh”? YES Can it be full of feeling or without feeling for others? WITHOUT FEELING		
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What is the form of the target language? What record will you give students of form (on the whiteboard or a handout)?	FORM What difficulties do you expect students to have with form ? What might confuse them? What mistakes might they make?	What solutions do you have for these potential difficulties/problems with form?
<p><u>Polarizing (adjective, describing election)</u></p> <p>It has been described as the most <u>polarizing</u> election in decades.</p> <p><u>Hawkish (adjective)</u></p> <p>Clinton is thought to be more <u>hawkish</u> and interventionist than Obama.</p>	<p>Ss might not understand that polarizing in this case is used as an adjective “it is a polarizing election”.</p> <p>Ss might not understand that hawkish is used as an adjective</p>	<p>Elicit other examples of adjectives</p> <p>Elicit grammar rule and examples</p> <p>Elicit adj and adv elicit meaning of adv (describe verb) Elicit examples</p> <p>Elicit adj and meaning of the adjective in the sentence.</p>

<p><u>Loopholes (countable, noun)</u> Strengthen background checks and close dangerous loopholes.</p>	<p>Ss might think that loopholes are uncountable or that they are used in a different way in sentences “These loopholes... etc.”</p>	<p>Elicit the plural and singular of loophole</p> <p>Give Ss other examples of where the word loophole can be used</p>
<p><u>Infringed (verb)</u> The right of the people shall not be infringed upon, period.</p>	<p>Ss might not know how to use the form “infringe upon” or that upon/on has to follow infringe</p>	<p>T explains using infringed upon</p> <p>“Students felt they were infringed upon when they could no longer go to the bathroom during class”</p>
<p><u>Callous (adjective)</u> ...which opponents say is both insensitive and callous.</p>	<p>Ss might not know how to use callous in a sentence.</p>	<p>T elicits other examples “The callous witch, teacher, parents, etc.”</p>

PRONUNCIATION		
<p>What is the pronunciation of the target language? What record will you give students of pronunciation (on the</p>	<p>What difficulties do you expect students to have with pronunciation? What mistakes might they make?</p>	<p>What solutions do you have for these potential difficulties/problems with pronunciation? ALWAYS Model and drill (chorally first, then individually)</p>

whiteboard or on a handout)?		(isolate sound, back in word, back in sentence, back-chain if needed)
<p><u>polarizing</u></p> <p>It has been described as the most <u>polarizing</u> election in decades.</p> <p><u>hawkish</u></p> <p>Clinton is thought to be more <u>hawkish</u> and interventionist than Obama.</p> <p><u>Loopholes</u></p> <p>Strengthen background checks and close dangerous loopholes.</p>	<p><i>/'pouləˌraɪzɪŋ/</i></p> <p><i>/'hɔkiʃ/</i></p> <p><i>/'lupˌhəʊlz/</i></p> <p><i>/ɪnˈfrɪndʒd /</i></p> <p>Ss need drilling in the /ɛd/</p>	<p>Before drilling, isolate the sound / ʃ / drill chorally (to build confidence in students) and then individually (correct students during individual drilling if necessary). Put the sound back in the words, drill (chorally then individually), put the word back in the sentence, drill again and use back-chain if needed.</p> <p>Elicit number of syllables (pol-ar-iz-ing) elicit word stress Elicit silent letters</p> <p>Elicit spelling Elicit pronunciation Model and drill the sounds of /'hɔkiʃ/</p> <p>model and drill back in word and in sentence</p> <p>Model and drill the sounds Back in word, back in sentence</p>

<p><u>Infringed</u></p> <p>The right of the people shall not be infringed upon, period.</p>	<p>and not /et/.</p>	<p>Elicit silent letter</p>
<p><u>Callous</u></p> <p>...which opponents say is both insensitive and callous.</p>	<p>/'kæləs/</p> <p>Ss need drilling /'kæləs/ not saying /lus/ .</p>	<p>Elicit number of syllables and word stress</p> <p>Model and drill</p> <p>Elicit number of syllables (in-fringed) and word stress</p> <p>Focus on sounds</p> <p>Elicit and highlight that the /l/ sound is silent</p> <p>focus on sound /ŋ/</p> <p>Ss need drilling /'kæləs/ not saying /lus/ , repeating chorally and individually.</p>

APPROPRIACY		
<p>Which context</p> <p>Used for?</p>	<p>What difficulties do you expect students to have with appropriacy? What mistakes might they make?</p>	<p>What solutions do you have for these potential difficulties/problems with appropriacy?</p>

The best way to activate this knowledge is to create classroom situations where students can use their passive knowledge. This is not to practice new knowledge, but language that has already been learned that needs to move to their “active personal repertoire” (Scrivener 2010, 23). Participation and interaction are important to students because they are used to grammar drills. In speaking activities, it is important students do not withdraw from the activity or fail to practice their speaking skills. Fluency is important in speaking and especially important to emphasize this skill over accuracy. Often students will try to speak but are corrected so often, it hinders them from learning to speak with confidence and pace. Confidence is a very important aspect of teaching students to speak in a foreign language because it is often lacking due to the lack of control they feel. It is important to take into account learner anxiety and address this by using activities such as storytelling, role-play and drama. In these activities, the classroom offers a controlled and “safe” environment where learner anxiety can be addressed and students can grow in confidence and autonomy in the target language.

Speaking activities are classified as “communicative” because it requires learners to speak and listen to one another in the target language. An example of an exchange of information is giving instructions so that someone can use a new machine. In this task, students need to know something from another student that they don’t already know thus leading to the transfer of meaning. A task such as one student explaining a picture from a textbook that the other

students can see is not communicative because there is no real need for someone to hear a description of something they can see for themselves. If, however, the activity is transformed to have students draw a sketch of a picture they cannot see while the other student describes it, there is real communication happening with a specific purpose. The real world application of this activity could be if students are listening to a description of something over the phone. Some other ideas and categories for effective communicative tasks include role-play, board games, puzzles and pyramid discussions. In pyramid discussions, students decide how they individually feel about a particular topic, discuss it with a partner, then with another group of partners and eventually to the whole class. This encourages confidence and fluency, giving students multiple occasions of practicing the same vocabulary before it is necessary to present to the whole class.

An excellent communicative task for a vocational school such as Cometa is a “real play”, or having students enact actual conversations they might have with tourists at their internships or at the English coffee shop and restaurant in Cometa. In this case, students are given real play cards that describe a situation from his or her work life. This allows students to practice language they need in their own life. Students might also be given blank cards on which to create their own real play with the following guidelines.

Who are the two people?	
Where are you?	

What are you talking about?	
Why are you talking?	
What happened just before this?	
Is any other information important?	
What are some points that will come up in the discussion?	
What would be a good result?	

After the real play takes place and the students fill out the above format, they can review their discussion by answering the following questions: Was the discussion like the real thing? What were some interesting things that happened/that you said? What have you learned from this? Will the task help you in real life?

An important part of speaking activities is post-activity error correction. In this stage, teachers have already observed and taken note of anything interesting heard during the student discussion to post on the board for a post-activity follow up. For example, if the teacher heard students saying “Can I help she” instead of “can I help you” (confusing the third person formal in Italian with the second person single form used universally in English), the teacher might put this on the board for discussion after the activity is complete.

When giving speaking activities, it is important students have a “genre” that includes **why** the speaking is done, **where** it is being done and **who** is listening

or interacting with the speaker (Scrivener 2010). For example, if students are asked to do a speaking activity based on a conversation at a formal party, they must also know the purpose (making contacts, finding new clients), the setting (living room of a private house in Nairobi), audience (one or more other professional people of similar social status), and response (multi-way: a varying number of people speak).

Within the overall productive skill of speaking, the “micro-skills” of functional language, for example “interrupting politely”, might also be practiced. This micro-skill can be practiced with role-play cards such as having students discuss swimming while other students must interrupt politely to change the subject.

There are three major obstacles to interactive speaking: restriction of the classroom, limited practice time and learner anxiety. With restriction in the classroom, the room is arranged in such a way as to foster and encourage students to interact with each other and use the target language. Some options are a fishbowl arrangement, where students’ desks are arranged in a horseshoe shape in the back of the room.

Another option is to place students’ desks in cooperative groups. This leads to maximizing the children’s limited practice time. The best way to maximize limited practice time of a language is to use group learning and arranging the room in ways that encourage talking and interaction.

The final element of encouraging speaking in the classroom is to address learner anxiety. This can be done by creating a sort of “family” environment in the classroom where students feel support that leads to independence. The emphasis in the classroom should be one of encouraging students to use English outside the classroom environment by creating a “safe space” where they feel comfortable. Another important aspect of dealing with learner anxiety is to be specific in feedback. When students are speaking to each other in the classroom, it is important that their teacher offers feedback that is not too general because otherwise it becomes meaningless. For example, if a student is speaking well over all and using vocabulary words that show comprehension, commenting specifically on the vocabulary words used is better than a general comment. Corrections of grammar need to be delivered at the right time and be clear and precise. It is important not to correct students so much that they lose confidence in themselves and their ability to become fluent.

Pronunciation is the final and perhaps most important aspect of developing the skill of speaking in students. The emphasis on pronunciation was different in the Direct Methods and the Audio-Lingual Methods as opposed to the Communicative Language Method. In the former methods, pronunciation is drilled to perfection where as with the latter, pronunciation is needed for a purely communicative and utilitarian purpose. In the Communicative Language Method, if a can be understood in the target language, correct pronunciation is not taught or emphasized. However, in the language classroom, there are many

opportunities to foster correct pronunciation by identifying common errors, creating learning events that integrate the usage of these “errors” and finding the appropriate timing to correct these errors. These “problem sounds” should be integrated into many different contexts in order for the students to have different opportunities to master correct pronunciation.

1.2.5.2 Productive Skill: Writing

As a general rule, writing is the least used of the four language skills. Reading, listening and speaking are skills that are much more needed in every day than writing. This is because, although students will need to learn writing skills in English for e-mails, texting, letter-writing, applications, etc. the need for longer, formal written work seems to have lessened over the years and this is reflected in the classroom where the emphasis is on communicative activities and less on writing.

When teaching students writing in English, the writing prompts should stem from personal experiences and from speaking first. Emphasis during writing assignments should be placed on meaning and not on pointing out little grammatical errors or drills. However, whereas in speaking activities emphasis is on fluency, emphasis in writing is more on accuracy and the teacher plays a big role in editing, correcting and handing back writing samples.

An effective way to set up a writing lesson would be through the following stages: introducing the topic, introducing the main writing task, allowing students to brainstorm, fast-write, select and reject ideas, sort and order ideas,

decide on specific requirements, focus on useful models, plan the text, get feedback, prepare drafts, edit, prepare final text and edit the final writing sample for readers.

As in speaking activities, it is important that writing activities have an audience and purpose. In real life, writing is judged as successful if it served its purpose. The four elements that every writing task should include are: genre, audience, purpose and aim. In addition, it is important to give students specific guidelines of how long the writing should be, how much time they have and what exactly is required of the specific writing piece.

There are various exercises that one can do to help students develop their writing. One would be to keep a daily journal. It is important that the teacher reads through the whole writing assignment before correcting it. Another could be to give students cartoon strips with the dialog left blank. Students would need to fill in the dialog happening between the characters and be inventive with vocabulary and written skills that come from spoken English.

Editing and marking writing after it is completed is essential. Although getting feedback from a teacher on writing work is essential, it should not be discouraging and teachers might adapt codes in order to grade discreetly. Some examples of different types of writing errors are: orthography (poor formation of letters), punctuation (incorrect use of full stops), spelling (moving sound to spelling), layout (no attempt to lay text out) and language (student does not have enough control of basic lexis or grammar).

1.2.5.3 Receptive skill: Listening

Listening is a key skill to language fluency. When two people are talking, the flow of the conversation comes from both speaking and listening in order to respond in the correct manner. Many aspects are important to keep in mind when teaching listening to students.

One important aspect of listening skills is that, when students are exposed to English in the “real world”, they might get frustrated with their listening skills because they don’t understand or recall every detail of what was heard. It is important and useful, therefore, that language teachers develop students’ skills to listen for overall meaning. This can be accomplished by giving listeners a clear listening task before they listen to something and then doing a second listening in order to listen in more detail. In this type of listening, it is important the task is set before students listen in order to let them know what they are listening for. After the recording is listened to, students can give feedback on the task. If they were able to do the task, you can conclude and move on to a detail task or the next stage of the lesson. If students are unable to do the task, they may listen to the recording again.

Another important aspect of listening is to emphasize process rather than product because in the process of listening for specific answers, students will develop their listening skills much more. This, in some ways, is more important than them getting the right answers all the time.

When students are listening to a dialogue in English for the first time, in order to process they use a “top-down” method by making use of what they already know to help predict the structure and content of the text in order to understand the overall message. With this method, it makes more sense to introduce students to the listening topic first so they can piece together meaning, also lessening the level of frustration often associated with listening to a text in a foreign language spoken at a “natural” speed. In order to implement the top-down method in class in order to develop listening skills, it is important to give students an opportunity for discussion on the general topic, have them predict the specific content, predict the structure and then do a listening for overview, and finally for detail.

There are many varieties of listening activities that can be tried in the classroom such as jigsaw listening, a gallery setup (have students revolve around the room listening to different recordings), home recordings, live listening and guest stars.

It is important that students are exposed to the target language. This means that it is spoken often around the students and that, after a while, students will be able to recognize sounds and become more familiar with the language through exposure. Another important aspect of teaching listening is to have plenty to listen to- from an election in the U.S. to demographics; students need to hear varied and diverse topics. It is important to lower stress in students by planning lessons and enjoying the topics you teach. Another aspect that could increase

listening skills would be playing an English CD in the background while students work on another project. It is also important that the listening material given to students is filled with meaning and not just a “listen and repeat” exercise.

1.2.5.4 Receptive skill: Reading

The first place to start with teaching reading to students is to teach basic literacy skills in the target language. This is important because they need to learn the writing system in English, and for this, to learn basic reading skills. Reading in the target language is extremely important as a skill of competency in the target language and it must not be neglected. The goal of basic literacy skills in the target language is to have students be able to read basic schedules, timetables and advertisements since these are important to basic literacy. After working with the basic vocabulary words needed for these tasks through various activities (flash cards, review games, etc.), it is important to move on to more complex and longer texts for students’ reading skills to improve.

Similar to the receptive skill of listening, reading also follows the task-feedback circle of giving students an overview of the reading, giving them a general or gist reading task first, then a detailed reading task and finally conclude with feedback. With reading tasks, students can use “skimming and scanning” methods. This increases their reading speeds and lets them read for gist and overall understanding. Skimming is reading quickly for overall themes, basic structure and main ideas. A skimming task would be to pull out

general information such as “Is the story set in a school or a restaurant?” which would require learners to find the answer quickly, without reading every word of the passage. Scanning reading is moving eyes quickly over a text in order to locate specific piece of information without reading the whole text. A typical scanning task would be to have students pull out the answer to a question such as “what time does the train leave to Chicago?”. Skimming and scanning are both top-down skills.

In reading and reading comprehension, it is important that students pick out the important and key vocabulary words and headings. It is also important they learn to identify the beginning, middle, and end of the work of literature in order to better understand its content. An example of this would be to teach students the difference between a topic sentence and the various causes of the topic. For example, if students are reading about the Civil War, it is important while they are reading in a foreign language that they can identify which sentences are topic sentences, which are causes of the Civil War, what the key headings and vocabulary are as well as the beginning, middle and end of the text.

Literacy training in a foreign language is especially needed for students who are illiterate or semiliterate in their first language because it gives them the writing system in English.

2. Language Analysis

When teaching a foreign language, it is important to analyze and understand well the language being taught. The in depth analysis of language can be split up into four categories: meaning, form, pronunciation and appropriateness.

2.1 FORM

The form of the language is the grammar- the patterns, regularities, nuts and bolts you connect together in different ways (Scrivener 2010). The names of form are the grammar names given to groups of grammatical items such as past simple, past continuous, conditional, etc. An example is the past continuous in the following sentence: “*She was going to go to school last summer*” contains a grammatical item whose meaning remains consistent, i.e. the past continuous. Various elements of the sentence can be changed but the core remains the same. The grammatical item can be summarized as:

subject+ was/were+ present participle *go* + *to* + infinitive

Analyzing form in English grammar is important to give students terminology and patterns in language that helps them recognize and utilize it more fluently. Major groups of language include nouns, verbs (present perfect, past perfect, present simple, past simple, present continuous, past continuous, etc.), prepositions, adjectives, articles, adverbs, relative clauses, etc. There are many resource books available to help with English grammar, such as “Essential Grammar in Use” by Helen Naylor with Raymond Murphy.

2.2 Meaning

It is important to analyze the meaning of vocabulary or lexical items in depth in order to help learners. For example, students might ask what the word *watch* means. It is important to explain the word to the learner without using language more complex than the word. It is also important to explain the difference between the everyday meaning and other uses as well as how the word is used as a verb and how/when the word is used as a noun. Students will need examples and it is important to remember the following when explaining new words:

- avoid language more complex than the word being explained
- focus on the most important usages
- use examples
- use teacher as well as student knowledge and feelings to focus on what is understood by this word

An example of a word being explained by combining dictionary information as well as knowledge of the teacher is the following about the word “wellingtons”.

Wellingtons:

You wear them on your feet. You wear them when you don't want to get your feet wet. They're made of rubber. You wear them when it rains. You wear them

so that your feet will be dry. They are difficult to take off. They are often black or green. They are quite tall. Sometimes they are smelly!

Only “you wear them on your feet” and “they’re made of rubber” carry the essence of the meaning of what wellingtons are, therefore can be used to explain the meaning.

In order to have students understand clearly the meaning of new grammar or lexical items, it is important to first understand the essence of the new items and then create simple questions that help students understand clearly. These are called “concept questions”. They are statements that have simple yes or no answers that focus on meaning. An example is:

I had the car repaired.

Did someone repair the car? YES

Did I arrange for this to happen? YES

Did I repair the car myself? NO

Another example of concept checking questions is for the following sentence:

You must have finished the milk.

CCQs

Was there milk in the fridge before? YES

Is there milk in the fridge now? NO

Are you sure he finished the milk? NO

Does she want there to be milk now? YES

Is there anyone else that could have finished the milk? NO

Does she deduce that he finished the milk? YES

The importance of concept questions is that students are able to focus on meaning in a clear, simple and straightforward way as opposed to lengthy explanations in their own language or in the foreign language but that they don't understand.

2.3 Pronunciation

It is important to focus on pronunciation of new language items with students because hearing the words spoken and repeating them aids in familiarity and use of the new language. Pronunciation can be looked at according to stress and meaning (marking out the content carrying words in a sentence), weak forms, intonation, the schwa (weak vowel sound) and using the phonetic language. The *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA) is useful for students because it is the only international language and based on the Latin alphabet therefore can be used with English language learners from all over the world. It is a representation of the sounds of the spoken language of English and is used by lexicographers, foreign language students, linguists, and translators.

An example of use of the phonetic alphabet is when teaching students the present continuous, introducing the grammar item "I am going to school" and showing students the following to aid with pronunciation:

aɪ æm 'ɡoʊɪŋ tu skul

2.4 Appropriacy

After teaching students about the meaning, form and pronunciation of particular lexical or language items, it is important to teach also about the appropriacy or formality of the words. This involves common sense and politeness- when it is appropriate to use certain words and phrases and when it is not. It also has to do with the awareness of the audience. It includes questions such as: Who is the audience? How well do you know them? How formal/informal is the relationship? Where are you?

Explaining appropriateness can be as simple as saying “Pleased to meet you” is used in more formal settings and “Great to meet ‘ya” in less formal, or explaining more formal and less formal ways to open and close e-mails or letters.

2.5 Different types of Lessons

2.5.1 Situational Presentation

A situational presentation lesson is one in which the teacher presents language through a context created by the teacher. For example, if a teacher is teaching *used to*, the teacher draws a picture of a country house and a rich man and students have to tell the teacher about his life. The teacher then elicits information about the man’s past life through pictures of being interviewed. Through thought bubbles, students are invited to make sentences about the man’s past. Then, the teacher uses specific, yes or no questions (called concept checking questions) for example:

What's this? (a bike)

Does he ride a bike now? (no)

Did he ride one in the past? (yes)

But not now? (no)

Does he ride a bike now? (no)

Students not understand the meaning “used to”. The meaning of the target language comes first, before the form. Students must understand the concept first before the actual language is introduced.

2.5.2 TBL- Task Based Learning

Task based learning allows students to center learning around a specific task or outcome instead of the classic test-teach-test method. The task is usually real world such as ‘plan a party’ and may include listening or reading exercises. Task-based learning starts with authentic exposure to a real world task, moves to activities that promote ‘noticing’ and then finishes with various language related tasks that lead to a finish “product” or assignment being complete.

An example of task-based learning is asking a group of students to plan a party. Students can first brainstorm where, when and how the party will take place as an individual assignment. Then, students are asked to discuss with a partner to agree on a way to celebrate. Next, a language focus on errors made during discussions takes place before analyzing a model of native speakers doing the same task, going through gist and detailed listening tasks. Next, students

analyze the meaning, form, pronunciation and appropriateness of the language before moving into controlled and semi-controlled practice activities (for example using the new lexis in new sentences, choosing the best use of “party planning” language, etc.). Finally, students are asked to plan a party in groups of three, consolidate their ideas, and report before moving in to new groups until a consensus is reached and all students agree on one solution. (SEE *THE ATTACHED FOR AN EXAMPLE OF AN INITIAL BRAINSTORMING TASK FOR THIS ACTIVITY*)

END OF COURSE CELEBRATION

Think of how you would like to celebrate the end of your course with your classmates. You have 5 minutes to make some notes about the following. Try to add as much detail as possible.

Where will the celebration be?

What will you do?

What time and where are you going to meet?

What time will the celebration finish?

Will everyone be able to get home?

Now, discuss your idea with your partner and agree on one way to celebrate.

This could be your idea, your partner’s idea or a mixture of the two.

2.6 Conversation Classes and the “typical” Italian Method of Learning English

The typical method of teaching and learning English in Italy divides grammar and theory from speaking. In schools, this means that students have an Italian teacher who teaches the basics of English grammar in Italian and a “madrelingua” who teaches basic conversational skills in English. As a result, there is often a divide between speaking in the English language classroom and learning theory and grammar. In order to bridge the divide, it is necessary that the English teacher uses English as much as possible in the classroom and integrates grammar concepts in the context or real situations.

CHAPTER 2

MY EXPERIENCE IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT COMETA

CASE STUDY: ITALIAN VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

1. Case Study: Italian Vocational School

1.1. Founders of Cometa, Origin and Curriculum Choices

The use and implementation of the many methods of teaching the English language depend on the context in which it is being taught. This thesis explores and investigates the above English language teaching methods (from the direct method all the way to the language as a mediation method) in the context of Cometa, a vocational high school in Lake Como, Italy.

Cometa is a vocational high school started in 2003 for children ages 14-18 who dropped out of high school and had no possibility of entering into the working world. It was started with the educational principles and guidelines of Father Luigi Giussani, an Italian priest and founder of a lay movement in the Roman Catholic Church, *Communion and Liberation* (<http://english.clonline.org/>). The guiding principles of Father Giussani's views on education as well as the underlying tenets of Cometa are the following: reason, tradition, verification, authority and provocation. Together they can be summarized as "an introduction to reality" (Giussani 2010). Giussani used the word *reality* to define something objective, as everything that man engages himself in and encounters. A total involvement in reality implies a participation in all of life, in all that is given (Peterson 2000).

Giussani likens reality to education as destination is to a journey. According to Giussani, reality is affirmed in education when the existence of its meaning is affirmed. Adolescence is a phase that is addressed by Giussani as a "defiant

attitude that is difficult to understand and a conformity that lacks conviction and depth” (Giussani 2010, 55) which make it a challenging phase for educators who search to help their students develop their own identity.

1.1.1 Tradition

Educating adolescents should involve loyalty and fidelity to tradition, which is considered the structure of values into which a child is born. Without presenting students with a certain solidity (Giussani 2010), a vision of the meaning of reality, they cannot achieve maturity in the sense that it is difficult for them to make judgments about things, criticize or reject knowledge if they have not received it first.

By tradition, Giussani means “an education with a clear hypothesis for interpreting reality” (Giussani 2010, 40). Without offering this hypothesis to adolescents, they have no tools with which to choose and develop their identity as they look at the world.

In school, the lack of presenting adolescents with a firm tradition translates into an uncertainty and confusion on the part of the students. Giussani explains this and attributes it to the fact that students are really trained in a myriad of analytical skills, and are well able to “take things apart”, but do not know how to put everything together into a unified world view. He says:

“The excessive analytical quality of the curricula leaves the students at the mercy of a myriad of data and contradictory solutions which lead them to feel disconcerted and saddened by uncertainty” (Giussani 2010, 60).

The analogy used by Giussani is one of students coming into a room, finding a clock, taking it apart and having all the pieces laying around but being unable to put it back together again. If students lack a guide to help them find the “unitary meaning of things” (Giussani 2010), they feel fragmented and lack energy. The following criticism of today’s schools is taken from *Milano Studenti*, by Gianpiero Gamaleri:

“The truly negative aspect of school is that it fails to introduce the human dimension in all the values that all too often we handle so uselessly. While man reveals his temperament in every action, isn’t it ridiculous (or tragic?) that in school we cover millennia of civilizations by studying human actions, without being able to reconstruct the meaning of man and his place in the world? Our school is based on an unnatural neutralism that cancels all values...yet we live in such a blind world that only rarely is the school indicated for its crimes. The school is accused of failing to train good technicians, worthy experts, or skilled workers; it is accused of no longer teaching Latin or of diluting final high school exams; but is never accused of failing to shape real men and women, unless these “non persons” commit gross, sensational crimes.” (Galameni 2011, 3)

Another complaint of a high school student drives home the point Giussani is trying to make: “they make us study a great number of things but they don’t help us to understand their meaning, and so we don’t know why we have to study” (Giussani 2010, 23).

Tradition is important in the education of adolescents because it teaches them that loyalty to the way one has been taught and in which the teenager’s consciousness is formed is the basis of any conscientious education (Giussani 2010).

1.1.2 Authority

Someone has true authority when they have a full picture of reality and can gain respect from their students. For adolescents, following authority comes in a more “instinctive” way and tends to be closer to one’s own comfort zone. Authority is the “value-testing standard” given to teenagers by tradition. Persons with true authority hold a highly educative role in that they need to constantly remind their students of the sense of all reality. This approach that authority can give is one of “coherence”, or helping young people make sense of their lives in its totality. Coherence is shown through the steady and gradual presence of reality and does not impose itself but gives a sense of life beyond the ups and downs, likes and dislikes and superficiality of opinion. This experience teaches youths to become dependent on what is real, not the passing and fleeting.

Those with authority in the lives of adolescents are originally their parents, even if they don't recognize it. If one is Christian, the authority is the Church whereas for students, school represents authority.

1.1.3 Verification

Even tradition and authority are not enough for an adolescent in that he or she must confront his or her own origin. Adolescents can verify what is being offered to them only if they take the initiative and "test" out what was given to them for themselves. Conviction comes about in adolescents when they "test the original idea or view" and find it to be relevant to what they are looking for (Giussani 2010). The essential nature of "verification" is that only the individual themselves can undertake this process and it is totally his or her responsibility. The educator may guide, offer support, and help but only the student can become consciously involved and test the validity of what was handed over to him in his daily life.

A fundamental flaw of education today, according to Giussani, is a rationalistic approach that does not give students the opportunity to verify for themselves whether something is true or not.

"It is from this that one perceives that he has a soul, is alive, and exists, because he perceives that he feels and thinks and somehow performs other actions of life" (Ham 2000, 11).

Students understand who they are through their actions and life in this world.

Based on the above quote by Saint Thomas Aquinas, it may be said that many of today's educators want to educate by clarifying ideas instead of realizing that these ideas remain abstract if they are not "verified" through one's experience. Energy and free will must come into play in order to adopt any change understood by the intelligence and in order for such abstract ideas to take shape and form in one's life (Giussani 2010).

1.1.4 Risk

Teenagers must be guided toward autonomy, toward doing things themselves, and this requires "risk" as well as a great appreciation and acceptance of human freedom. If students are presented with tradition, a hypothesis of reality, an authority figure and given the tools to verify, this verification and this process of students becoming themselves requires a "risk" of freedom. Without taking risks in education, both on the part of the student and that of the teachers, students can learn to escape reality, become rebellious or lack a personality when confronted with relationships. A necessary part of "risk" requires that students understand who they are when confronted with the world which could involve them "being at the mercy of their likes and dislikes, their instincts, deprived of any standard of development" (Giussani 2010, 23).

This requires that the teenager not be separated from the world but helped and guided when confronted with it.

The overall guidelines for Giussani's method of educating adolescents is as follows:

- a hypothesis for the meaning and significance of life, the world and all of reality (we call this the explanation of "tradition"), as the only condition of giving certainty to the teenager;
- the presence of a clear authority figure, a person who represents the above hypothesis as the sole condition for coherence in the educational process;
- stimulating the adolescent to personally commit to the verification of the hypothesis in his own life, as the sole condition for true conviction; and
- the acceptance of a gradual, balanced risk as the adolescent independently tests and weighs this hypothesis against reality, as the sole condition for the coming age of his or her freedom and autonomy.

1. 2 Cometa Oliver Twist School: Curriculum, Founders and History

Cometa specifically, founded on the educational philosophy of Giussani, was formed with the mission of giving students who struggle in school an opportunity to start over and have a positive academic experience for the first time. This experience gave birth to the Oliver Twist School in 2009, which included not only a vocational path, but also an academic path. The school was constructed to contain both classrooms and workshops specific to each vocational path.

The Artisan “Contrada” was established in 2012 where masters of carpentry and interior design teach kids their trades through four workshop-schools: carpentry, tapestry, restoration and design.

Cometa is composed of 178 female students and 221 male students; 199 of which are Italian and 200 are of foreign origins. Cometa is a high needs school with 18 Individualized Learning Plans, 44 children with dyslexia and other learning disabilities, and 35 individuals with disabilities.

The Cometa educational mission originated with the experience of two couples who began fostering children in 1987. From the needs of these children (sports, studying, recreation) was born the need for an after school program and eventually the desire for a school. The themes of welcoming and fostering are fundamental to the mission of Cometa as every child that comes to the school is surrounded by quotes and symbols of its origin and seen as a new member of the family. This experience is represented concretely by the images and decoration of the school but also through the curriculum, teacher to student ratio, attention to special needs students’ full potential and highly individualized paths of study for every student.

Comet Oliver Twist school in the year 2015/2016 serves 358 students from the Lombardy region in Northern Italy. The number of enrolled students has steadily risen, as shown in the chart below.

Table 1 Enrolled Students in Cometa

School Year	Enrolled	Enrolled students vs. early school leaving	Total Enrolled
2011-2012	219	72	291
2012-2013	274*	45	319
2013-2014	299*	53	352
2014-2015	332*	60	392
2015-2016	358*	38	396

Source: Author's Own Elaboration.

Of these students, many have dropped out of other schools, have been held back a year, have learning disabilities or are foster children with difficult family lives. As the next chart shows, the dropout rate of students in Cometa is significantly lower compared to the regional percentage as well as compared to the rate of dropped out students entering Cometa from middle school.

Table 2 Drop-Out Rates in Cometa

	1st yr	2nd yr	3rd yr	4th yr	5th Yr	Tot	Enr	% Do	% regional students dropped-out
2011- 2012	1	1	1			3	219	1,4%	<5%
2012- 2013	2	3			2	7	260	2,7%	<5%
2013- 2014	4		1	3	3	11	283	3,9%	<5%
2014- 2015	2	3	3	2		10	323	3,1%	<5%
2015- 2016*						0	345		<5%
TOT						31			

Source: Author's Own Elaboration

Enr = Enrolled
Do = Dropped Out

As a result, the curriculum of Oliver Twist is set up in a way to be an inclusive, rehabilitative experience instead of a punitive measure and is committed to finding the unique potential of students instead of labeling them as “hopeless or problematic”.

Students may choose from the vocational paths of Carpentry, Hospitality or Textiles. For each path, students spend two to three months in an internship experience, starting from the second year, and have a “job rotation” every week in which they are either learning skills about their trade “on the job” at the school’s restaurant and coffee shop or are working with the artisan masters at the Contrada, making furniture, t-shirts or other objects of the Carpentry and Textile fields.

1.2.1 Carpentry Path

The Carpentry path in Cometa is unique in that it serves actual clients who need furniture to re-design their homes or for various projects, fairs or restoration enterprises. Working professionals in the field partner with students from the Oliver Twist School to work on commissions and increase the skill set of the kids. The emphasis is on the learning process and not on the results of the projects even if the expectation for the finished products is of a very high level of quality.

1.2.2 Textile Path

The Textile path in Cometa is the more “creative and artsy” path in terms of design, fabrics and style. Students in this sector work on bandanas and t-shirts, as well as create a “mood board” in which they creatively represent all their ideas and inspirations in order to complete a finished product. Students use high-tech instruments such as CAD and Photoshop and make “mood boards” like top interior designers would do when given a commission.

During the 2013-2014 school year, the Oliver Twist Textile students had the opportunity to design a t-shirt for *Bershka*, a major fashion label in Europe and were even able to fly to Barcelona to present the winning t-shirt design that was sold in Zara stores all over Europe. Textile students along with Carpentry students from Cometa also created Christmas store windows exhibitions for the famous Italian department store, *Rinascente*, in the center of Milan.

Figure 1 Textile Students work on their “Mood Boards”



1.2.3 Hospitality Path

The Hospitality sector of Cometa is the largest and most “functional” of all the sectors. The Hospitality sector serves hundreds of guests and events every year- from weddings and birthdays to conferences and important work events. In addition to having a full functioning and open to the public coffee shop and restaurant, the Hospitality sector places students in the best restaurants and hotels in the Lombardy region. Through the years, Cometa has established a strong network of restaurants and coffee shops that are happy to train, teach and hire students in the Hospitality path.

The typical path of study for a student in the Hospitality path in Cometa lasts three years. Students can choose to continue to do a fourth and fifth year in order to get a certificate or to graduate and eventually go on to University, or they can leave with the training necessary to get a job after the third or fourth years.

The academic side of the Hospitality section requires students to take Mathematics, Italian, English, French, Music and Art. The majority of the academic hours are dedicated to the three principal subjects that are also tested at the end of the third and fourth years by the region: Italian, Math and English. During the first year of study at Oliver Twist, students are immediately placed in a “job rotation” at the coffee shop and in the kitchen of the restaurant. They learn to make coffee drinks, serve customers breakfast and lunch and perform the various other jobs necessary to the Cometa coffee shop.

The second year, students are placed in an internship experience in the Lombardy region where they have their first experience of “work” in all its terms: arriving on time, being prepared, long hours, extra shifts, being obedient to a boss, etc. This experience is discussed at length when students come back to school one day a week and is enriched during the third and fourth years. During the third and fourth years, students can go abroad to do their internships. The fourth year internship experience is a critical part of the students’ path in that their restaurants hire many as full-time employees after their studies are completed.

During scholastic hours, students take a combination of “professional” courses where they learn the skills and theory behind their chosen trade. Students also take the normal academic classes of Italian, English and Math, which are tied to the basic competencies needed and asked for by the region.

2. English as a Foreign Language in Cometa

The origins of Cometa can be traced to the educational philosophy of Fr. Giussani, as described above. Giussani never mentions teaching English as a foreign language specifically, but speaks generally about education and the choice of curriculum.

Although various methods and instruments have been chosen to teach English as a foreign language in Cometa, the overall guiding principal for choosing curriculum can be described in the following citation of Giussani, taken from

an interview with him done by Holly Peterson, an educator and researcher of Giussani's work from California:

“After some time I became aware that the problem of education was entirely focused on the technology to adopt and on the tools to use, but at the expense of forgetting the subject, and therefore, the point of departure. Instead, as all of Christian history teaches, education is not essentially a question of methods or of the instruments a community uses, but a question of the community itself, and the truth of the life of the person who educates. To become fixated on technology and methodology is a grave error of perspective that empties the dynamic of education”.

Other research of Father Giussani's educational method emphasizes the use of the educators' heart and knowledge of the subject matter in order to educate the pupils' freedom (Di Pede 2011). Teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Cometa will be seen in light of this research and the above link to Giussani's educational method and philosophy.

English language learning in general is important to students in vocational schools because it is the language most spoken amongst tourists and useful in order to go abroad (Scrivener 2010). Many problems face students who want to learn English, mostly due to motivation and lack of speaking opportunities in order to become fluent.

“...many students seem to dislike studying English or invest little effort in their formal English lessons, even if they may engage with English informally

outside school... The motivational dissonances between students' in-class and out-of-class contexts of encounters with English represent a significant critical challenge for teachers working in settings where English has become a major medium of youth culture, entertainment and recreational activity" (Ushioda, 2011, 67).

Students of English as a foreign language face many factors that will affect their success such as the following:

"It consists of such factors as the attached value of a task, the rate of success expected by learners, whether learners believe they are competent enough to succeed, and what they think to be the reason for their success or failure at the task" (Ushioda 2011, 70).

2.1 Vocational Education in the English Classroom

English is taught as a mandatory subject in secondary vocational schools in Italy. Teaching and learning English in a vocational school requires the knowledge and use of the technical language of the school. For example, students of the Hospitality school as well as teachers must learn the vocabulary and language associated with their trade. Given that "English has become a prerequisite for participation in communication, not only on an international level, but also in more and more contexts on a national level, even in non-English speaking countries such as Sweden, not the least within education of all sorts" (Konito 2016, 20).

English as a Foreign Language is emphasized in all the sectors but especially in the Hospitality path where the students frequently encounter foreign speaking clients that require them to use English “in service”. Students have three to four hours of English per week. In addition, students are required to use English at the coffee shop in Cometa and pass a regional exam in English after the third and fourth years.

The English curriculum in Cometa started out with activities and assignments geared towards the students’ vocational training needs as well as their basic levels of English. Two English learning systems were used in the school three years ago: Dyned, a computer program geared towards English fluency, and CLILL, the use of English in core subjects as a way to increase bi-lingualism.

2.1.1 Dyned

Dyned is a blended learning approach to English language proficiency. It is a computer program developed initially for business use but has evolved over time for use in schools. In Cometa, Dyned was purchased for all of the students to be used on their tablets. The expectation of Dyned in Cometa was to complete a set target a week of hours of usage of the computer program which guaranteed results on the level of English proficiency. An example is that if a student studied for 80 hours a year, they are guaranteed to move from an A1 level of English to an A2 level of English on the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) scales.

The first year with Dyned, the hours of lessons were set up to give the students at least one hour with Dyned per week, spent with the class tutor. The English teacher gave three hours of instruction or class time on the basic topics covered in the specific Dyned unit.

Figure 2 A Dyned Screen Shot



A typical lesson using Dyned consists in the teacher introducing the topic (telling time, new vocabulary, nationalities, etc.) while students follow listening prompts on the Smart board provided by Dyned. The class time can be split up between writing, listening, speaking and reading. To get the students speaking with Dyned, it is important to use it as a tool to prompt class discussion in English. An example is if the teacher is teaching about nationalities and the Dyned screen says “Maria comes from Mexico”. From

this prompt, the teacher can ask: “Where do you come from” to the students or ask them to tell the class where their classmate comes from.

Another aspect of Dyned that is useful for speaking and listening is the “record your voice” setting. As part of the Dyned method, students must record their voice repeating a native speaker’s voice and listen to the playback. Another aspect is reading comprehension as well as listening comprehension. Dyned is accompanied by a full classroom curriculum as well as worksheets to help students improve their writing as well.

Another aspect of Dyned that was useful to Cometa was the online database of the students’ study records that is accessible to teachers. As a teacher of Dyned, one is able to check how much each student studies and how well.

Figure 3 Screen Shot of Dyned Results

File Edit Options Reports View Course Details Help

Through last study date

First English

11 Students

First English – Entire Course

Student Name	Time	Module	M	PTL	Days	MT-AVG	SS	Rep	ABC	
İREM TA***	05:23	Unit 1 (Beginn...		0.0	8		5	395		
KADİR OR***	20:39	Unit 2		0.0	3	79.0	5	251		
İBRAHİM TA***	02:00	Unit 1 (Beginn...		0.0	3		2	355		
NIHAT SA***	10:26	Unit 1 (Beginn...		0.2	0		2	921		
İBRAHİM SADRI ÇÜ***	02:06	Unit 1 (Beginn...	1	0.0	0		0	98		
NEFİSE EB***	00:19	Unit 4	1	0.5	227		0	3		
BUSE AR***	00:09	Mastery Tests		0.5	11					
ESMA YI***										
UMİT AY***	01:25	Unit 1 (Beginn...		0.0	24		-2	49	3	
GÜLNUR KA***	01:20	Unit 1 (Beginn...		0.0	2		-4	32		
Average:			04:03	1	0.2	48	53.8	1.0	234	3
(Active Students) Average:			04:51	1	0.1	30	79.0	1.0	263	3

Back

Tutor

Edit

Select

Sort by: Study Score

The above chart shows the screen that the teacher sees for each student. It shows the amount of time a student has spent on each Unit, the module they are working on and their “study score”. The study score is the combination of the students’ time and quality of study as well as how much they record and listen to their voice to improve their speaking skills. The “tutor” button shows which specific skills the student needs to work on; for example using the repeat or listen buttons more or going slower on comprehension questions and working for accuracy.

Dyned in Cometa was useful to improve students’ listening and speaking skills as well as a positive educational use of the tablets. It utilized the students’ tablet and added a positive element to the school in that it was a blended learning method- it was neither exclusively technological nor solely based on a textbook. Dyned in Cometa was used for three years to teach English.

2.1.2 Textbook

Choosing a textbook for the English language-learning classroom is an important process because it provides a structure and anchor to the curriculum.

In Cometa, the textbook was chosen based on three criteria:

- 1) Up to date content to connect with the students

2) Alignment with the CEFR (Common European Framework Reference-language levels of A1-C2)

3) User friendly/variation of speaking, listening, reading and writing exercises

In addition, the Pearson *Choices* textbook series chosen includes an online learning platform where students can submit their homework and teachers can evaluate and assess in a more intentional way their students' progress.

Having a text book does not substitute for lesson planning but allows for more structure and directionality to the year. It also allows students who have different language levels to move forward or review needed concepts according to their needs.

The following activities are examples of how exercises from the textbook can be adapted, tailored and enhanced in order to meet students' needs, specifically in the hospitality sector.

Activity 1

With a partner, practice *using* the information below in a dialog after making sentences comparing the Multi-Screen Cinema and the Royal Cinema.

Multi-screen Cinema	Royal Cinema
Drinks £2	Drinks £0.80
Seats 500	Seats 200
Comfort ****	Comfort **
Friendly staff *	Friendly staff ***
My opinion: Okay	My opinion: Very good

Use the correct form of the words below:

bad (irregular)

big (irregular)

cheap

comfortable (more)

expensive

friendly (less)

good (irregular)

small

Example:

Drinks in the Multi-Screen cinema **are more expensive than** drinks in the Royal Cinema.

1. Drinks in the Royal Cinema drinks _____ in the Multi-Screen cinema.

2. The Multi-Screen Cinema _____ the Royal Cinema.

3. The Royal Cinema _____ the Multi-Screen Cinema.

4. The seats in the Multi-Screen Cinema _____ the seats in the Royal Cinema.
5. The people who work in the Multi-Screen Cinema _____ the people who work in the Royal Cinema.
6. In my opinion, the Royal Cinema _____ the Multi-Screen Cinema.
7. In my opinion, the Multi-Screen Cinema _____ the Royal Cinema.

Activity 2

Have students listen and repeat words that rhyme with the “tide” of “tidy” and have the same sound as “tidier”. Then, go into the meaning of the word tidier with pictures.

Collide:

/kə'laɪd/

Isolate the sound:

/laɪd/

Wide:

/waɪd/

Ride:

/raɪd/

Hide

/hard/

Tide

/tard/

Tidy: ([**tahy**-dee] /tardi:/) clearly organized and neat.

Now form a sentence to compare these two pictures using tidy....



Elicit from students: The bathroom **is tidier than** the kitchen.

*Remember the -y turns into an -ier in this case because there is a consonant before the -y.

After Dyned, the school adopted textbooks in order to teach English and aid in the realization of the school's bi-lingual project. The textbooks are entitled *Choices* published by Pearson and include an online forum as well as listening CDs and DVDs.

The English lessons based on the textbooks take on a different form from Dyned in that they include listening exercises from the CDs, reading comprehension exercises, grammar, and short film comprehension exercises. The challenge with the English curriculum is to include plenty of speaking opportunities for the students. The way the English classroom is set up in the Sala Bar (Hospitality) sector is to do book exercises 2-3 days a week and one day of conversation where the students are required to speak only English for an hour.

In the traditional Italian high school, teaching a second language is very mechanical and heavily emphasizes grammar and memorization. In the English curriculum proposed in Cometa, students are encouraged to speak English due to the internship experiences they have as well as the fact that many English speaking tourists visit the school. The following is an activity created to help students give tours to English speaking clients by explaining the images and quotes of the school in English to guests.

MAP OF THE SCHOOL, Giving a Tour in English, November 10, 2015

ENTRANCE:



GORILLA/DANTE:

Fatti non foste a viver come
bruti , ma per seguir virtute
e conoscenza .

Dante , Inferno XXVI

.



LA QUINTA:



I CORRODOI/THE HALLWAYS:



AULA MAGNA:



GLI ARMADIETTI..



ENGLISH BAR



RESTAURANT

OTHER PLACES (The Association, Classrooms, Helm, quotes.....)



It is always a challenge to get students speaking in the English language learning classroom instead of being attached to grammar and book exercises

but can be facilitated by group work, a “conversation” day as well as other activities that place students in a situation where they are forced to speak English.

The choice of a textbook facilitates group learning in the English language learning classroom in Cometa and is important in that it breaks up the sometimes monotonous rhythm of grammar exercises and gives the students a chance to talk to each other and work together on projects. The curriculum is set up to do book exercises integrated with role-plays, dialogs and vocabulary exercises as well as “vocational” lessons where students learn useful grammar and vocabulary for their chosen career path. For example, in the Hospitality sector, students study the most useful vocabulary and dialogs needed to communicate at the coffee shop, in the restaurant and when they do their internships.

2.1.3 CLIL

CLIL stands for Content and Language Integrated learning and was introduced by David Marsh and Anne Maljers in 1994

(<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/content-language-integrated-learning>). With this method, English is used as the “vehicle language” to teach students the major content areas. For example, in Cometa, Math, Italian Literature, and Science are taught in English one day a week. In Italian Schools, the Law of Reform of Secondary Schools that was started in 2010 introduced the idea of using a foreign language as a “vehicle” also within the

ordinances of Italian scholasticism. Teachers who teach CLIL must have a C1 level of English and the teaching skills and formation required of an in-service teacher.

The CLIL method has spread throughout Europe due to the fact that learning a foreign language has been deemed the key dimension for the modernization of European instruction and CLIL chosen as the way to renew and improve school curriculum (Rethinking Education, 2012).

2.1.4 English Coffee Shop

In Cometa, starting with the first year of school, students must use English in the coffee shop and at the restaurant. This is true also of the students who do their “job rotation” at the coffee shop and who must learn how to make coffees, serve breakfast and lunch foods and clean the service area. The staff of Cometa speak in English to the students and help them to feel comfortable using English as the primary service language before going to outside public places where they will be expected to use English with tourists.

Teaching English in a vocational high school has many implications for the English leaning classroom. The type of classroom is considered an ESP, or English for Specific Purposes classroom. The specific purpose is often a job, such as for receptionists, architects, and others. In the case of Cometa in the Hospitality sector, it is English for coffee shops, waiters/waitresses and restaurant staff in general.

Many English learners, especially in Italy, learn English to improve their job prospects or for work purposes in order to communicate with English speaking clients. This means that the classroom curriculum is designed with the specific needs of the students in mind, tailoring everything to the students' requirements.

Teaching English in a vocational school does not mean knowing everything about the specific context (in this case Hospitality and the restaurant industry). It does mean using vocabulary, examples, topics and specific contexts that are relevant to the students for their jobs and help them practice specific skills.

A helpful way to implement specific work related tasks into English lessons is to first focus on a specific task within the students' job: for example, serving coffee to an American client. Next, it is useful to ask questions and explore more information like "What questions do the customers ask? What words do you struggle to find as you serve a cup of coffee in English?"

After students pinpoint where they struggle within their job sector, the teacher can formulate situations and tasks based on the needs of the students. The aim is to build "a specific detailed picture of a single occasion where your student needs English" in order to create a role-play, real play or reformulate other activities to suit students' needs.

Examples for the hospitality sector could be having students listen to and take notes about conversations between a waiter and a customer, having students translate/create a menu, having students list vocabulary needed for their job

and designing information gap activities in which students have to fill in blank information for taking reservations or food orders. Other activities include role-playing (having students role play themselves while other students role play customers at a restaurant/coffee shop) and brainstorming kinds of complaints/compliments customers might have at a typical restaurant.

An example of how students would be prepared to speak English at the bar is found in the following diagram.

Name: _____ ,

Waiter/Customer

Describe in English what you see in the following three images as if you were a waiter describing the plates.

PLATE 1

PLATE 2

PLATE 3

Now listen to and write down the conversation you hear between a waiter and a customer, using these plates.

Customer:

Waiter:

Customer:

Waiter:

Name _____

Usi l'inglese al tuo stage?

Quanto spesso?

TRADURRE LE PAROLE:

Caffè ^[L]_[SEP]

Macchina per il caffè ^[L]_[SEP]

Caffè normale ^[L]_[SEP]

Zucchero ^[L]_[SEP]

Latte ^[L]_[SEP]

Caffè con latte^[L]_[SEP]

Acqua (naturale/frizzante)

Posso avere....?

Posso aiutarla.....?^[L]_[SEP] *un attimo, prego*

Chiedo al mio manager^[L]_[SEP]

Avete prenotato?^[L]_[SEP]

Volete qualcos'altro?^[L]_[SEP]

Sarà 5 euro^[L]_[SEP]

Potete pagare di là^[L]_[SEP]

Non parlo inglese molto bene... Volete un panino?^[L]_[SEP]

Da portare via

Riscaldato^[L]_[SEP] *Mangiate qui?*^[L]_[SEP] *Aspetti 5 minuti*^[L]_[SEP] *Desidera lo scontrino?*^[L]_[SEP]

Altro frasi/vocaboli utilizzati al lavoro.....

Now write a dialog using all the new “work” vocabulary you have translated.

Waiter:

Customer:

Waiter:

Customer:

Waiter:

Customer:

Waiter:

The above worksheets created for the English learning classroom in Cometa are simple examples designed in order to help students be a success when they work in the coffee shop.

Another aspect of having students speak English in Cometa is assessing students' English language level during their job rotation at the coffee shop. This enables students to practice vocabulary they learned in the classroom in a real world setting.

2.2 Assessment: Traditional Regional Exams vs. Exams of Oliver

In Cometa, formative and summative assessments are both used as methods of measurement for students' achievement. For example, in foreign language learning, formative assessments are performed through "exit slips" or daily notebook checks. Exit slips are pieces of paper that a student must fill out before leaving the classroom to show understanding of the topics covered in

the day's lesson. Notebooks are required of every student and must be brought to class every day. In the students' notebook, they must keep their bell-ringers, their daily classroom exercises as well as homework and various other activities. Notebooks are then graded as a form of formative assessment to gauge student learning on a daily basis. In addition to notebooks, every two weeks students complete a summative assessment of the unit that is composed of written, listening and reading comprehension exercises as well as grammar.

2.2.1 Exams of Oliver

In Cometa, the first and second year students must complete a special exam entitled the "Oliver" exam. Attached are two examples of the first and second year "Oliver" exam for the Hospitality sector. The Oliver exam is unique in that it assesses both the basic regional benchmarks as well as the "non-measurable" skills unique to Cometa- for example the vocational skills as well as critical thinking and transversal capacities.

Example of first and second year "Oliver" exams:

English Salabar Year 1 Exam

For this exam, there will be three parts: written, oral and a portfolio. The written part is to answer the following question.

WRITTEN

At the beginning of the year you responded in Italian to the following question. Now you must respond in English to the following question that is asked of you on an application. You must fill out the top part and answer the following question. In order to respond, please use the following guidelines.

Why is it important to learn English?

Include:

Name: Age: Nationality: Address:

-tell me about your story (your family, what you like, information about you)

-Your daily life: how does English fit in in your community in every day?

-tell me about yourself and other people who know a foreign language.

I am Italian and I have 3 brothers. I like math and science. I enjoy playing games and going out with my friends. Every day, I have to speak English at the coffee shop and at the bar. My uncle is American and speaks English at home.

B: risponde con frasi basilari alla domanda senza un pensiero più profondo

I: risponde alla domanda con un pensiero e frasi ben costruite usando bene la grammatica ma non approfondisce e non aggiunge qualcosa in più.

A: sa spiegare bene perché, sa giudicare l'importanza dell'inglese per la propria vita, e fare degli esempi al lavoro applicando la consapevolezza di sé.

PORTFOLIO DEFENSE (ORAL)

I am a business wanting to give you a job at my restaurant. I need to know you can speak English well enough with foreign speaking clients. Present your portfolio to me demonstrating you are an A1 level. Use artifacts from this year to present to me:

- your best English menu
- an audio clip describing a little about you in case a client asks
- your dictionary with the year 1 words
- a dialog between a client and a waiter based on the menu

PORTFOLIO

- pictures at work
- best dictionary
- best menu della commessa (pictures of the plates)
- best audio clip
- video clip at the restaurant/bar o durante la commessa
- best biography (including pictures)
- your passion in English at work: describe it (example coffee art, your favorite plate, etc.)

B: L'alunno ha risposto alle domande ma in maniera semplice, breve e schematica.

I: organizzato e completo, tutti gli elementi sono presenti in maniera ordinata ed entro i tempi.

A: creatività, completo, ben fatto, mostra che l'alunno è andato oltre la richiesta e ha pensato di compilare un portfolio che è sintomatico di maturità. Inoltre riesce ad immaginare che il portfolio potrà favorire il suo ingresso in azienda ed che era proprio questo il fine pensato.

English Salabar Year 2 Exam

For this exam, there will be three parts: written, oral and a portfolio. The written part is to answer the following question.

WRITTEN (60 mins.)

Based on the experiences of this year (your stage, looking up work in English, the guest speakers) please write a short letter to your friend in another school who wants to know why you are learning English to convince him/her to study

a second language. Respond to the following question:

How might language open “doors of opportunity”?

-include the abilities you have when you learn another language (ability to communicate, to express yourself, meet new people)

-use the past tense to talk about your “stage” (Where was it? How did it go? What did you learn? Were there foreign clients? If not, do you understand the importance of English at your workplace? How do you react to a foreign client?)

-write the requests and offers you heard at work from foreign clients (Can I help you? Would you like some water?).

B: risponde con frasi semplici (soggetto, verbo, complemento) alla domanda senza un pensiero più profondo...

I: risponde alla domanda con un pensiero e frasi ben costruite usando bene la grammatica ma non approfondisce e non aggiunge qualcosa di più.

A: sa spiegare bene perché, capire l'importanza di ciò per la sua vita, e fare degli esempi al lavoro applicando la consapevolezza di sé.

PORTFOLIO DEFENSE (ORAL, 15 mins)

I am a business wanting to give you a job at my restaurant that serves lunch. I need to know you can speak English well enough with foreign speaking clients. Present your portfolio to me demonstrating you are an A2 level. Use artifacts from this year to present to me:

- your best English menu from the restaurant at lunch, defending the choices (focusing on lunch and the restaurant)
- a video of you using English at the English bar or restaurant at lunchtime (taken by your partner)
- your dictionary with the year 2 words added to the year 1 words
- observations/video done by a peer and practical test results of service at the restaurant

PORTFOLIO

- best dictionary including 1st year and 2nd year
- 3 work opportunities that ask you to speak English
- best menu from the restaurant at lunch

-best audio and video clip

-best biography

B: L'alunno ha risposto alle domande ma in maniera semplice, breve e schematica.

I: organizzato e completo, tutti gli elementi sono presenti in maniera ordinata ed entro i tempi.

A: creatività, completo, ben fatto, mostra che l'alunno è andato oltre la richiesta e ha pensato di compilare un portfolio, aspetto sintomatico di maturità. Inoltre riesce a comprendere che il portfolio potrà favorire il suo inserimento in azienda e è stato creato con questo proposito.

2.2.2 Regional Exams

The third and fourth year exams are administered and written by the region. They are much more basic and standard exams involving a written letter, multiple choice responses as well as reading comprehension sections.

This is an example of what is asked of students in a third year regional exam:

Next July, in the city in which you live, the Summer Rock Festival will take place and many groups and singers will participate in a concert series that will last for one week. Your friend Ted, who lives in the United States, would like to come to Italy for the occasion of the event and has written you to ask some

information. Write him an e-mail with all the information and advice needed, in particular:

- where and when the concert will take place
- which are the most interesting concerts
- how to get tickets
- where he can sleep
- which other activities (visits, excursions, etc.) he can do while he is in your country

Students must respond with 50 words using the format of an e-mail and are assessed on completeness, the structure of the sentences, accurate grammar and vocabulary and responding to all the parts of the request.

The next part of the regional exam is a fill in the blank exercise with options.

Modern British families

Father leaves for work (1) the morning after breakfast. The children take the bus to school, and mother stays at home cooking and cleaning until father and the kids return home in the evening. This is the traditional picture of a happy family (2) in Britain. But is it true today? The answer is - no! The past twenty years (3) enormous changes in the lives and structures of families in Britain, and the traditional model is no longer true in most cases.

The biggest change has been caused (4) divorce. As many as 2 out of 3 marriages now end in divorce, leading to a situation (5) many children live with one parent and only see the other one at weekends or holidays.

There has also been a huge rise (6) the number of mothers who work. (7) the large rise in divorces, many women need to work to support themselves and their children. Even when there is no divorce, in many families both parents (8) to work in order to survive. This has caused an increase in childcare facilities. In addition, women are no longer happy to stay at home raising children, and many have careers earning as much as or even more than men.

However, these changes have not had a totally negative effect. For women, it is now much easier to have a career and good salary. (9) it is difficult to be a working mother, it has become normal and it's no longer seen as a bad thing for the children. As for children themselves, some argue that modern children grow up to be (10) independent and mature than in the past.

2.2.3 Year Long Plan in Cometa

The English language Cometa curriculum year long plan combines aspects of the text book, regional objectives, competencies required for the Hospitality, Textile and Carpentry sections as well as skills students need to develop transversally for the Oliver Exams (such as critical thinking, reasoning, etc.)

The following is an example of a year long plan for first through fourth years in Cometa that are based on thematic units. Thematic units are useful because they allow students to focus on an overall theme instead of zeroing in on specific grammar concepts, thus losing the overall meaning of the language.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TOPICS AND MATERIALS

1 ST YEAR

My personality: all about me, lifestyles, interests, where I come from and where I live, what do your clothes, interests and food choices say about you?

Resources: Choices Unit 1 and 2,6. Focus Now 1 Unit 4, Focus 2 p. 20, Speak Your Mind p 135

Welcoming and Socializing: how to welcome people, self confidence, body language, dialogs at the Coffee Shop and Restaurant

Resources: New English File El. Unit 1 a, Unit 2 (my hand out)

Food and Drink: eating in the future, good food, health, nutrition, food and culture, colors and food

Resources: Choices Unit8, Focus Now 1 Unit 2, Speak Your Mind Unit 5

Culture: English speaking countries, my country, travelling, giving directions, fashion capitals of the world, typical clothes in different countries.

Resources: Choices Unit 9, Focus Now 1 Unit 8, Speak Your Mind Unit 10

Technology: gadgets, new technology in textile industry Resources: Choices Unit 10

Review

GRAMMAR: Review: to be, possessive pronouns, can/can't, this/that, have got

Present Simple, like + ING WH Questions Adverbs of frequency

Irregular plurals Degrees of comparison Present Continuous verb + ing/

to First Conditional Past Simple Irregular Verbs Prepositions of place

Going to/future Articles

2ND YEAR

Time and Money: slow vs. fast, habits and hobbies, being frugal, shops, clothes markets and shops, brands Resources: Choices Un 1, 3,

Work: ideal job, your first job experience, strange jobs, summer work, working in a restaurant, first internship experience, speaking with foreign clients

Resources: Focus Now 1 Unit 3, Speak your Mind Unit 14

Entertainment: music, films, reading, sport. Fashion in music, films etc.

Resources: Choices Unit 2,4,6, Focus Now Unit 6

2. Generations: dealing with people around us, gender roles, friends, students exchange, the history of patterns.

Resources: Choices Unit 5, 11. Focus Now Unit 1 5. Review

GRAMMAR: Present Tenses review Irregular verbs Present Perfect Some/any/a lot of/a few/a little Ever/never/hardly ever/already Modal Verbs: have to/may/must/must not

3RD YEAR

1. Work and Career: prospects for your future, career of a waiter/waitress, success, talent , CV

Resources: Focus Now 1 Unit 3, Speak your Mind Unit 14, + vocational texts, Focus Now 2 Unit 6

2. Habitat: taking care of nature, into the wild, going green, local food, finding local produce, growing your own food

2. Learning: studying at school, learning through experience, learning a textile job, Resources: Choices PI p 98, Choices Intermediate Unit 9 + vocational English

3. World Events: news, historical facts, future health, heroes Resources: Choices PI p. 56, Choices Intermediate Unit 6, Focus Now p 122/123,

5. Review

GRAMMAR: Present Continuous Review Have to Conditionals (first/second conditional) Reported speech All/most/many/first conditional Going to/will

GRAMMAR FOR EXAM PREP: Present Tenses Past Simple Irregular verbs

Possessive case Passive voice Degrees of comparison Possessive pronouns

4TH YEAR

Inspiration: sources of Inspiration, mood board, research, masterpieces, textile genius/ from design to a final product (for textile), futures in the Hospitality industry for Sala Bar. Resources: Choices Unit 11, + vocational vocab

Out of comfort Zone: adventure, extreme, hard work, broaden horizons, what makes you happy in your job Resources: Choices Int Unit 7, Focus Now Unit 6

Innovation: new tech, experiments, new tech in textile industry/Carpentry/Sala Bar. Resources : Choices Int Unit 12, Focus Now Unit 2

How the garment is produced. Seams, finishes, support and structure. Trend and Web. Promoting Fashion. How to plan an event/cooking/pastry chef expertise.

CV and job interview.

Fashion/food/wood and literature

GRAMMAR: Past Simple (questions and negatives) Conditional (1/2)^[SEP]Questions^[SEP]However/although/despite^[SEP]Future Tense/ going to/present continuous Prepositions/^[SEP]Was able to/should/didn't have to Verbs+ing/to^[SEP]Articles

The above year long plans was put into a “curriculum overview” for Cometa to include vocational activities, see attached ***.

Another example of an English language teaching curriculum (year long plan as well as explanation of pedagogy) is the following, created for Cometa:

Mappatura didattica – Marzo 2017

Report di sintesi . Dipartimento D'inglese

1a) elenco contenuti trattati

I anno	II anno	III anno	IV anno
1. My personality: all about me, lifestyles, interests, where I come from and where I live. <u>Tessile:</u> what does your clothes say about you? clothes and personality, <u>Resources:</u> Choices Unit 1 and 2,6. Focus Now 1 Unit 4, Focus 2 p. 20, Speak Your Mind p 135 2. Welcoming and Socializing : how to welcome people, self confidence, body language <u>Salabar:</u> basic vocabulary at the coffee	1. Time and Money: slow vs fast, habits and hobbies, being frugal, <u>Tessile:</u> shops, clothes markets and shops, brands Resources: Choices Un 1, 3, 2. Generations : dealing with people around us, gender roles, friends, students exchange, <u>Tessile:</u> the history of patterns. <u>Resources:</u> Choices Unit 5, 11. Focus Now Unit1 3. Entertainment: music, films, reading, sport. <u>Tessile:</u>	1. Work and Career: prospects for your future, <u>Tessile:</u> career of a textile designer, success, talent ,CV <u>Salabar:</u> working as a waiter/barman, career in hospitality <u>Carpentry:</u> short videos realized during the internships, describing activities and tools. <u>Resources:</u> Choices Interm. Unit 10, Focus Now 1 Unit 3, Speak your Mind Unit 14, + vocational texts, Focus Now 2 Unit 6 2. Learning: studying at school, learning	4TH YEAR 1. Inspiration: sources of Inspiration, <u>Tessile:</u> mood board, research, masterpieces, textile genius/ from design to a final product <u>Salabar:</u> ideare, how to create a menu, managing an event. <u>Resources:</u> Choices Unit 11, + vocational vocab 2. Out of comfort Zone: adventure, extreme, hard work, broaden horizons, what makes you happy in your job <u>Resources:</u> Choices Int Unit 7, Focus Now Unit 6 3. Innovation : new tech, experiments, <u>Tessile e Legno:</u> new tech in

<p>shop/restaurant, Cometa (tour of the school in English, how to welcome people) <u>Resources:</u> New English File El. Unit 1 a, Unit 2 (hand outs) 3. Food and Drink: eating in the future, good food, health, nutrition, food and culture, <u>Tessile:</u> clothes at restaurants, colours and food <u>Salabar:</u> health and nutrition, food and culture, restaurants, serving <u>Resources :</u> Choices Unit8, Focus Now 1 Unit 2, Speak Your Mind Unit 5 4. Culture: English speaking countries, my country,</p>	<p>Fashion in music, films etc <u>Salabar:</u> cooking TV shows. <u>Resources:</u> Choices Unit 2,4,6, Focus Now Unit 6 4. Work : ideal job, your first job experience, strange jobs, summer work etc <u>Tessile:</u> Famous fashion designers, Fabric Types <u>Salabar:</u> internship vocabulary, dialogues at the coffee shop/restaurant. <u>Resources:</u> Focus Now 1 Unit 3, Speak your Mind Unit 14 5.Health: good/bad habits, diet <u>Salabar:</u> balanced diet <u>Resources:</u> Un5 Choices 6. Review <u>Carpentry:</u></p>	<p>through experience, <u>Tessile e</u> <u>Salabar:</u> skills you need in textile/hospitality <u>Resources:</u> Choices PI p 98, Choices Interm Unit 9 + vocational English 3. Habitat: taking care of nature, into the wild, going green, where I live <u>Tessile:</u> sustainable materials in textile industry, surface treatments <u>Salabar:</u> o km food, going to a local restaurant 4. World Events: news, historical facts, future health, heroes <u>Resources:</u> Choices PI p. 56, Choices Int Unit 6, Focus Now p 122/123, 5. Exam Preparation</p>	<p>textile industry/Carpentry <u>Resources:</u> Choices Int Unit 12, Focus Now Unit 2 4.TESSILE How the garment is produced. Seams, finishes, support and structure. Trend and Web. Promoting Fashion, Fashion and literature 5. CV and job interview. 6. Exam Preparation Module</p>
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<p>travelling, giving directions, <u>Tessile</u>: fashion capitals of the world, typical clothes in different countries. <u>Salabar</u>: food around the world <u>Resources</u>: Choices Unit 9, Focus Now 1 Unit 8, Speak Your Mind Unit 10</p> <p>5. Technology: gadgets and machines <u>Tessile</u>: new technology in textile industry <u>Salabar</u>: kitchen appliances Resources: Choices Unit 10</p> <p>6. Stories: different types of films, Superbowl commercials, Hollywood, writing a script. Reading a book</p>	<p>Midterm exams Describing yourself, family, likes/dislikes, professional English (tools and materials)</p>	<p>6. Review</p>	
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Resources: Unit 5 Choices 6. Review <u>Carpentry</u> : Basic vocabulary (tools, materials and verbs)			
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Professional Development Books

- Wallace, M. J. 1991. *Training foreign language teachers: A reflective approach*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Reid, J., ed. 1998. *Understanding learning styles in the second language classroom*. New York: Longman.
- Brown, H. D. 2001. *Strategies for success: A practical guide to learning English*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Chamot, A.U., S. Barnhardt, P. Beard El-Dinary, and J. Robbins. 1999. *The learning strategies handbook: Creating independent learners*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Bassano, S. and M. A. Christison. 1995. *Community spirit: A practical guide to collaborative language learning*. Burlingame, CA: Alta Book Center

Dictionaries.

- Crystal, D. 1995. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of the English language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Platt, J., H. Weber, J. Richards, and H. Platt. 1997. *Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics*. New York: Longman.

Grammar

- Swan, M. 1996. *Practical English usage*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Azar, B. S. 2014. *Basic English grammar*. 2nd ed. New York: Pearson ESL.
- Azar, B. S. 2013. *Understanding and using English grammar*. 3d ed. New York

General English Pearson Books and ESP Books

- Choices. Student's book-Workbook. Con espansione online. Per le Scuole superiori. Con CD Audio. Con CD-ROM
- Venture A2 for Dyslexic students
- New Head Way
- New English File
- Market Leader
- Speak Out
- Fashion English
- English for Fashion Industry
- Main Course English

Websites used:

- <http://www.cambridge.org/>
- <https://www.pearsonelt.com/myenglishlab.html>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish>
- <https://www.britishcouncil.org/>
- <http://www.onestopenglish.com/>
- <http://www.wordreference.com/it/>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/>
- <https://www.flocabulary.com/>

2.2.4 Classroom management

In Cometa in the English classroom, students must come in quietly, sit down in their desks and complete the “bell-ringer” on the board. The idea of a bell-ringer, developed by Rick Morris

(<http://newmanagement.com/bellwork/index.html>), consists in a question based on the previous lesson to get students settled and ready to learn. It is an academic activity students do to begin their day or period.

Bell work, or bell ringers, were developed by Rick Morris, Harry Wong, Fred Jones, and Kent De Pue. According to Harry Wong, “an opening assignment gets students to work before the bell has rung” (Wong 2014, 20). Opening assignments can include completing a project or lesson that was started the day before, journal prompts, writing assignments or grammar activities.

According to Jones (2001) bell-work helps with classroom management in that students see the classroom and their social lives as two different worlds and it gives them a structure to depend on; students know what to expect when they enter the English classroom thus maximizing learning time. It is a clear start to the lesson. After the bell ringer is briefly discussed, students continue their lesson with a new grammar explanation and exercise followed by students’ use of dialogs among themselves and the last five minutes used for homework or error correction. On special project days, students write glossaries, write their own dialogs, present their favorite song in English or make up quizzes to help their classmates study for a test.

Classroom management is essential in Cometa due to the high needs and difficult family situations of the students. Students with special needs are assigned a support teacher and each class has a tutor that takes care of the social emotional needs of the class as well as the internship and the family school communication. The teacher is in charge of managing the different entities present in the classroom (support teacher, tutor, one-on-one aid) and

making sure learning time is maximized and not disturbed by the addition of support staff.

High needs students have various tools at their disposal for tests as well as daily class time. They are aided in constructing conceptual maps and tables as well as dictionaries and are assisted by specialists to help them discover the way they learn best. The high level of attention to special needs students in Cometa contributes to low student drop-out rates (See Table 1, above). There is a high ratio of adults to students, which makes it possible for students to be “taken care of” in a very unique and highly personalized way.

2.2.5 Class Counsels

Grades in the Italian system are based on the 1-100 scale as in America. Every grading period, class counsels are conducted where all the teachers of a class get together to talk about the grades and concerns of each student. It is a very unique and important moment for the school since the adults in the building have very little time to “look each other in the face” all together and talk about behaviors of their students that may be similar in many different subject areas. It is useful to hear where one teacher notices students’ strengths and where they have similar points of growth. At these class counsels, the principal decides on a course of action for particularly struggling students. For example, a student with many absences must be sent a letter home to inform the parents of the situation or a student with failing grades in more than two subjects may

or may not receive a note home as well but these actions are all to be decided by the teaching body.

The benefits of class counsels are many.

First and foremost, red flags of students are caught early on and parents and other important figures can be notified. It is a preventative measure in that adults that deal with the same children can bring to light both positives and negatives of particular students and come up with an action plan. Class counsels are also useful for the class tutor to have a better understanding of the situation of their class in order to better plan for a course of prevention and action.

2.2.6 Tutors

Tutors in Cometa have a very important role. Not only is a figure needed that is totally responsible for each class in terms of the social and emotional needs, but the tutor is also responsible for each students' internship experience. Due to the delicate nature of the school-business relationship, the tutor is essential in making sure students show up to work on time, are consistent, respectful and dependable workers. Tutors also help design individualized learning plans for struggling students, deal with the bureaucracy of each class (class registers, relations, attendance, locker keys, permission slips, money owed to the school, etc.)

The main purpose of the tutor figure is to free up the teachers to focus on lesson planning and curriculum design. The cooperation between tutors and

teachers can be powerful in helping both figures to understand and fully take care of all aspects of the students.

3. English and Special Learning Needs in Cometa

Table 3: disabili- persons with disabilities, DSA- dyslexia, BES- special needs, Altri studenti- other students

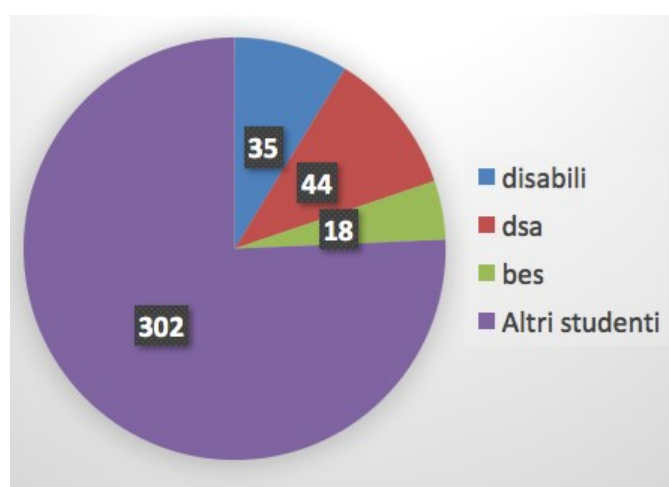


Table 4: origini italiane- students with Italian origins, origini straniere- students with foreign origins

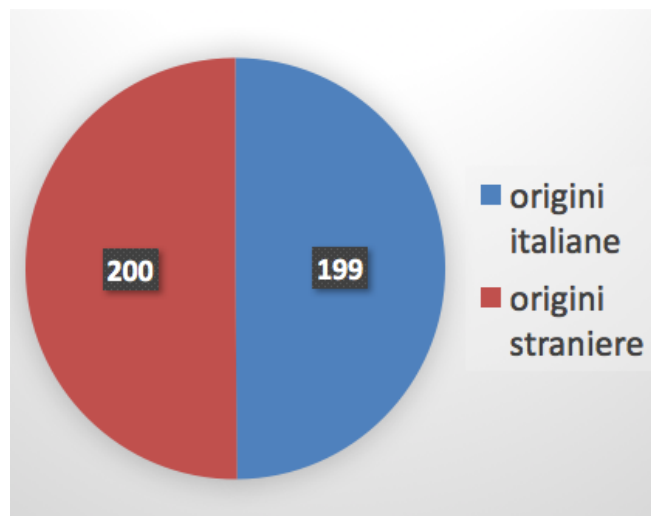
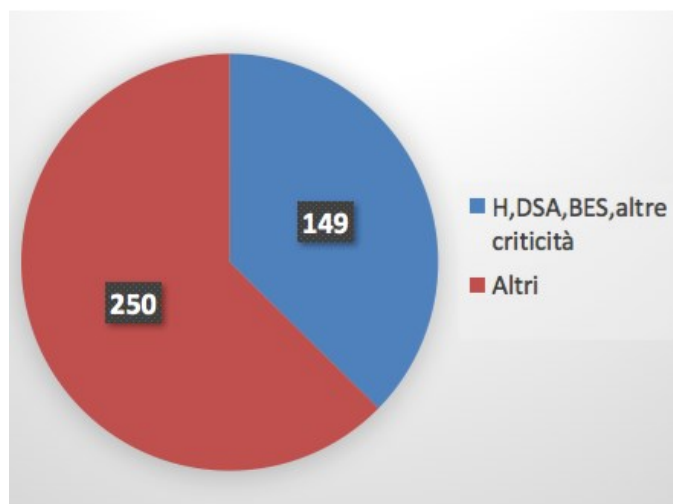


Table 5: H, DSA, BES, altre criticità- ADHD, dyslexia, special needs or other critical situations, Altri- others



Source: Authors' own elaboration

In Italy, BES represents students with special needs. BES can include learning disabilities, foreign students, students with dyslexia, students with emotional/behavioral disturbances, and any other special learning need. DSA represents specifically students with dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia.

Italian law requires that all Italian schools have a “precise inclusion strategy in order to institute the right to learn for all students and especially those in difficulty” (Direttiva sui Bisogni Educativi Speciali, 2012).

3.1.1 Compensatory Instruments

In order to make inclusion for all students a reality in Italian schools, many laws are also written about “compensating measures/instruments” for each specific learning need and for each specific classroom subject.

In English, this looks like adapting the following exercise for a BES student in the following way:

ORIGINAL VERSION

Name: _____

TEST SBI

Mettete le parole seguenti nella categoria giusta.

Beef/ broccoli/ rice/ crisps/ salmon/ cheese/ sardines/

Pasta/ onion/ kiwi/ sweets/ yoghurt/ lamb/ melon

Meat

Fruit

Vegetable

Cereals

Fish

Dairy

Snacks

FOOD

Completate le parole con le lettere corrette.

1. I love fruit. My favorites are a _____. .
2. I don't eat many vegetables but I like c _____ o _____ and
p _____t _____.
3. I eat a lot of cereals like p _____.
4. My favorite meat is l _____ and b _____.
5. Fish is very good for you so I eat a lot of s _____ and _____
_____.
6. I eat a y _____ h _____ every morning and this dairy food is good for me.
7. When I want a snack, I have some n _____.

WILL WON'T

Usate will o won't per completare le frasi.

- 1. next year / be easy?*
- 2. no / not. next year / very difficult*
- 3. we have / lots of tests?*
- 4. yes / . We / have tests every week*
- 5. we go / on / lot of school trips?*
- 6. no / not. we / not have time*
- 7. which teachers / we have*
- 8. we / not know / until September*

Present Conditional

Completate le frasi.

- 1. If people _____ (not have) a lot of money, they _____ (not often eat) at restaurants.*
- 2. When my dad _____ (be) hungry, he _____ (buy) crisps from the local shop.*
- 3. What _____ (your mum do) when she _____ (feel) tired?*
- 4. I _____ (not go) out when I _____ (have) exams at school.*
- 5. _____ (you drink) cola when you _____ (meet) your friends?*
- 6. When my sister _____ (lose) her phone, she _____ (get) very angry.*
- 7. When our teacher _____ (not give) us homework, we _____ (be) very happy.*

8. If I _____ (not eat) breakfast, I _____ (not study) well.

AT A CAFFE

Mettete insieme la colonna sinistra con quella a destra.

Hello, can I _____ you like to drink?

What have you got _____ you are.

Here's the _____ no chicken.

I'm sorry, there's _____ help you?

What would _____ is that?

A coffee for _____ for lunch?

How much _____ menu.

That's _____ \$10.80, please.

Here _____ me, please.

SIMPLIFIED VERSION

Name: _____

TEST SB1

Mettete le parole seguenti nella categoria giusta.

Beef/ broccoli/ rice/ crisps/ salmon/ cheese/ sardines/

Pasta/ onion/ kiwi/ sweets/ yoghurt/ lamb/ melon

Meat

Fruit

Vegetable

Cereals

Fish

Dairy

Snacks

FOOD

Completate le parole con le lettere corrette.

1. I love fruit. My favorites are a _____. .
2. I don't eat many vegetables but I like c_____ o _____ and
p_____t_____.
3. I eat a lot of cereals like p_____.
4. My favorite meat is l_____ and b_____.
5. Fish is very good for you so I eat a lot of s_____ and _____.

6. I eat a y ___ h ___ every morning and this dairy food is good for me.

7. When I want a snack, I have some n ___ .

WILL - WON'T

Usate will o won't per completare le frasi.

Esempio: Will they go to school by bus?

No, they won't. They will go by train.

1. next year / be easy?

.....
.....

2. no / not next year / very difficult

.....
.....

3. we have / lots of tests?

.....
.....

4. yes / We / have tests every week

.....
.....

5. we go / on / lot of school trips?

.....
.....

6. *no / not. we / not have time*

.....

.....

7. *which teachers / we have*

.....

.....

8. *we / not know / until September*

.....

Present Conditional

If/When + present simple tense + present simple tense

Completate le frasi.

1. *If people _____ (not have) a lot of money,*

they _____ (not often eat) at restaurants.

2. *When my dad _____ (be) hungry,*

he _____ (buy) crisps from the local shop.

3. *What _____ (your mum do) when*

she _____ (feel) tired?

4. *I _____ (not go) out when I _____*

(have) exams at school.

5. _____ (you drink) cola when you _____ (meet) your friends?
6. When my sister _____ (lose) her phone, she _____ (get) very angry.
7. When our teacher _____ (not give) us homework, we _____ (be) very happy.
8. If I _____ (not eat) breakfast, I _____ (not study) well.

AT A CAFFE

Collega la colonna sinistra con quella a destra.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| A. Hello, can I | you like to drink? |
| B. What have you got | you are. |
| C. Here's the | no chicken. |
| D. I'm sorry, there's | help you? |
| E. What would | is that? |
| F. A coffee for | for lunch? |
| G. How much | menu. |
| H. That's | \$10.80, please. |
| I. Here | me, please. |

3.1.2 Support Staff in Cometa

In addition to a “special needs advisor” for every class and Cometa as a whole, There is a one-on-one aid for every child with special needs who is present with them in the classroom according to the specific outlines in their individualized educational plan. Usually, aids are present especially in Italian and Math class, but the English classroom can be a place of great struggle for students with dyslexia and other learning needs.

The biggest issue faced by English language learners who have an IEP is that, often, they struggle with their first language, which makes learning a foreign language an added struggle. These students often add letters, mix letters up, omit letters, add syllables, drop syllables or know the beginning or ends of words but not the middle (Ainscow 2003).

3.1.3 Strategies to Help Learners with DSA Learn English

In addition to the modifying of tests and additional instruments offered to students with special learning needs in the English language classroom, the following are other options in order to ensure full inclusion of students.

- **Maintaining a daily routine:** students with special learning needs need predictability and routine therefore it is useful to establish and follow a method in the way the lesson is run and a good idea to communicate weekly the activities to be covered in class.

- **A lesson plan:** it is useful to provide a lesson plan or order of events of a lesson for students in order for them to follow activities with more interest
- **Vocabulary for each new topic:** Before introducing a new topic the teacher should provide a reference glossary and explain significant new words with concrete examples, images, etc.
- **Use of tables, graphics and notes:** the use of these extra tools favors the memorization of vocabulary and of structures. It is necessary to eventually encourage students to create their own notes and graphics to increase learner autonomy.
- **Review of content:** Before the beginning of a new unit, the teacher should review the previous unit in order to help students make connections between new material and previous material. There needs to be continuity between various topics studied by the students.
- **Simplification/modification of exercises:** Often, the directions of exercises are too complicated and contain too much information, and, in the English language classroom, are written in English. This makes it difficult for students to understand and therefore certain words must be taken out, directions should be given in Italian and simplified/modified.
- **Reduction of the number of activities:** The teacher must always select material beforehand in order to reduce it to the proper quantity for

students with special needs. Students need immediate feedback in order to go forward with similar exercises.

- **Organization of work paper:** Students with special learning needs need to work on a special paper that is subdivided into sections, organizing their work. This is necessary because there is often too much information distracting them and preventing them from understanding clearly what needs to be done. It is necessary that such a paper be simple without too much writing and if necessary, parts that students are not working on at the moment be covered in order to not distract them.
- **Key-words and key-sentences:** When working with texts to read and analyze, the teacher can highlight the principal information or underline key words and sentences with a different color. It's also possible to write in the margins of every paragraph a specific question that helps students to focus attention on the most important concepts.
- **Concept maps:** Concept maps are a very useful and efficient tool to use in class. They represent graphically a network of concepts that make explicit the knowledge of any given argument. Concept maps help significant details of the material to emerge in order to be learned and takes advantage of graphic memories by synthesizing what needs to be learned.

- **Reinforcing activities:** Often special needs students need to practices and recite things for longer in order to memorize and know things confidently. The teacher must have material that helps students reinforce material in addition to material that helps students go deeper (fill in the gaps exercises, games, complete the given word, etc.)
- **Notes from the lesson:** At the end of each lesson the teacher can give a copy of the notes written or typed in order to give students a conceptual map of the days' lesson.
- **Differentiation and diversification of lessons:** In order to meet students where they are at, the teacher must diversify and differentiate class activities: listening activities, watching videos, using power points, small group work, partner work, individual work, etc.
- **Pair work and group work:** Pair work is one of the most efficient strategies for learning English as a foreign language. Students can exchange ideas, ask questions and come up with answers. Group work must be monitored, however, and the teacher should give a specific role to each group member based on each one's capacity and attitude.
- **Oral and written tests:** The teacher must always anticipate tests for students with special needs and have them write them in their assignment book way in advance. Written directions should be in large print and the number of exercises should be and time to complete increased.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH QUESTION PRESENTATION AND DATA COLLECTION

1. Introduction

Teaching English in a vocational school leads to many questions as to how to best create a curriculum and assessments that are informed by students' work experiences.

The following survey was given to students during the 2015/2016 school year in order to understand how best teach English in a vocational school, taking into account the needs and desires of students.

Name: _____

Research Question

What affects does an internship experience have on students' English language learning attitudes?

Questionnaire:

1. Descrivi i tuoi stage in questi anni. Quanto duravano e dove li hai svolti (al ristorante, al bar, ecc)? Describe your internships in these years. How long did they last? Where did they take place?

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2. Durante i tuoi stage, ti è stato chiesto di parlare in inglese? Se sì, quante volte, in quali mansioni? Were you required to speak English in your internship experience? If yes, how many times and describe in what capacity (al bar, in sala, mentre servivi)?

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3. Descrivi la tua attitudine verso la lingua inglese (se a te piace, se ti sembra utile, importante, interessante...) prima, durante e dopo i tuoi stage. Describe your attitude towards the English language learning before your internship experience.

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4. Che cosa ti ha preparato meglio a comunicare con i clienti? Che cosa vorresti aver imparato che ti sarebbe stato utile? What helped you to feel the

most prepared to communicate with clients? What do you wish you had learned that would have been useful?

5. Quale parte dell'apprendimento della lingua inglese tu trovi più utile/interessanti e perché? Which parts of English language learning do you find most useful? (speaking, writing, listening, reading) and why?

6. Oltre ad essere utile per il tuo lavoro, fai un elenco delle altre ragioni per le quali può essere utile e importante imparare l'inglese. A te piace imparare l'inglese o tu lo impari solo perché devi? Spiega. Outside of its usefulness for your job, can you list other reasons why it might be important to learn English? Do you like learning English or is it only something that you need for your job? Explain.

7. Io penso che imparare la grammatica inglese è utile. I think learning English grammar is useful.

____ strongly disagree ____ disagree ____ agree ____ strongly agree

Explain:

8. Secondo me, imparare a **parlare** inglese è più importante che imparare la **grammatica**. I think learning English speaking is more important than grammar.

____ strongly disagree ____ disagree ____ agree ____ strongly agree

Explain:

9. La **grammatica** inglese e **imparare a parlare** inglese per me hanno la stessa importanza. English grammar and speaking English are of equal importance for me as an English language learner.

____ strongly disagree ____ disagree ____ agree ____ strongly agree

Explain:

10. Descrivi alcuni aspetti che trovi importanti per parlare inglese durante il tuo stage. (esempio stima di sé, lessico del ristorante, etc.) Describe some of the

characteristics you think are needed in order to speak English during your internship. (For example: self-confidence, good knowledge of vocabulary, etc.)

11. Descrivi se c'è stato un “cambiamento” nella tua attitudine verso l'apprendimento dell'inglese IN AULA prima, durante e dopo il tuo stage. SPIEGA NEL DETTAGLIO! Describe, as best as possible, if there shift was a shift in your attitude towards learning English in class before, during and after your internship. If there was a shift, describe it in detail!

12. Rispondi a questa domanda pensando a prima, durante e dopo il tuo stage. Please answer the following question thinking about before, during and after your internship experience:

Is learning English important to you?

The above survey was given to the third and fourth year classes in order to create a new, speaking based, “experience” based curriculum for Cometa.

An example of what “experience based” curriculum might mean can be explained by the following anecdote.

In May 2016, a fourth year Hospitality class returned from their internship and I found a group of students eagerly awaiting me at my desk. They all said excitingly “Teacher, at my internship I had to serve a group of 50 foreigners all in English all by myself!” or “Teacher, I speak all English at my internship with the Americans and Germans that come there on vacation” or “Teacher what can I do in class to help me communicate better with my foreign speaking clients?” I remained impressed by this fact: that high school student, who normally remain unmotivated and “bored” by foreign language classes because they don’t see its immediate use, were actually begging me to help them speak English because they saw its use and importance during their internship experience.

This experience, of seeing little sense in learning core subjects such as English, to an excitement and a “question” coming from my students themselves as to how to learn better and improve occurred in many other classes and internships and is something, in my opinion, that must be treasured and used carefully as a teacher.

The questions and the excitement of my students to improve their English led me to pose several questions on how to inform my English as a foreign language curriculum with this new data. For example:

What are the effects on English language teaching and learning methods in the classroom of an internship experience?

How does the internship experience effect English language learning motivation and attitudes in the classroom?

What are the effects on English language teaching and learning methods in the classroom of an internship experience?

How does the internship experience effect English language learning motivation and attitudes in the classroom?

1.1 Job and Internship Rotation in Cometa

Every student in Cometa does an internship that lasts three months. The internship takes place in a business that specializes in each student's chosen path. For example, the students of the Hospitality sector all have jobs in restaurants, pastry shops, hotels or coffee shops. During this internship experience, many students are required to speak English with tourists and other foreign speaking clients. In addition to conversation classes, grammar classes and classes on English speakers' culture, students were asked to take a questionnaire (in Italian and English) reflecting on their internship experience,

the use of the English language, and their motivations and attitudes towards English language learning before, during and after their internship.

Students of the second, third and fourth year classes were given the following survey to complete. The basis of the survey was also geared at collecting data on what the students perceive to be important in learning a foreign language: grammar skills, speaking skills, etc. and how they hope to acquire these skills.

Just as reflective teaching is important in order to grow and improve the practice of teaching, asking the students to reflect on their internship experience, speaking English, and their English language learning experience in general stimulated them to reflect on their years of learning English and how to improve and move forward.

The following survey was also used to measure students' attitude towards English language learning and teaching.

In the survey, students were given as much time as necessary as an activity completed after the completion of the year. It was not conducted for a grade but as a voluntary exercise to collect data and improve English teaching and learning in Cometa.

1.2 Results of Hospitality Class Four

Use of English during the Internship

Fourteen students total were surveyed in the fourth Sala Bar class and five students didn't speak English during their internship whereas nine students used English frequently if not everyday.

Of the fourteen students surveyed, thirteen out of fourteen agreed with the question "I think learning English grammar is useful" and one student strongly agreed.

Attitudes toward English before the Internship

When asked their attitudes toward the English language before their internships, students responded the following:

"I love the English language because it's a very important language..."

"English has always been important to me and I like it"

"English is very useful and important in today's world. I saw an improvement in my language skills after my internship because I used English often".

"I like it but I don't speak it much. It is important for the work I would like to do"

"I like it, it's important"

"I like the pronunciation and I speak well enough, but I am not able to formulate sentences and I have some problems with the vocabulary. I think the level of my English has improved"

"English is my favorite subject and the most important subject, not just because I can speak it but because people all over the world know this language"

“I always like English and always found it interesting. Nothing changed during or after my internships”

“My attitude toward English is that I need to improve it”

“English is important and useful for the work that I am studying to do”

“I really like studying English and it is very useful for me”

“I like the English language and I think it is very important because it’s the most spoken in the world”

“I think learning English is useful for our internships because we can speak with foreign clients”

“For the work that I do it is very important”

“I like English because it is the most important language”

Grammar/Speaking

When asked which was more important to them in their language learning, grammar or speaking, five students said speaking is more important than grammar whereas one student said grammar is more useful than speaking. The remaining seven students said grammar and speaking are of equal importance, with one student saying “if you speak without knowing the rules, it’s easier to make mistakes”.

Change in Attitude towards English before, during and after the Internship Experience

In response to the question “Was there a shift in your attitude towards learning English in the class before, during, and after your internship? If there was a shift, describe it in detail”, students responded the following:

“Before the internship I did English but I didn’t see the necessity, after I did English because I found out it is very important for work”

“I was able to learn more during the internship because I was able to speak”

“My attitude towards English in the classroom changed because I understood the importance of this language”

“I’ve always been interested in learning English, my attitude has not changed”

1.3 Results of Hospitality Class Three A

Use of English during the Internship Experience

Of fifteen third year students interviewed about their internship experience ten said they spoke English at least once or frequently during their internship and five said they didn’t need English to speak with clients (of these five, two students worked as cooks in the kitchen so speaking with clients in general was not necessary for them).

Speaking/Grammar

When students were asked which is more important in their opinion, learning grammar or speaking, most students agreed with the statement “speaking is more important than grammar in learning English”, with ten students agreeing

and three students saying learning grammar and speaking were of equal importance.

Attitude towards English before, during and after the Internship

Students were asked if there were changes in their attitudes towards the importance of English and learning English in the classroom before, during or after their internships. These are the responses:

“There was no shift in my attitude because I always loved English”

“I realized that I need to learn English well”

“Thanks to the internship of my friend, Debora, who went to America, I realize the importance of English and I want to study more”

“I just want to learn more because it’s really important to me”

“Before my internship I didn’t think English was useful and now I think English is very important for my job and for my life”

1.4 Results of Hospitality Class Three B

Use of English during the Internship Experience

Of the twelve students interviewed of the third year Hospitality class, section B, nine spoke English with foreign speaking clients and three didn’t use English at their internships.

Grammar/speaking

When asked if grammar or speaking was more useful and important to learn, six students responded that grammar was more useful, two that speaking was more useful and three that the two were of equal importance.

Attitude towards English before, during and after the Internship

When asked to describe if there was a shift in their attitude towards learning English in class before, during and after their internship, students described the following:

“Before the internship I took more time to understand English spoken to me”

“There was a big shift in my attitude after I spoke with a real English person... I realized it’s really different”

“I now have more confidence and security to speak with customers”

“I think I need to study very hard in English in order to reach a good objective”

2. Conclusions and Implications: An English Language Teaching Curriculum and Method for Vocational Schools of Today

After conducting the above research, there are many implications for the foreign language classroom in English. The implications can be divided into three groups: assessment, speaking practice and curriculum.

2.1 ASSESSMENT

It is clear that students who have an internship experience and return to school more eager to learn need to have activities in class that correspond to their “real

world” experience in the restaurant and coffee shop. In order to simulate these experiences, it is important to assess students on their speaking and serving skills in English. There are many ways to do this, but one way is to have students record themselves speaking a dialog or acting out their jobs in English. It is important to assess fluency as well as accuracy after internship experiences as students will be judged on both of these skills while speaking to foreign clients during their internships. Instead of focusing on grammar and reading comprehension during assessments in the English language learning classroom, English in a vocational school such as Cometa should assess speaking skills as much as possible and design speaking “tests” where students must speak and interact with the teacher and each other as much as possible in English.

2.2 SPEAKING PRACTICE

Reading the students’ answers to the survey and taking into account their internship experiences, it is necessary to give students plenty of practice speaking in the English classroom, as explained in sections on “Speaking practice and skills”. Activities that give the students practice speaking the English language the majority of the time will help prepare them for their internship experience and give them extra practice during and after the internship experience. Activities such as surveying each other, asking each other questions on a text, writing dialogs, recording themselves, listening to each other and taking videos of themselves speaking English at work are all

useful speaking activities to give students extra practice and help for their internships.

2.3 CURRICULUM

The implications of students' answers to survey questions for an English language curriculum is that students should be pushed as much as possible out of their comfort zone of memorizing and doing grammar exercises to speaking and using the new language in class and as homework. For this, it is not necessary to completely ignore grammar or not cover it, but is necessary to ensure USAGE of grammar in context in every lesson.

A curriculum providing students with a blend of grammar practice as well as speaking activities used in context can be developed through the use of a textbook, computer usage, group activities and dialogs as well as other methods.

2.4 CONCLUSIONS

While research in the area of teaching students to speak English at a vocational school continues, some conclusions may be drawn based on the above evidence. Integrating technology, speaking practice, grammar in context and students' experiences are all important and useful ways to be an effective English language teacher in a vocational school and can blend together to create a learning method that takes into account students' experiences and professional needs. Drawing on the origins of Cometa, the educational philosophy that drives the school (Giussani), as well as the students'

interviews, a new English language curriculum can be created in order to take into account the newest research blended with the specific vision and needs of the school.

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