

ACADEMIC JOURNAL



ISSUE III

LEARNER-CENTRED AND
PERSONALISED INSTRUCTION

2026



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Quality English Ltd.

Howbery Park
Wallingford
Oxfordshire
United Kingdom
OX10 8BA

www.qualityenglish.com
info@quality-english.com
linktr.ee/qualityenglishqualityeducation



Welcome to our Academic Journal



“As classrooms become increasingly diverse, the importance of flexible, responsive teaching practices continues to grow.”

This journal remains more than a publication; it is a platform for dialogue, innovation, and connection across the Quality English network and beyond.

We are proud to present the third edition of the QE Academic Journal, continuing our shared commitment to advancing knowledge and collaboration within the global EFL community.

Building on the momentum of our previous editions, this issue explores the theme of learner-centred and personalised instruction - an approach that places learners' individual needs, goals, and experiences at the heart of the educational process. As classrooms become increasingly diverse, the importance of flexible, responsive teaching practices continues to grow.

This journal remains more than a publication; it is a platform for dialogue, innovation, and connection across the Quality English network and beyond. We extend our sincere thanks to the authors, reviewers, and contributors whose expertise and dedication have made this edition possible.

Thank you for being part of this journey. With your continued engagement, we look forward to further strengthening a dynamic and inclusive academic community.

Jonathan Swindell
Chief Executive

Words from our Editor

Welcome to the third iteration of the Quality English Academic Journal. This year's edition is dedicated to learner-centredness and personalised instruction across Quality English schools. These thoughtful contributions reaffirm, particularly in an educational landscape increasingly shaped by artificial intelligence, the central role of human agency and the importance of relationship-building in language learning. Grounded in extensive classroom experience, they collectively advocate for responsive, principled pedagogy.

Across these eight articles, learner-centredness emerges not as a single methodology but as a coherent ecosystem of practices that place human agency and relationships at the core of educational quality. This helps explain why Quality English schools remain compelling learning environments in a rapidly evolving context.

The collection moves from philosophical grounding to applied pedagogy. Mark Greenow establishes learning as internally driven and inherently relational. This perspective is operationalised in different ways: Dr Rebecca Hooker emphasises diagnostic attentiveness to learners' individual purposes (ICE); Jayne Bowra highlights the role of emotional scaffolding and identity safety (SEL); and Dr Rachel Fionda explores inclusive curriculum design through Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Together, these contributions reject "one-size-fits-all" models in favour of structured responsiveness—approaches that are flexible yet firmly principled.

A key point of convergence is that personalisation is not synonymous with isolated individualisation. Instead, agency is shown to be socially constructed. Susanna Wright explores this in continuous-enrolment contexts through peer interaction; Gary Sangster highlights the role of mediated dialogue in corrective feedback; and Susanna McCue demonstrates the importance of negotiated participation when learners resist learner-centred approaches. Relationships, therefore, are not peripheral but constitutive of learning itself. Quality English schools succeed because they cultivate learning communities rather than delivery systems—environments where learners are known, heard, and actively engaged.

Another unifying theme is the redefinition of the teacher's role. Learner-centred approaches do not diminish teacher expertise; they redistribute it. Teachers act as diagnosticians, designers, coaches, and facilitators of decision-making. Whether through scaffolding feedback, embedding reflection, or guiding learners through uncertainty, their role becomes more cognitively and relationally demanding. This reinforces the idea that high-quality provision depends on professional judgement and adaptive expertise—qualities that cannot be standardised or automated.

Importantly, the collection also addresses tensions and constraints. Contributions on corrective feedback and learner resistance highlight the need for learner-centred approaches to be carefully staged and context-sensitive. Meanwhile, UDL and continuous-enrolment models demonstrate how personalisation can be achieved at scale without losing coherence. This balance between idealism and pragmatism is central to defining quality: it is not the abandonment of structure, but its intelligent design.

Several articles, such as the article by Jennifer Holden & Gary Silcock extend learner-centredness beyond immediate language outcomes to broader developmental goals, including resilience, identity formation, decision-making, and critical thinking. In doing so, they position learners not simply as language users, but as agents navigating complex social and cognitive worlds. Quality English schools, therefore, are framed not merely as providers of language instruction, but as environments that support holistic, transferable growth.

Ultimately, what makes this approach—and these schools—worth learning in, is their ability to synthesise personalisation with community, structure with flexibility, and pedagogy with human development. The result is an educational experience that is not only effective, but meaningful: one in which learners actively shape both their learning and themselves.

I hope you enjoy reading these articles as much as I have.



IAN BRANGAN

Transformational Learning in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

MARK GREENOW

1. All involved in the learning experience: teachers, students, classmates, parents et al are unique, and will bring to the table distinct levels of preparation, ability, motivation, ambition, and enthusiasm.
 2. Learning is a process not a product. However, because this process takes place in the mind, we can only infer that it has occurred from students' work or performance.
 3. "Ultimately what is learned is controlled by the learner and not the teachers, not the textbooks and not the syllabus." Ellis.
 4. "Learning is not something done to students, but rather something students themselves do. It is the direct result of how students interpret and respond to their experiences – conscious and unconscious, past, and present." Ambrose.
 5. Learning involves change in knowledge, beliefs, behaviours, or attitudes. This change unfolds over time; it is not fleeting but rather has a lasting impact on how students think and act.
- Students need to develop learning skills, take responsibility for their mistakes, and tick their own boxes.
 - Students may learn as a byproduct of doing other blended activities.
 - Students need time and the mental space to reflect on the process of learning and to sort out the story of who they are.
 - Teachers need to be trained, trusted and empowered to facilitate a harmonious learning atmosphere that encourages natural learning.
 - The best teachers are perpetual learners.

While innovation is inevitable, the current pace of technological change has been faster than at any time in human history, yet scarily, as Justin Trudeau said, "it will never be this slow again." While providing new tools and opportunities for students and educators the challenges are considerable.

These ideas have underpinned my career along with the early realisation that we do not know how students learn a language or agree on the best method to teach English. My attempts to offer learner centred, holistic frameworks for students and teachers to work together have sometimes run contrary to syllabus structure, stakeholder expectations, professional pride, progress measurement, and inspection criteria. It seems though that we are now at an inflection point and going forward it will be the only way to teach.

Students now have all the information in the world at their fingertips, but how can they discern what is real, what is fake news, mis or dis information? The Greek philosophers of the past could not have imagined a world where all questions now seemingly have answers. "Verifying the information we encounter, testing it and evaluating it. This is the skill we must teach the next generation of citizens of the world, the capability to think clearly, completely, critically, and creatively." Levitin.

Dark clouds are still hanging over our post Covid world, and it is easy to slide into pessimism in an increasingly polarised climate when our phones are full of horrors every day and the unstoppable rise of AI means we are now hurtling into the unknown. The best institutions, like QE schools, will adapt, and the move to more learner centred study has already been considered. Here are fundamentals to consider as we go further into this process.

Governments around the world are grappling with what to do about things like deep fakes, data harvesting, and online bullying. Australia, in December 2025, became the first country in the world to ban social media for children under sixteen and other countries will surely follow. This will affect schools' ever changing and varying mobile phone policies.

- Information is best absorbed in pursuit of a goal and over time can become knowledge and eventually wisdom.
- Student individual needs must be recognised and prioritised.
- Learning happens best when curiosity is sparked both inside and outside the classroom.
- The environment and peers are essential. The best thing any institution can give a student is friends that help them respect and learn from different viewpoints.
- Collaboration is to be encouraged by focussing on the how rather than the what.

Social media platforms have undoubtedly transformed society. "As the transition from play-based to phone-based childhood proceeded, many children and adolescents were perfectly happy to stay indoors and play online, but in the process they lost exposure to the kinds of challenging physical and social experiences that all young mammals need, to develop basic competencies, overcome innate childhood fears, and prepare to rely less on their parents. Virtual interactions with peers do not fully compensate for these experiential losses." Haidt.

The educational benefits of Assistive AI have been clear for a while, but Generative AI is the possible Pandora's Box that has people, from actors to teachers, worried about their jobs. I discussed this with the Executive Director of the Good Future Foundation, Daniel Emmerson, who is currently collaborating with schools to help them deal with the responsible deployment of AI. To quote him "Generative AI is already changing the way that learners learn, from differentiating content and adapting its medium, to offering unrestricted access to high quality tuition at scale. But access alone does not constitute education. What learners need, moving forwards, is a rigorous focus on the process of knowledge acquisition and its central role in amplifying critical thinking." The current feeling is that schools should not be forcing teachers to use AI, but educators need to understand how it works to best support their students. Things are changing fast, weekly even, and Daniel's feeling is that upskilling will become necessary, but AI will not replace teachers instead it will help them engage more fully with learners in a modern learning process.

What is clear is that the course/clock/content teaching model is over for good and there is no longer room or need for the sage on the stage. Teachers must instead become responsive enablers that allow students to follow their dreams and find their flow. If managed correctly, this could lead to a life-long passion for the subject and/or more importantly learning. I agree with Haidt though, while it is important for the teacher to be authentic "it is sinful to force young people into opinions and equally sinful not to force them into experiences."

The flexible, blended, and layered programmes offered at British Summer School, are designed to engineer spaces and experiences where all can grow and learn naturally through adventure, by exploring, by creating, by following a passion and much more. Overarching everything we do is a True Me programme where students are encouraged to evaluate their performances and think critically about who they are and who they want to become. We realise every journey will be different and as Steve Jobs said, "the journey is the reward itself."

The ancient Greeks had a perfect word for where we are now, "Kairos" meaning a unique moment in time. We must all be careful to keep the joy of life and learning strong. As Paul-Choudhury points out in his book *The Bright Side* (2025) we must remain optimistic in the face of the unknown future. As the years go by students will not remember what they were taught but they will remember how they were made to feel. Going forward students and their responsive enablers will have unprecedented chances to learn and flourish together. What an amazing time to be alive.

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Mark Greenow, after a lengthy career in EFL as a teacher, trainer, writer, examiner, academic and school manager, is currently working as a consultant with British Summer School. His two main academic interests are the process syllabus and vocabulary acquisition. He is excited to see where AI will lead us.

mark@britishsummerschool.co.uk



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Optimising the Language Learning Experience for Adults: Incorporating Older Learners' Interests, Concerns, and Expectations (ICE) in the Language Classroom

DR REBECCA HOOKER

"You're the teacher, you decide!" This was the attitude when I first started teaching French, Italian and German in adult and community education some twenty years ago. These learners came to their precious, weekly evening class with widely differing motivation but were often not confident enough to articulate exactly what they wanted to achieve by being there. Mostly they just wanted me to deliver a reliable course book, and grammar explanations suited to *all* of the diverse individuals in their small group, one size fits all, just as they had been used to at school. However, I discovered early on that, when I took the time to really explore why they left their homes on a cold, winter evening, for the relative discomfort of 'night school', they clearly wanted far more than just grammar lessons or skills to be performed. Their reasons for coming to class went far beyond the commonplace rationale for learning a language such as employability or having better prospects, more common amongst younger adults or teens. However, my contention has always been that to fully engage any students, and to build their confidence, it is vital that teachers not only deliver the curriculum content but also make the effort to find out about learners' *ideas and worries and expectations (ICE)*.

With more research exploring my learners' rather vague stated motivation of *'improving their speaking'* or *'learning grammar'*, I discovered some esoteric motives for learning another language at evening classes. These included: learning to pronounce Italian painters' names correctly; talking to the harbourmaster in France when navigating a ship; or even doing something intellectually stimulating following a stroke, such as learning Italian for a 'grand Italian tour'.

This compulsion to find out about this apparent paradox, i.e. the advantages for older adults of subjecting themselves to the challenges of learning a foreign language, totally voluntarily and seemingly against all odds of success, led me to my own 'later-life learning', namely doctoral study in TESOL education. My research focused on identifying the multiple benefits of learning another language, over the age of fifty and beyond compulsory education. My findings suggest important personal benefits for older language learners including: boosting the brain; minimising risk in communication; negotiating new identities; relating to other human beings; enhancing self-esteem and the sheer pleasure of exploring other cultures (Hooker, 2012).

These are in addition to mastering basic language transactions, such as ordering food and drink or giving a business presentation, etc.

Through my own teaching and research interviews with 19 native English speakers, all learning a second language, I began to appreciate more about adults' individual motivation and reactions to learning another language. Maeve Binchy's fictional account of a mixed group of adult Italian learners at 'evening classes' in Ireland also influenced me. She captures some of the essence of the adult 'leisure language learning' experience. For example, she writes about 'Barry', who, when questioned about his need to learn Italian, replies prosaically, *"It has to do with the World Cup....I met a lot of nice Italian people, and I felt as thick as a plank not being able to speak their language"* (1997:395)

Larsen-Freeman's account (2001) of the '*social reality*' of second language acquisition (SLA) particularly resonates with me. Her view goes beyond the norms of 'mainstream' SLA research, which tend to concentrate on the traditional developmental and sequential processes of SLA applicable to everyone (e. g. Universal Grammar), to focus on the individual learners themselves. Larsen-Freeman (2001, p.12-24) acknowledges that, i) *learner attributes* (age, aptitude, personality, learning disabilities and social identities; ii) *learner conceptualizations* (motivation, attitude, cognitive style, and beliefs) and iii) *learner actions* such as learning strategies, are important cognitive and affective contributions made by individual students to the learning processes and outcomes.

However, the challenge lies with identifying these learner differences and applying them to practice by incorporating them into the teaching of a set programme, possibly one with more rigid institutional or curriculum constraints. Where there is an accredited programme, it can sometimes be easier to just follow the coursebook or stick solely to the syllabus 'script' and minimise individual learner contributions.

Nevertheless, even when faced with a more prescriptive curriculum, addressing both students' linguistic and personal

needs has always been a top teaching priority for me, whatever the context: schools, hospitals, universities, the workplace or in the community.

Teaching everyday communication to international doctors and nurses in UK healthcare settings in 2012 persuaded me of the validity of a sound learner-centred approach. There are arguably strong parallels between teaching and medicine, with both being applied sciences. The popularised concept of *ICE* in medical consultations (Tate, 2010) requires determining a patient's *Ideas/Interests* (e.g. I have a pain in my leg); *Concerns* (e.g. Is it a blood clot?) and *Expectations* (e.g. Can you give me some medicine?). As with patient-doctor interactions, a mismatch between a learner's-teacher's *ideas/interests* (e.g. I want to improve my speaking when travelling); *concerns* (e.g. I worry about saying incorrect sentences) and *expectations* (e.g. I want to feel more confident) can lead to unsatisfactory decisions about learning or clinical pathways. This 'person-diagnostic' approach can naturally complement any initial 'linguistic diagnosis', e.g. the standard level or placement tests conducted by language schools or institutions. Schools also need to afford the teachers the freedom (or train them) to plan programmes incorporating both.

In my current role at International House, Torquay, I normally teach immersive English in small, non-accredited classes, often retirees and business leaders, aged 30-80, four hours a day and for 1-2 weeks. Given that pre-course student 'needs analysis' information can be sketchy, the first session always covers fact-finding about each student's ICE along with basic information about English, applicable to everyone. This involves either me, or the students interviewing each other, or students completing a form independently. It results in the students having a good working knowledge of each other's ICE, shaping the class dynamic and informing the course design to reflect all students' needs and expectations. It would be convenient to just follow the Common European Framework (CEFR) level-appropriate coursebook, with its handy indicators and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), but I strongly believe that only when armed with this textured and rich learner information, do I feel ready to choose the best teaching resources to plan the course.

The net result is that this approach pays dividends both in terms of learners' achievement and the quality of their lived experience of learning English. A French business student recently wrote in his final feedback, that the teacher "had adapted the course to my needs. I really enjoyed this week".

Furthermore, at the end of the course, he also felt confident enough to try for a higher CEFR level for his formal assessment test.

Delivering a 'tactful, action sensitive pedagogy' (van Manen, 1997) to carefully consider learners' past and imagined lived experience of learning another language, requires striking a fine balance. Planning a teaching programme, especially for settings with adults from diverse backgrounds and ages, means balancing course content, pre-determined by students' initial proficiency levels, together with the meaningful resources and methodology to reflect individual student ICE.

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Dr Rebecca Hooker is an independent researcher & language teacher with a particular interest in the multiple benefits of later-life 'leisure' language learning. Having taught a wide range of students, aged 5-85, in a variety of academic & professional settings, she is currently teaching older adults at International House, Torquay.

rebeccahooker.uk@gmail.com

Beyond Differentiation: Building Confidence and Resilience through Personalised Instruction

JAYNE BOWRA

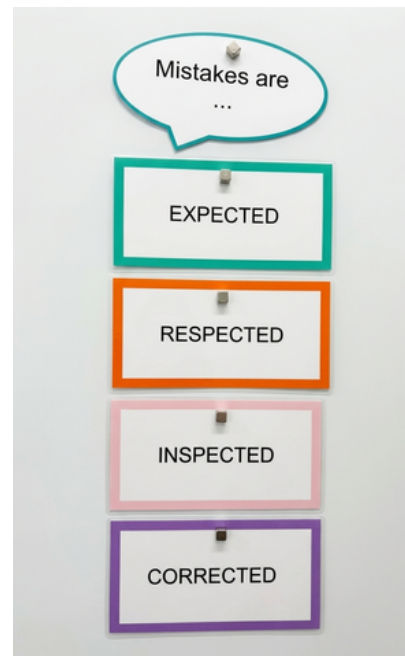
In the modern EFL classroom, the definition of personalised instruction is evolving. Traditionally, personalised instruction has been viewed through the lens of differentiation, whether that is adjusting the level of a reading text or scaffolding a grammar task to meet a learner's needs. This strand still stands strong today and is promoted more than ever thanks to the advent of AI and its associated wizardry.

This article argues that while traditional differentiation remains valuable, the key to fostering resilient, confident language learners lies in embedding Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) into personalised instruction. As we navigate our way into the second half of the 21st century, at Languages United we believe that a more holistic approach is required to address the needs of the individual learner. If differentiation addresses the cognitive gap, SEL addresses the emotional bridge required to cross it and while AI can automate linguistic differentiation, it cannot provide the social-emotional scaffolding required for a student to feel safe taking risks.

The vulnerability of the language learner

Language learning is, by its very nature, a high-stakes emotional activity. As Dörnyei (2005) notes, a learner's self-concept and emotional state are inextricably linked to their willingness to communicate. It is not uncommon for a student to feel that they leave their 'expert' self at the door of the classroom and operate in a space where they may feel linguistically impoverished. This can lead to high levels of anxiety and potentially a classroom culture where the fear of making a mistake outweighs the desire to communicate. To address these emotional challenges, teachers can adopt a coaching mindset, positioning students as active agents in their learning.

Personalised instruction should therefore not just be about the what (content) but the how (the emotional environment). By embedding SEL into our pedagogy, we begin to create a mistake-friendly culture. In our own school classrooms, we explicitly state that the classroom is a place of psychological safety where mistakes are expected, respected, inspected and corrected. This culture serves as a protective factor, building the resilience that the learner needs to bounce back from the inevitable frustrations of learning a language.



To go one step further, we also want to promote confidence. There's a wonderful affirmation that regularly pops up in social media feeds and it's a sentiment that we encourage our students to make their own.

"My foreign accent doesn't mean I'm less knowledgeable, less educated, or less intelligent. It simply means I mustered the courage and effort to learn another language."

This quote is part of our learner identity-safe classroom space that acknowledges the courage of learning a language protects the learner's 'expert' identity.

The coaching mindset

To build true resilience in the learner, the teacher may need to reflect on their own role as a coach within their teacher beliefs. The recent Potential Outcomes Impact Report: Towards a Learner-Centred Future by Education Reimagined (2024) highlights that learner-centred environments are most effective when they foster agency and identity. For a language learner, this means moving away from being a passive recipient of grammar rules and becoming the captain of their own linguistic ship.

By adopting a coaching approach, the teacher can help students move away from the idea that a mistake is a failure. Instead, mistakes are learning data. This can help students build the confidence to navigate ambiguity and we as teachers don't just teach them English, we coach them in the self-efficacy required to use that English in a messy, unpredictable but ultimately authentic way. A coaching approach naturally lends itself to developing strategies that embrace mistakes as opportunities.

Modelling resilience through process praise is an easy way for the teacher to deliver personalised instruction. Instead of a generic "Well done!" the teacher can focus the coaching feedback on the effort and the strategy: "I noticed how you got stuck on that word, but you paused, took a moment to think and used a different strategy to explain it. That is powerful self-management." This shift in focus empowers the student - when learners see themselves as capable of overcoming challenges their academic persistence and confidence soars.

Belonging as a protective factor

At the heart of resilience is belonging. When instruction is socially embedded, students are recognized not just as learners, but as active social agents. This shift is most visible through linguistic mediation, a core communicative capability highlighted in the CEFR Companion Volume (2020). When we celebrate a student for helping a peer understand a task, using rephrasing, simplification or supportive strategies, we validate their social contribution. In this way, a 'people skill' is transformed into a measurable academic outcome, proving that the student can navigate complex social and linguistic terrain. Ultimately, a student who feels they belong is a student who is willing to take risks; they know that if they stumble, the safety net of a supportive classroom community is there to catch them.

Conclusion

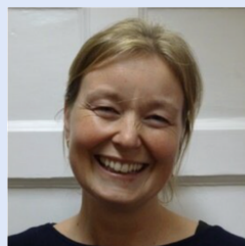
SEL is not a soft extra; it is the foundation upon which academic success is built. By intentionally coaching resilience and agency, we provide our students with more than just a certificate. We provide them with the protective factors they need to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. The goal of personalised instruction is not to remove the struggle of language learning, but to provide the social-emotional toolkit to navigate it. In the modern EFL classroom, personalised instruction extends beyond differentiation. By embedding SEL principles, we equip learners with the confidence, resilience and agency to navigate linguistic challenges and life beyond the classroom.

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Jayne Bowra, Director of Studies at Languages United, has over 12 years' teaching experience and a DipTESOL. She believes the key to effective teaching lies in seeing each student as a unique learner, tailoring her approach to nurture their potential and inspire curiosity in every lesson.

jayne@languagesunited.co.uk



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Universal Design for Learning in ELT: Moving from Accommodation to Inclusive, Learner-Centred Design

DR RACHAEL FIONDA

As understandings of learner variability develop, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) offers an evidence-informed framework for inclusive, learner-centred design in ELT. Educational equity is a core value of learner-centred instruction, and pedagogical research and wider social narratives have moved beyond a focus on a 'typical' learner towards broader understandings of learner variability. Awareness of learner variability, informed by learning theory and the increased visibility of neurodiversity in educational practice, has prompted attention to forms of support built into design rather than dependent on accommodation models. By emphasising flexibility, access and shared goals, UDL opens new ways of thinking about lesson and programme design in ELT. This article explores how UDL-informed approaches support inclusive, learner-centred practice in ELT, and considers the implications of this shift for teachers and institutions working in diverse contexts.

Grounded in pedagogical best practice, UDL recognises that learners differ in how they engage, how they perceive and process information, and how they are able to act on and demonstrate understanding. UDL is structured around three interconnected principles: engagement, which addresses the *why* of learning; representation, which focuses on the *what* of learning; and action and expression, which concern the *how* of learning. Together, these principles foreground learning design features that are accessible to all learners and provide a clear rationale for flexible, learner-centred approaches in ELT contexts.

In many teaching contexts, accommodation models can require analyses of learners that are unlikely to be feasible (Meyer & Rose, 2025, 4), as well as reinforcing individual differences as atypical (ibid.). Research into human cognition and learning processes reminds us that learners differ in the knowledge and experiences they bring to learning, and that they rely heavily on top-down processing, drawing on prior knowledge and existing schemas to make sense of new information (Weinstein & Sumeracki, 2019, 45). Research into attention and cognitive load tells us that common features we think help with student engagement and keeping the classroom 'lively' can reduce learning as our brains work best when not multi-tasking or switching quickly from one task to the next (ibid.). There is also strong evidence that attention is determined by subject matter

which interests learners (Weinstein & Sumeracki, 2019, 55). Taken together, this evidence suggests that effective teaching depends more on the intentional design of learning environments that align with how learners attend to, process and engage with new information.

Learner variability is a defining feature of contemporary adult ELT classrooms, with important implications for how learner-centred instruction is planned and delivered. Learners have different linguistic backgrounds, educational experiences and life stages. In many language schools, this diversity is further shaped by rolling enrolment and mixed proficiency profiles, creating classrooms that are changing continuously. In the context of a contemporary classroom, learner variability requires a model of planning, support and delivery which supports equitable access from the outset without relying on disclosure. Recent research from CAST (Meyer & Rose, 2025) reminds us that learner needs are often invisible, that disclosure places the burden on the learner and that not all learners can disclose, want to disclose or have been able to access a diagnosis to be able to disclose. The barriers are many, and within adult ELT contexts an accommodation model which singles a learner out risks reinforcing stigma, placing responsibility on the learner, and limiting access to support for those who are unwilling or unable to disclose (Meyer & Rose, 2025). This context highlights a clear rationale for embedding inclusive practice.

In practice, UDL in the ELT classroom prioritises access by embedding support into lesson and programme design. At lesson planning level, this is particularly evident in approaches aligned with the principle of representation, which focuses on how learners access and make sense of new information. One effective starting point is schema activation; by explicitly connecting new content to learners' existing knowledge and experiences, schema activation supports comprehension, engagement and retention (Meyer & Rose, 2025). In practical terms, this may involve clearly stating lesson outcomes, unpacking task requirements step by step, revisiting key vocabulary or concepts before new input, and designing short activities that prompt learners to predict or reflect on content.

These design choices also support the principle of engagement by helping learners manage attention and cognitive load. Active breaks can be incorporated in the lesson whereby students can review previous work, ask questions or simply rest. Clear goals, explicit task demands and carefully managed transitions reduce unnecessary processing demands, while selective presentation of information, for example, focusing learners' attention on a single relevant task rather than an entire coursebook page, supports sustained focus (Meyer & Rose, 2025). This can also assist students with dyslexia and/or visual stress (the latter condition can co-occur with dyslexia and can produce quite severe symptoms of visual disturbances (Stein & Kapoula, 2012)).

Engagement is further strengthened when learners can connect content to their own interests and goals. This co-construction of subject matter and knowledge with the teacher reflects evidence from learning science that memory is reconstructive, with learners actively building new understanding by integrating new language with existing knowledge, experiences and goals (Weinstein & Sumeracki, 2019, 63-70). Such flexibility also supports motivation and learner agency, reflecting the UDL emphasis on shared goals with multiple pathways (Meyer & Rose, 2025).

Action and expression recognise that learners may reach and demonstrate understanding in different ways. In adult ELT classrooms, reliance on a single, whole-class mode of response can therefore be unnecessarily restrictive. Inclusive lesson planning instead involves offering clearly articulated options for how learners can show learning and produce output, while maintaining shared language learning outcomes. The use of visuals not only represents multimodal presentation but also reduces cognitive load by offering learners a way to connect meaning without having to immediately produce the L2 lexis. Structured reflection can support metacognitive strategies by providing scaffolded language that encourages review and reduces cognitive load.

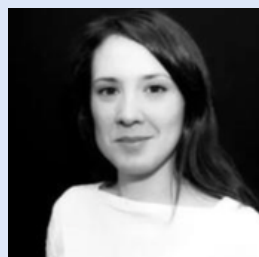
Adult ELT classrooms continue to reflect learner variability and so approaches that rely primarily on individual accommodation are likely to remain limited in both reach and sustainability. Inclusive, learner-centred design, informed by learning science and put into action through the Universal Design for Learning framework, opens up learning to all of our learners. By embedding access, engagement and flexibility into lesson and programme design from the outset, UDL allows personalisation to emerge through shared structures rather than individual adjustment. In doing so, it reframes inclusive practices as an expression of effective pedagogy that supports learning for all learners in diverse ELT contexts.

Five ways to start:

1. **Make the purpose of learning visible.** Be explicit about what learners are doing and why.
2. **Present key ideas in more than one way.** A short explanation, a visual, or a simple example can make the same content accessible to more learners.
3. **Reduce unnecessary task switching.** Stay with one meaningful task for longer, rather than moving quickly between activities.
4. **Build in structured choice.** Offer small choices in how learners approach or present their work.
5. **Design with dignity in mind.** Plan learning that works for a wide range of learners from the outset, rather than adding separate support later.

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Dr Rachael Fionda is a teacher trainer with over twenty years' experience in ELT. She has worked in Germany, Italy, Austria and Ireland as a teacher, lecturer and academic leader. She holds an MPhil from the University of Innsbruck and a PhD in Applied Linguistics from Trinity College Dublin, and is Training and Development Coordinator at Emerald Cultural Institute, Dublin.

rachael@emeraldlearn.com

Navigating Oral Corrective Feedback: Balancing Accuracy, Fluency, and Learner Engagement

GARY SANGSTER

Over the past decade of working in academic management, I have undertaken many lesson observations of teachers. In general, I find that most teachers are dedicated to delivering challenging, dynamic, and motivating lessons and implementing a wide range of pedagogical techniques with effectiveness and efficacy. However, one trend that I have observed amongst the most experienced practitioners is that learners are offered limited amounts of explicit corrective feedback to their spoken output. It is not uncommon for teachers to choose not to attend to learners' non-target spoken utterances. Often this is reiterated by both formal and informal student feedback in which learners tend to want more of their non-target utterances to be corrected. Teachers opting not to correct is concerning because research in second language learning largely indicates that OCF is desired by learners and supportive of second language learning and acquisition (SLAL) (Dao and Nguyen, 2022). What is more, the most frequently used corrective feedback technique is often recasting. Recasting is a commonly used OCF technique wherein a teacher reformulates a learners' non-target utterance into the target form, for example:

Learner: 'Yesterday, I have watched Manchester City.'

Teacher: 'Yesterday, I watched Manchester City.'

As Ranta and Lyster (2007) posit the issue with recasts is that being both implicit and input-providing, they do not compel learners to produce target forms and often remain unrecognized by learners as a form of correction. Likely, it is for these reasons that studies often find recasting as one of the least effective OCF techniques in SLAL (Rassaei, 2014).

During observational feedback meetings, teachers' rationale for either not correcting or relying on recasts is often that explicit correction interferes with students' fluency practice and development; can eat up valuable class time as well as potentially cause learner affect leading to their disengagement. These rationalisations indicate the complexity of issues facing teachers in their decision-making processes regarding their instrumentation of OCF. These key issues encompass, but are by no means limited to, learners' need to develop fluency and practise communication without interruption, as well as the degree to which correction is desired by learners within specific classroom interactions. Furthermore, teachers' decision-making processes within these instances are framed by their own emerging and evolving belief systems at the point wherein specific interactions occur. Given the benefits of correction and learners desire for it, the issue to be addressed is how to shape teachers'

belief systems in such a way that they feel confident in administering OCF that promotes learner centeredness, student ownership and not divert classes from pre-planned learning outcomes.

Ultimately, the approach fostered to address this issue has been to encourage the integration of OCF based activities into lesson planning. These activities have taken a scaffolded approach to offering correction as it was believed this would help support a learner-centered communicative ethos. Basically, scaffolding forms a fundamental part of socio-cultural perspective of SLAL, in which the role of interactions and problem solving are emphasized. Within these interactions, scaffolding entails the teacher offering no more support than is necessary to learners which means they are then able to navigate the gap between their current language abilities and potential. Therefore, scaffolded corrective feedback means providing the minimal amount of support to learners for them to be able to independently self-correct. Fortunately, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) outlines a regulatory scale of scaffolded OCF moves. This scale outlines a continuum from highly implicit feedback to over explicit correction (Fig 1). Ideally, teachers use the continuum to identify the minimal potential support required by individual learners before moving down the scale until learners can self-correct.

Fig 1

Table 5.7 Regulatory scale – implicit to explicit (Aljaafreh and Lantolf, 1994: 471)

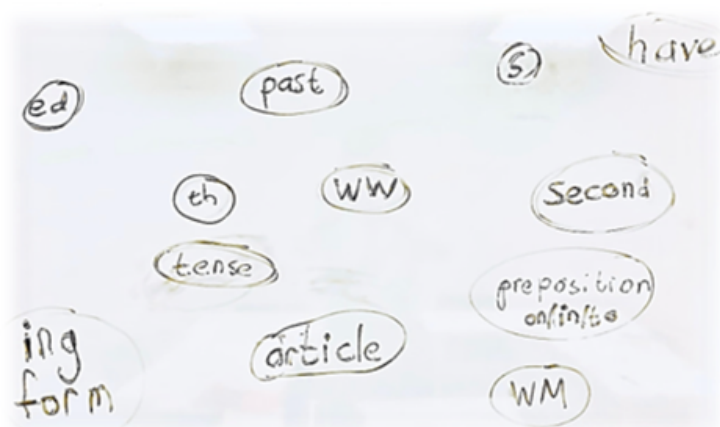
- 0 Tutor asks the learner to read, find the errors, and correct them independently, prior to the tutorial.
1. Construction of a 'collaborative frame' prompted by the presence of the tutor as a potential dialogic partner.
2. Prompted or focused reading of the sentence that contains the error by the learner or the tutor.
3. Tutor indicates that something may be wrong in a segment (for example, sentence, clause, line) – 'Is there anything wrong in this sentence?'
4. Tutor rejects unsuccessful attempts at recognizing the error.
5. Tutor narrows down the location of the error (for example, tutor repeats or points to the specific segment which contains the error).
6. Tutor indicates the nature of the error, but does not identify the error (for example, 'There is something wrong with the tense marking here').
7. Tutor identifies the error ('You can't use an auxiliary here').
8. Tutor rejects learner's unsuccessful attempts at correcting error.
9. Tutor provides clues to help the learner arrive at the correct form (for example, 'It is not really past but some thing that is still going on').
10. Tutor provides the correct form.
11. Tutor provides some explanation for use of the correct form.
12. Tutor provides examples of the correct pattern when other forms of help fail to produce an appropriate responsive action.

The practical implementation of this entails providing practitioners with several activities that adopt the regulatory scale through offering learner centered correction. Two of these activities are posited below.

Activity 1: Speaking Correction Code

A common feature across ELT is for practitioners to offer feedback to students' written output employing a correction code. This is where the non-target aspects of the writing are marked with a code such as 'WO' for word order or 'WW' for a word choice issue, the idea being that students can use the code to self-correct their own work. I reformulated this into a means of offering spoken correction to learners. For instance, this can be implemented in the final part of a 'think, pair, share' activity during which students are sharing their discussion outcomes with the whole group. Whenever a student makes a non-target utterance of a certain type for the first time, this is marked on the whiteboard with an appropriate code. For example, if a learner says, 'she disagree with me', an 'S' is written on the board to represent the missing third person 's' on the end of 'disagree'. At any point when the same issue arises with a learner output the teacher indicates the appropriate symbol on the board, to prompt self-correction.

Fig 2



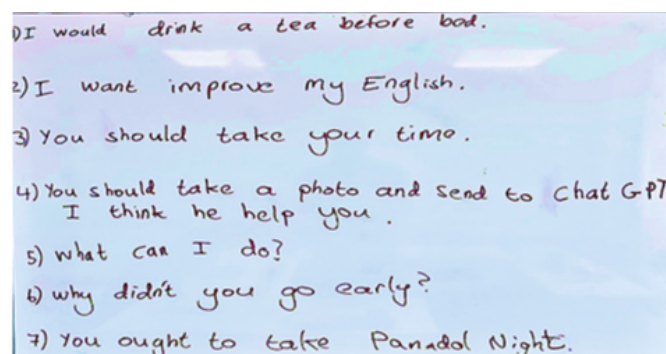
In my experience, whilst this technique can initially provoke a little confusion amongst learners, when implemented with patience and persistence it is highly effective in terms of prompting students' to self-correct with minimal interruption in terms of fluency practice. This is further supported by the fact that it is not uncommon during these interactions that students begin to self-correct without any recourse to prompting from the teacher.

Activity 2: Scaffolded Post-Delayed Correction

When it is post-delayed, correction is provided to learners either once the speaking practice activity is finished, later in the class or in a subsequent lesson. Scaffolded post-delayed correction entails the teacher making a record of student target and non-target output whilst monitoring a speaking activity. For the scaffolded post-delayed activity, these utterances are displayed to the learners. Learners are then set a series of scaffolded mini tasks to support their target form use, which they can undertake in pairs or groups. One sequence for doing this is:

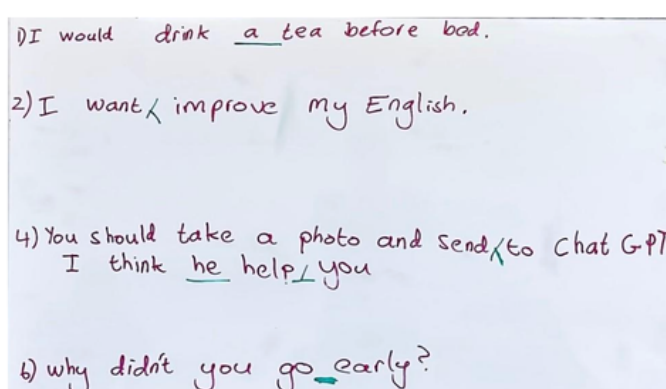
1) Identify which of the utterances are target and non-target, see Fig 3.

Fig 3



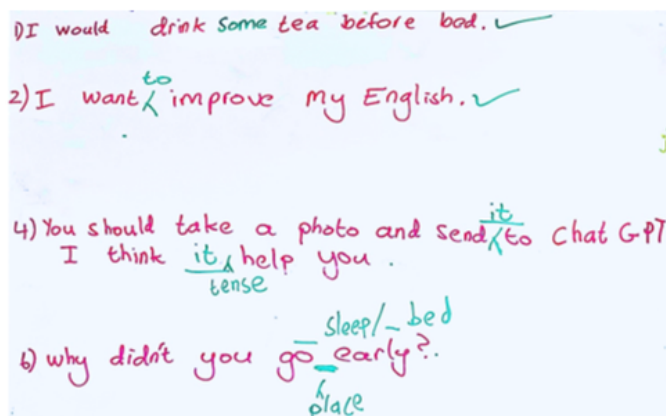
2) Teacher removes the correct utterances and marks those that remain with clues indicating what needs to be changed, see Fig 4.

Fig 4



3) The utterances that remain can be marked with further clues as to what correction is needed - see sentences 4 and 6 in Fig 5.

Fig 5



Finally, if necessary, the teacher provides the correct form for the remaining uncorrected utterances.

This activity provides a learner-centred means of attending to learners' non-target output. It is not only supportive of student talk time with learners working in groups, but they are encouraged to implement the correction as autonomously as possible with the teacher mediating them towards target form knowledge and production.

Conclusion

In conclusion, amongst teaching teams I have managed, following the increase of such strategies, it has been noticeable that substantial increases in the amount of OCF are offered to students. Whilst at the same time, according to teachers, this leads to students making more rapid progress in their spoken language accuracy without their fluency practice being impeded.

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Gary has worked in ELT for 20 years. He completed the DELTA qualification in 2014, shortly before rising to the heady heights of academic management. He achieved his Masters in 2022, with a dissertation focusing on corrective feedback. Gary has been the DOS of Essential English Centre since October 2023.

gary@essentialenglishcentre.co.uk



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When Our Learners Don't Want Learner-Centred Teaching

SIENA MCCUE

Why Some Adult Learners Resist Learner-Centred Methods

Learner-centred teaching is frequently promoted in English language teaching (ELT) as an unquestioned pedagogical ideal (Canagarajah, 1999). Yet we know that around the world, “traditional” approaches are heavily equated with academic and social success; teaching is expected to involve explicit explanation, clear authority, and a structured transmission of knowledge. I have taught proficient English language learners who primarily learnt through teacher-centred approaches: diligent study of grammar and practice combined with drills and rote memorisation, often with a strong focus on accuracy over communication. When learners, accustomed to these sorts of approaches, enter classrooms that prioritise discussion, collaboration, and discovery-based activities, these practices may feel uncomfortable and at odds with the educational norms and ideologies through which they have come to understand what it means to learn; therefore, teaching methods cannot be understood as culturally neutral (Hird, 2023). Approaches widely promoted within global ELT often reflect specific assumptions about how learning should take place, and regardless of effectiveness, this inevitably creates a mismatch of expectations that teachers in language schools (most of which have learner-centred methodology, advocated for in the curriculum) find difficult to manage. It is a paradox in practice: activities designed to place learners at the centre of the learning process may be met with resistance, despite evidence that this is associated with more meaningful acquisition of language (Harmer, 1998).

Sensitivity to these expectations is therefore essential if teachers are to create classroom environments where learners feel comfortable gradually engaging in more participatory approaches. In this article, I would like to explore several familiar classroom scenarios that depict this tension and suggest practical ways teachers can address it. The changes proposed are not revolutionary, but are easy to implement and, I find, often overlooked solutions that can have a big impact on learner uptake regarding positive engagement in learner-centred activities.

“What do we do?”

You begin the lesson by writing on the board: “Today we are going to learn the past simple.” For many learners, this objective signals a familiar structure: a grammatical explanation followed by controlled practice. Instead, you immediately ask students to circulate and interview classmates about what they did yesterday. Some hesitate, others ask for the grammar first, and some struggle to form

questions, even turning to their phones to translate what they want to say. Although the activity is communicative and even conducive to a Test-Teach-Test approach, the lack of clarity can be jarring, leaving them unsure how to respond or how this fits into the greater plan of the lesson.

Clarifying the Process

A far more effective objective might be: “By the end of the lesson, you will be able to ask and answer questions about your weekend using the past simple,” followed by a brief outline of how this will happen (“We are going to see what you know now, review some grammar rules, and then practise speaking to as many people as we can”). By making both the linguistic aim and learning process explicit at the start of, and throughout the lesson, learners better understand why interaction is central and have an end goal in mind.

“I just want to talk to my teacher!”

In another lesson, you place students into groups of four and ask them to discuss a set of questions related to the topic of the day. However, participation quickly becomes uneven. More confident learners dominate the discussion, while quieter students contribute little or remain silent. Others turn to you for guidance, unsure how they are expected to participate, or only want to speak to you as opposed to their classmates. You flit from group to group, trying, with varying degrees of success, to encourage conversation, which becomes stagnant as soon as you move on. Although the activity is a common schemata-activating task, the group format feels socially and linguistically demanding for learners who are unfamiliar with this type of classroom practice.

Scaffolding Participation

I would suggest beginning a lesson with pair work rather than larger group interaction. For example, students first interview a single partner using a small number of model questions that you provide. While monitoring, make notes on language output and remain unintrusive; try not to interfere so that learners know their focus should be on each other, rather than on you. Once they have had the opportunity to rehearse the language in a lower pressure setting, they may be more willing to share their ideas in larger groups or with the class. The activity remains learner-centred, but the interactional demands are more carefully scaffolded to account for individual learner needs.

“Just tell us the grammar!”

You introduce a new grammar structure through a guided discovery activity in which several example sentences are written on the board, and students are asked to identify the rule. However, the sentences appear only as isolated examples with little contextual support, and many learners struggle to recognise the pattern, repeatedly asking you for a direct explanation. What was intended as an activity of noticing and deduction instead leads to uncertainty and frustration.

Guided Noticing Through Visual Support

Using images, even at higher levels, is an underrated but highly effective way to make discovery-based learning more accessible. For example, students might examine the visuals and match them with example sentences before identifying the underlying pattern. In this way, they are still encouraged to notice and articulate grammatical rules themselves, but the visual scaffolding helps guide the process, meaning the teacher can take a backseat while learners have a more active role in their own learning.

“This isn’t a real lesson, right?”

You take your learners on an excursion to a local art gallery with the goal of giving them communicative practice in an authentic setting: discussing pieces of art using vocabulary studied in class. While they are initially intrigued, their engagement wanes as they lack a structured task to keep them on target. You find your learners sitting on benches, clustered together at the café or gift shop, or simply glued to their phones as they wait to return to the school, the learning arena they are most familiar with.

Reinforcing the Purpose

Teachers can address this issue by explicitly framing such activities as structured language-learning tasks, such as a pair or group scavenger hunt that involves approaching staff to ask for information, reading display cards and signs, or writing descriptions of what they see. Follow-up tasks, such as presentations or written summaries, can further reinforce the linguistic focus of the activity. In this way, the experiential element of the lesson is preserved while its pedagogical purpose becomes more transparent. And it goes without saying that getting learner input into where an excursion should take place is paramount!

Conclusion

By working within our learners’ comfort zones, and not forcing them out of it, we can slowly encourage them to take a more active approach to their own learning. In this way, learner-centred teaching becomes a shared process rather than a pedagogical expectation that we force upon them (Hird, 2023).

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Siena McCue is the Assistant Director of Studies at the Essential English Centre in Manchester, England. She holds an MA in Applied Linguistics and a Delta, and has ten years’ experience teaching English in Malaysia, Spain, and the UK.

siena@essentialenglishcentre.co.uk

The Revolving Door Classroom: Personalising Learning in Continuous-Enrolment Courses

SUSANNA WRIGHT

Learner-centred instruction is widely accepted as a core principle in modern language teaching. Teachers are encouraged to personalise lessons, respond to learner needs, and give students greater control over their learning (e.g. Morrison & Navarro, 2014). However, much of the discussion around personalisation assumes a stable group of learners progressing together through a course.

Many international language schools, such as WSE, operate in a very different environment. Students arrive every Monday from all walks of life. They may stay for one week or nine months, and bring a wide range of goals, motivations and interests. Classes may include university students preparing for exams, retirees interested in British culture, or corporate employees looking to develop their professional communication skills. The more varied the class becomes, the more tempting it is for teachers to rely on the coursebook for safety and structure, rather than attempting to design twelve different pathways for twelve different learners.

However, by adopting a few simple classroom routines, teachers can allow for personalised flexibility within shared classroom activities. This can help group teaching remain coherent, while still responding to individual needs.

‘Teacher, this isn’t useful for me’

The more information a teacher has about a new student, the better they can personalise learning from the moment a student joins the class. Teachers can begin by identifying three key things:

- their main communication goals
- areas of language difficulty or focus
- their interests and passions.

This information could be gathered in a student-centred manner, through short peer interviews designed to integrate new learners into the group. At the start of the week, students interview the new arrivals about their goals, background, and previous learning experiences. Existing students also gain an opportunity to reflect on their own progress and language goals. Teachers can then use this information to adapt tasks, topics, or groupings during the week. In addition, the interviews encourage learners to support one another: longer-term students may suggest resources, explain language points that have been studied previously, or offer practical advice about learning strategies. This routine not only helps new students feel welcomed but also reinforces a collaborative classroom culture where learners actively contribute to each other’s progress.

‘Teacher, I need last week’s grammar’

In continuous-enrolment classes, new students often worry that they have missed important language points covered earlier in the course. A ‘class knowledge hub’ (e.g. Padlet, or a physical display board) is a useful solution for this. Each week, key language points, useful expressions, and discussion topics from lessons are added to the board. New students can quickly review what the class has explored previously and identify areas they would like to revisit. Learners are encouraged to post questions, personalised sentences, links to practice activities, and short explanations, creating an ongoing record of the class’s learning. In this way, the knowledge hub helps prevent new arrivals from feeling that they have missed too much of the course while also reinforcing previously learned language for longer-term students. These resources help transform the challenge of continuous enrolment into an opportunity for learner autonomy and collaborative learning, allowing students to personalise their learning pathway while still participating fully in the group.

‘Teacher, I didn’t learn anything’

Students joining an existing class for a brief period may struggle to notice a tangible improvement. A regular ‘Reflection Stage’ can make learning more visible, and help even short-term students appreciate their progress, while ensuring longer-term students remain goal oriented. The process also encourages learners to take greater responsibility for their own development. At the end of the week, students might complete these simple prompts:

- This week I improved... This is helpful for my real life because...
- A language area I still need to work on is... because I need it to...

or use the ‘3-2-1 technique’:

- 3 things they learned
- 2 questions they have
- 1 thing they enjoyed

Teachers can use this information to identify common needs and guide future lesson choices. For students who are leaving that week, teachers can use this information to guide them towards self-study resources and techniques to help them maintain their English after their course has finished.

‘Teacher, every week we do the same thing’

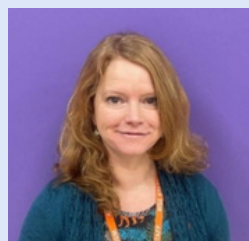
While many personalisation strategies focus on helping new students integrate into the class, long-term learners often require a different type of support. Students who remain in a course for several months can become disengaged if lessons feel repetitive or if their role in the classroom remains passive. One effective approach is to give experienced students additional classroom responsibilities that draw on their growing familiarity with the course. For example, they may help introduce new students to the class routines, explain how the class knowledge board is used, or share strategies that helped them understand previously studied language points. Some learners may take responsibility for maintaining the class learning hub, uploading useful expressions from lessons, or organising questions that emerge during the week. Others might collect and summarise homework tasks, lead short review activities, or contribute discussion questions related to their own professional or academic interests. These roles allow long-term students to move from being simply participants to becoming active contributors to the learning environment. In addition to increasing motivation, this approach reinforces their own learning, as explaining language and supporting peers requires deeper processing of the material (Chi, 2009).

‘Teacher, where are you?’

The strategies outlined above show how personalisation can be embedded into continuous-enrolment classrooms without losing structure or coherence. However, it is important to recognise that learner-centred approaches do not mean that teachers should step back and allow learning to unfold without direction. In practice, effective personalisation requires active and purposeful teacher intervention. Approaches such as ‘Demand High’ (Scrivener & Underhill) emphasise the importance of pushing learners beyond comfortable, surface-level output by reformulating, extending, and challenging their language. Similarly, the concept of ‘Overt Teaching’ (Byrne & Heffernan, 2023) highlights the value of visible, explicit teacher input, where language is clearly modelled, practised and upgraded. In continuous-enrolment contexts, where learners may have different levels of experience and varying degrees of autonomy, this balance becomes even more important. Teachers need to create space for learner choice and personalisation, while also ensuring that meaningful language development takes place. Personalisation, therefore, is not about reducing the role of the teacher, but about using that role more deliberately to shape, challenge and extend each learner’s progress, regardless of how long they remain in the course.

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Susi is DoS at Wimbledon School of English. She has worked in ELT since 2006, in Thailand and Australia as well as the UK, working as a Teacher, Teacher Trainer and Academic Manager. She holds a BA in English Literature, a DELTA, and a Diploma in ELT Management.

susi@wimbledon-school.ac.uk

Making our Minds Up and Upping our Minds: Placing Decision Making at the Heart of Student-Centred Learning

JENNIFER HOLDEN & GARY SILCOCK

They come in their hundreds - thousands even - and it can be oh so overwhelming. Each day, it is estimated that the average 10-year-old makes around 3,500 conscious decisions. By the age of 16, that number has risen sharply, reaching around 15,000 per day. However, by the time those same young people have reached adulthood, that number could reach a whopping 35,000 decisions every 24 hours: that's roughly one decision every 2 seconds. Is it any wonder that children - and especially teens - can feel frazzled by it all!

Mind the gap

In truth, many of those same adolescents lack the necessary neural hardwiring to make the decisions that count; social dynamics, online identity and career paths are all decisions that are regarded as dominant in an adolescent's thought process; they are also the ones where they are most vulnerable to failure.

This failure is due - in no small part - to the fact that an adolescent's brain is still developing and strengthening, a process best explained for teachers by Bestwick and Mauchline. They describe how the prefrontal cortex—responsible for controlling impulses, making decisions, self-evaluating, planning, and even aspects of grammar—is not fully formed until as late as the mid-20s. What this means, is that teenagers often rely more on a part of the brain known as the amygdala, which processes emotions, when making decisions. This helps explain why adolescents can act impulsively or engage in risky behaviour. It also explains the decision-making gap to adulthood.

During adolescence, the brain is still undergoing significant development, including increased myelination, which helps neural pathways become more efficient. Teachers can support this process by encouraging students to make meaningful connections, practice skills, and reflect on their thinking; processes which can reduce that overwhelming sense of being worn to a frazzle, helping young learners to make good conscious decisions - and not bad ones - in the process.

What is decision making?

Conscious decision making - as opposed to habitual and automatic responses - falls into two broadly defined fields: decisions to solve a problem (How am I going to do all this pesky homework!); or decisions to achieve a goal (I want to become an astronaut!).

Psychology teaches us a 7-step path to help make such baffling decisions: define, learn, list, compare, choose, act, and reflect upon our decisions. Notably for teachers, the most important steps lie less in the act (usually irreversible) and more in comparisons and reflections (affecting any future decisions). This is critical thinking; this is what will inform decision making - in an array of styles - and provides an opportunity for maximising student-centred learning by promoting ownership and agency.

Decision making styles

Recognising a range of decision-making styles enables students - and teachers - to best understand how choices are made, and how making key decisions can be less intimidating and more effective. It is a way of bridging that head-scratching gap between child and adult thinking. It is also a way of reducing the overwhelming stress that many teens face, exposing students to the fact that not all decisions are built on the same premise (What decisions do I have to make today?), and not all decisions are reached by the same means (Do I really need to listen to what my gut tells me all the time?). Thus, the issue is not just about making up our minds but rather learning how to up-our-minds (boosting the decision-making process) along the way. Here are six examples of decision-making types that can be used to up-the-minds of students:

- Rational - e.g. evaluating rules such as verb forms
- Creative - e.g. brainstorming and experimenting with language
- Analytical - e.g. analysing patterns in language
- Directive - e.g. making fast decisions in timed tasks
- Conceptual - e.g. designing study plans
- Behavioural - e.g. collaborative and teamwork tasks such as peer feedback

Common pitfalls

Like all learning strategies, decision making comes with a challenge alert: beware of 'decision fatigue': making too many decisions can lead to mental exhaustion - just think of the intense anxiety, stress and mood swings that many teens face, as well as the decline in the quality of decisions that result. In addition, teachers should watch out for 'analysis paralysis': the condition of overthinking which results in the all-too-common inability of students to make a choice. (Help! I've no idea what to do!)

However, help is at hand. As facilitators, we can reduce the cognitive load in decision-making tasks. We can limit choices and scaffold tasks into smaller, safe-to-manage chunks. We can also model our own decision-making process by thinking out loud and expressing uncertainty to students, thereby normalising indecision while demonstrating that decision-making is a struggle for everyone. Remember, decision making is a hidden skill (not an innate talent) and our job is to convert it into something accessible to even the most frazzled of students.

Upping our Minds: Applying decision making

Here are 7 activities to help up the minds of your students while promoting ownership and agency. Check out the QR code (image 2) for more detailed descriptions.

1 You be the judge (Rational thinking)

After writing a short story - e.g. 'The day everything changed' - students decide their own marks based on negotiated or set criteria.

2 Motivation Contagion (Behavioural thinking)

Based on positive characteristics shown in a lesson, students elect a 'Star of the Day': e.g. one who shows kind behaviour to others

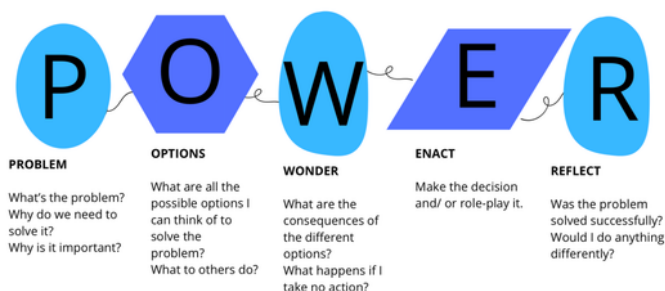
3 Control the narrative (Creative thinking)

Students collaborate to create short 'choose-your-own-adventure' stories with options for what happens next: e.g. 'A quest around the world'

4 Get off the fence (Analytical thinking)

Teach learners a thinking framework to break down the decision-making process: e.g. POWER (Problem, Options, Wonder, Enact, Reflect) (image 1) and follow up with role-playing.

Image 1



5 Values alignment (Conceptual thinking)

Learners compare value-based decision making and value-free decision making using real life dilemmas: e.g. what to do if you find a wallet.

6 You're in the driving seat (Directive thinking)

After initial input and open class work on clothes vocabulary, the teacher boards a 'menu' of activities: e.g. spelling challenge, matching, gap fills, descriptions of clothes etc. Learners then negotiate and/or select which activities to do and in what order to do them.

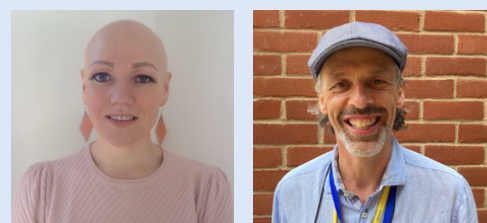
7 Join the dots (Behavioural /Analytical thinking)

After making a giant web diagram about e.g. daily decisions, learners label both the depth of impact and any connections. Conclude with learners making reflections.

Next steps

Decision making is a core educational value, a soft skill with high-transfer value that will accompany learners on their future paths. It embraces not only critical thinking but time keeping, problem solving and leadership too, and it's a skill that employers are crying out for: show me the leaders of the future! Significantly, decision making is also a skill that can be developed: by guiding learners to become better decision makers, we can also strengthen and develop neural pathways. Beyond that, by upping their minds, we can boost student motivation levels, increase linguistic performance and provide rehearsal for adulthood; all by helping learners to celebrate the process of decision making - and not just the outcome.

Image 2: Link to detailed descriptions of activities



Jenny and Gary are members of the Senior Management Teams for Discovery Summer working with teens and young learners. Based in Palermo, each with over 20 years of experience, they are Delta qualified teachers, teacher trainers and examiners with an interest in developing young people through and beyond language.

info@discoverysummer.com

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