

## Teaching Strategies on Global Language

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### Abstract

In this article, I will discuss some advantages and disadvantages of Teaching and learning are the two sides of a coin. The most accepted criterion for Measuring good teaching is the amount of student learning that occurs. There are consistently high correlations between students' ratings of the "amount learned" in the Course and their overall ratings of the teacher and the course.

Skills and knowledge are not separate, however, but intertwined. In some cases, knowledge helps us recognize the underlying structure of a problem. For example, even young children understand the logical implications of a rule like "If you finish your vegetables, you will get a cookie after dinner." They can draw the logical conclusion that a child who is denied a cookie after dinner must not have finished her vegetables. Without this familiar context, however, the same child will probably find it difficult to understand of which the cookie rule is an example. Thus, it's inaccurate to conceive of logical thinking as a separate skill that can be applied across a variety of situations. Sometimes we fail to recognize that we have a particular thinking unless it comes in the form of known content.

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At other times, we know that we have a particular thinking skill, but domain knowledge is necessary if we are to use it. For example, a student might have learned that "thinking scientifically" requires understanding the importance of anomalous results in an experiment. If you're surprised by the results of an experiment, that suggests that your hypothesis was wrong and the data are telling you something interesting. But to be surprised, you must make a prediction in the first place—and you can only generate a prediction if you understand the domain in which you are working. Thus, without content knowledge we often cannot use thinking skills properly and effectively.

Choosing the target area depends on many factors; What level are the students?, What is the average age of the students, Why are the students learning English, Are there any specific future intentions for the writing .Other important questions to ask oneself are: What should the students be able to produce at the end of this exercise?

Having decided on the target area, the teacher can focus on the means to achieve this type of learning. As in correction, the teacher must choose the most appropriate manner for the specified writing area. If formal business letter English is required, it is of little use to employ a free expression type of exercise. Likewise, when working on descriptive language writing skills, a formal letter is equally out of place.

With both the target area and means of production, clear in the teachers mind, the teacher can begin to consider how to involve the students by considering what type of activities are interesting to the students; Are they preparing for something specific such as a holiday or test?, Will they need any of the skills pragmatically? What has been effective in the past? A good way to approach this is by class feedback, or brainstorming sessions. By choosing a topic that involves the students the teacher is providing a context within which effective learning on the target area can be undertaken.

Finally, the question of which type of correction will facilitate a useful writing exercise is of utmost importance. Here the teacher needs to once again think about the overall target area of the exercise. If there is an immediate task at hand, such as taking a test, perhaps teacher guided correction is the most effective solution. However, if the task is more general (for example developing informal letter writing skills), maybe the best approach would be to have the students work in groups thereby learning from each other. Most importantly, by choosing the correct means of correction the teacher can encourage rather discourage students.

Critical thinking and problem solving, for example, have been components of human progress throughout history, from the development of early tools, to agricultural advancements, to the invention of vaccines, to land and sea exploration. Such skills as information literacy and global awareness are not new, at least not among the elites in different societies.

What's actually new is the extent to which changes in our economy and the world mean that collective and individual success depends on having such skills. Many U.S. students are taught these skills—those who are fortunate enough to attend highly effective schools or at least encounter great teachers—but it's a matter of chance rather than the deliberate design of our school system. Today we cannot afford a system in which receiving a high-quality education is akin to a game of bingo. If we are to have a more equitable and effective public education system, skills that have been the province of the few must become universal.

This distinction between "skills that are novel" and "skills that must be taught more intentionally and effectively" ought to lead policymakers to different education reforms than those they are now considering. If these skills were indeed new, then perhaps we would need a radical overhaul of how we think about content and curriculum. But if the issue is, instead, that schools must be more deliberate about teaching critical thinking, collaboration, and problem solving to all students, then the remedies are more obvious, although still intensely challenging. The history of U.S. education reform should greatly concern everyone who wants schools to do a better job of teaching students to think. Many reform efforts, from reducing class size to improving reading instruction, have devolved into fads or been implemented with weak fidelity to their core intent. The 21st century skills movement faces the same risk.

To complicate the challenge, some of the rhetoric we have heard surrounding this movement suggests that with so much new knowledge being created, content no longer matters; that ways of knowing information are now much more important than information itself. Such notions contradict what we know about teaching and learning and raise concerns that the 21st century skills movement will end up being a weak intervention for the very students—low-income students and students of color—who most need powerful schools as a matter of social equity.

The debate is not about content versus skills. There is no responsible constituency arguing against ensuring that students learn how to think in school. Rather, the issue is how to meet the challenges of delivering content and skills in a rich way that genuinely improves outcomes for students.

What will it take to ensure that the idea of "21st century skills"—or more precisely, the effort to ensure that all students, rather than just a privileged few, have access to a rich education that intentionally helps them learn these skills—is successful in improving schools? That effort requires three primary components. First, educators and policymakers must ensure that the instructional program is complete and that content is not shortchanged for an ephemeral pursuit of skills. Second, states, school districts, and schools need to revamp how they think about human capital in education—in particular how teachers are trained. Finally, we need new assessments that can accurately measure richer learning and more complex tasks.

For the 21st century skills effort to be effective, these three elements must be implemented in concert. Otherwise, the reform will be superficial and counter-productive.

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