

An Exploratory Practice Study on the Impact of the Problem-Based Learning Approach in a TEYL Course on Pre-Service Primary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory practice study explores the impact of problem-based learning (PBL) in a teaching English to young learners (TEYL) course on pre-service primary school teachers at the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts of Tataouine, Tunisia. A survey was used to collect information about pre-service teachers' attitudes towards PBL. The findings suggest that the pre-service teachers found PBL to be effective and engaging as an instructional approach in that it helped them develop their critical thinking, team-building skills, and self-directed learning.

Keywords: evidence-based practice, exploratory practice, lecture-based instruction, problem-based learning, TEYL

INTRODUCTION

To graduate from the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts of Tataouine with an Applied License in Education and Teaching, students have to study teaching-related subjects for three years. One course they have to take in Semesters 4, 5 and 6 is Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) course in English. The Tunisian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research issued a four-page general document titled *Didactics of English* (2016) for teachers of pre-service primary school teachers (see Appendix A). Though the document offers the name of the TEYL course title, "How to Improve the Teaching of English to Young Language Learners," no further guidelines or syllabus with respect to TEYL have been provided to the teachers since the accreditation of this license in 2016.

However, a project was put in place whereby two cohorts from different Departments of Education and Teaching across the country participated in a year-long training (2021-22). The overall purpose of this project can be deduced from its title, TC-Tunisia Foreign Language Teacher Education Project: Capacity Building for Foreign Educators of Young

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Learners in Tunisia (see Appendix B for the project program). Given the fact that there is no syllabus for the TEYL course, English teachers at the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts of Tataouine (ISAMT) designed a TEYL course outline for second- and third-year students (see Appendix C). The outline drew on the TC-Tunisia Project. Only after the training finished did the teachers come to have a better understanding of how the TEYL course should be designed. In particular, a major outcome of the TC-Tunisia Project is an understanding of teaching as a science—namely, teaching as an evidence-based practice. It is this new understanding of teaching that helped me find ways to address some latent teaching and learning issues: low-level engagement and poor results on summative assessment. I decided to investigate the impact of the problem-based learning approach on my pre-service primary school teachers through an exploratory practice study so as to resolve those issues or, at best, mitigate their negative effect on the teaching/learning process.

THE PUZZLE

Given the fact that it taps into many fields of knowledge, a TEYL course draws on diverse approaches and theories, rendering it a daunting course for the pre-service primary school teachers. It should come as no surprise then that this course should initiate a great deal of discussion, interaction, collaborative learning, critical thinking, self-directed research, problem-solving, peer teaching, and full engagement. However, after reflecting on my students' degree of engagement in class and on their performance on their summative exams in the TEYL course as well as on my instructional approach, it became clear that the skills that the TEYL course was designed to promote among students were not fully developed and that students' engagement was often poor.

The low level of engagement demonstrated by students in TEYL courses had a significant impact on the pedagogical approaches I employed in the classroom. I typically used a lecture-style method of instruction, albeit reluctantly. In an attempt to create a more stimulating learning environment, the delivery of the course material was enhanced with the incorporation of short videos followed by interactive activities such as pair and group work. Unfortunately, initial student interest was short-lived, and the overall productivity of the lessons often slowed to a crawl.

As for their exam performance, I have observed over the course of the last three years that the majority of students scored poorly on the summative exams. Though the exams were designed to simulate classroom situations that they might encounter in their future career, the majority of the students struggled to understand the scenario problems. There was also substantial evidence that most students were not able to connect the case studies under focus in the tasks with the course materials and classroom discussions when they were asked to elaborate on their answers.

It was clear that immediate intervention was needed if my students and I were to make the best of the TEYL course. A joint effort was put in place to explore in depth this puzzle and its subsequent negative effect. To solve the puzzle, or at least mitigate its negative effect, students and I agreed to implement the problem-based learning (PBL) approach. This exploratory practice study, therefore, sought to investigate the effectiveness of PBL in the TEYL course delivered to second-year prospective primary school teachers.

THE DATA

To conduct this exploratory practice study, data were collected from my students, who were majoring in Education and Teaching at the Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts of Tataouine, Tunisia. The total number of participants was 29 students: 25 females and 4 males. Their age ranged between 20 and 22.

I opted for an electronic survey using Google Forms to collect data for the present study. The questionnaire involved 22 questions, collecting information on the attitudes of the participants about the implementation of the PBL approach in the TEYL course. The questions were built on the main characteristics of PBL. For instance, the participants were asked whether they worked on problems or projects in their English language class; the degree to which they felt they were actively engaged in the learning process through PBL; whether they felt PBL fostered teamwork and collaboration among themselves; the degree to which they felt PBL improved their critical thinking and problem-solving skills; whether PBL facilitated their learning of TEYL concepts, and the degree to which they thought PBL would prepare them for real-world situations.

I adopted the Exploratory Practice strategy recommended by Allwright (2000, 2003), and followed a seven-step process. First, I set the scene by having an open discussion with my students. I invited my students to identify the “puzzle” behind their ongoing lack of motivation and their underperformance on the summative exams. We then elaborated on the issues to understand them better by tracing their possible causes and negative effects on the teaching/learning process in the TEYL course. The collective discussion we had in class helped generate relevant data for the next step: interpreting the collected data. We then analyzed the data, which led us to decide to a) change the mode of course delivery, b) adopt a new strategy that would enhance class engagement, c) make sure that the new teaching/learning strategy creates a learner-centered environment by implementing problem-based learning approach.

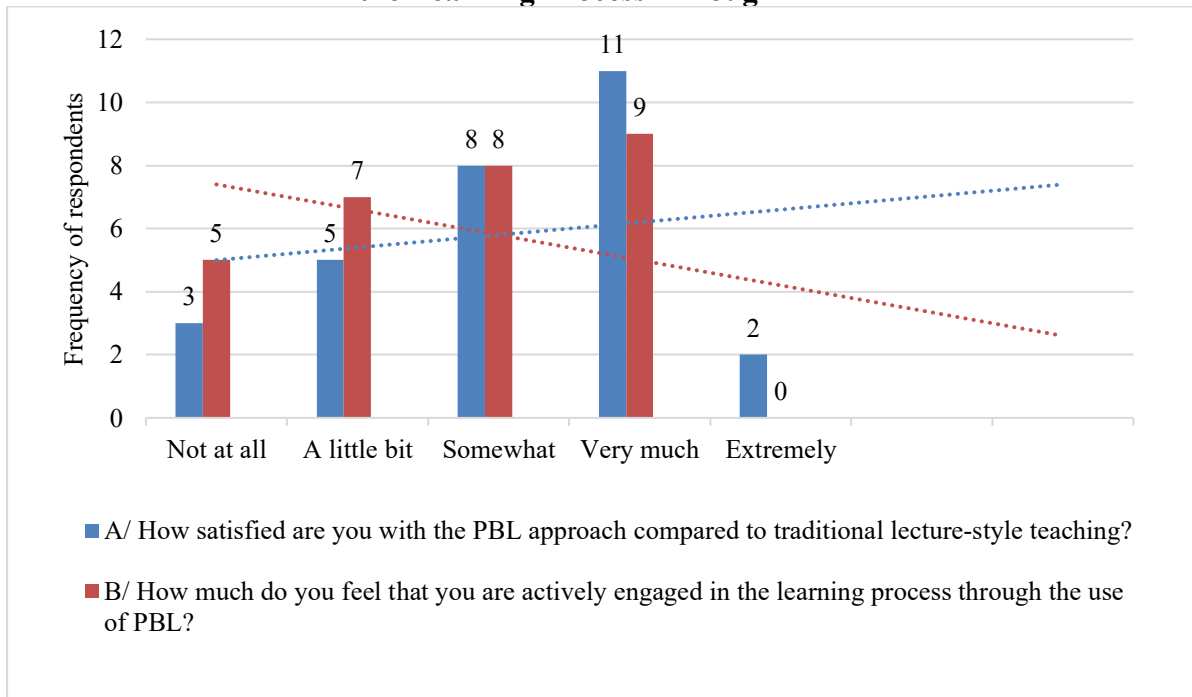
Because of time constraint and the length of the course outline that we had to cover for the rest of the year, we agreed that each “problem” would take one week (see Appendix D, E, F and G). At the first meeting in class, they were expected to cover Steps 1 and 2. Steps 3 and 4 were to be covered outside the class, while Steps 5 and 6 would be covered at the next class meeting.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section analyzes and presents the main results that have a direct bearing on the main research question: What was the impact of PBL in a TEYL course on pre-service primary school teachers?

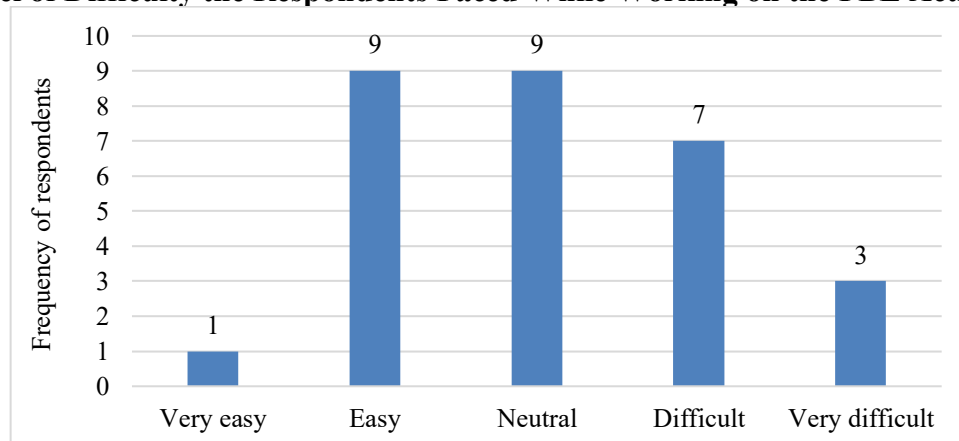
Two questions that would reveal an overall, or at least an incremental, change in the attitudes of the respondents toward the implementation of PBL in the TEYL course have to do with the mode of instruction and level of engagement. As shown in Figure 1, the majority of participants’ opinions peaked at *very much* with regard to their (a) satisfaction with learning through PBL over the lecture-style mode of instruction and (b) active engagement in the learning process. The substantial number of responses ranged between *somewhat* and *very much*.

FIGURE 1
Respondents' Attitudes About the Instruction Mode and Their Level of Engagement in the Learning Process Through PBL



However, while the mode of instruction reveals a rising trendline as to the possible direction of the participants' opinions, their level of engagement abated as there is a sharp drop at the end of the scale. The falling trendline of the attitude might be explained by the level of difficulty the respondents reported to have faced while working on the PBL activities. The data in Figure 2 corroborate this explanation, revealing that seven out of 29 respondents found the activities difficult and three selected *very difficult* on the scale. This is not surprising since the implementation of PBL was not a regular practice during their secondary education. Five out of 29 reported that they had never worked on problems or projects in their English language classes. Eight out of the same population selected *rarely*, while 15 ticked *sometimes* on scale.

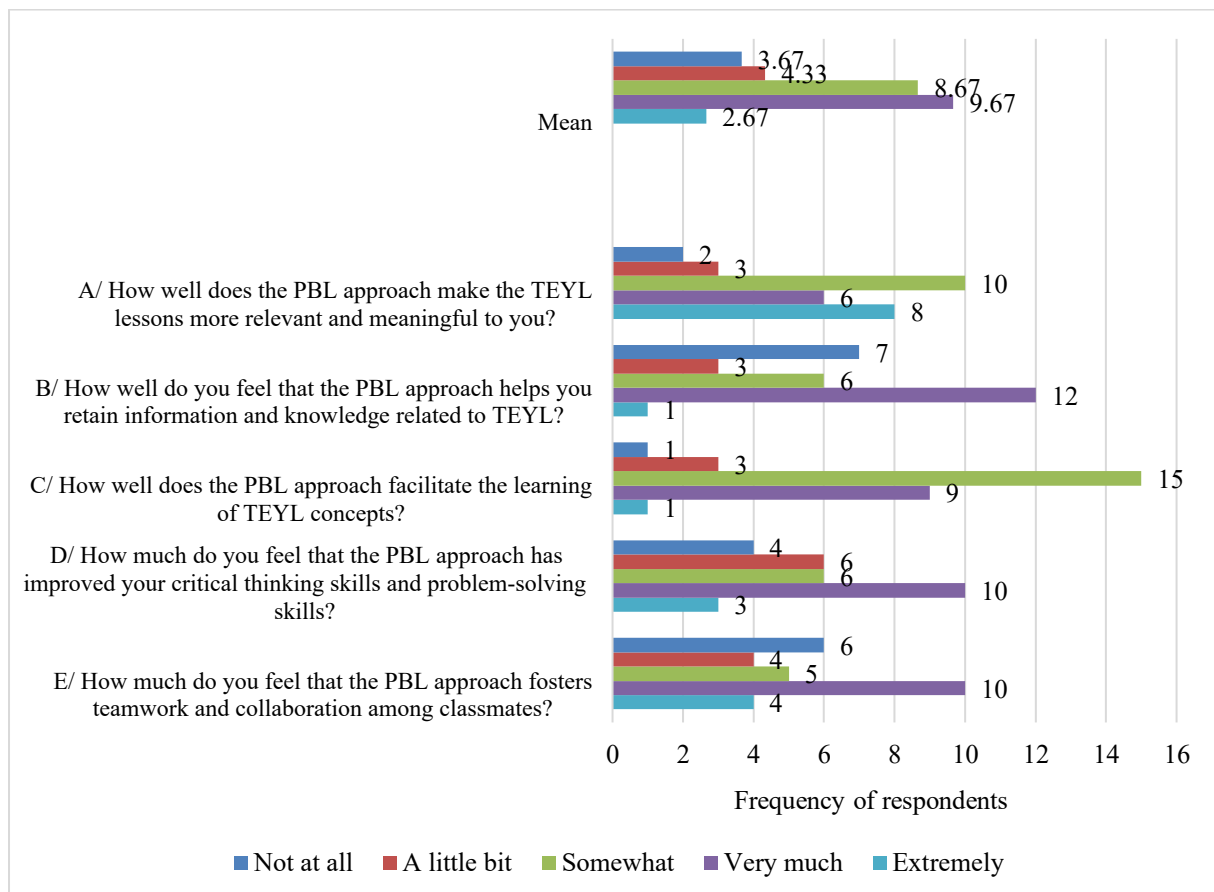
FIGURE 2
Level of Difficulty the Respondents Faced While Working on the PBL Activities



The moderate involvement and participation of the students while taking the TEYL course was related to their skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, collaboration and self-directed learning. These are major skills that the PBL approach rests on and they take time to be developed for a learner who rarely activates these skills. Figure 3 reveals the impact of these skills on the participant's learning process. Questions D and E show a considerable number of responses of *very much* on the point scale, reaching 10 participants for each out of 29.

As questions A and C reveal, the respondents reported to have benefited from learning through PBL since it made TEYL lessons more relevant and meaningful. Though 10 participants out of 29 checked *somewhat*, eight found the new method of learning *extremely* rewarding. Question C responses were most frequently *somewhat* and *very much*, with a total of 24 students, indicating that the PBL approach facilitated their learning of TEYL. Generally, the mean reached 9.67 for *very much*, followed by 8.67 for *somewhat*, while the rest of the points ranged between 2.67 and 4.33.

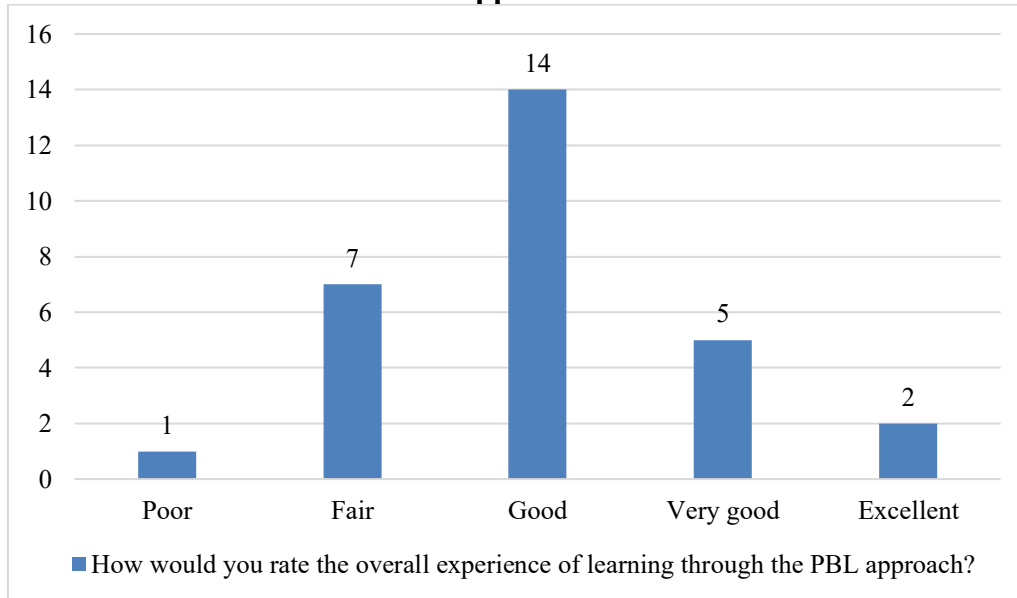
FIGURE 3
Students' Attitudes About The Impact of PBL on Their Learning Process of TEYL



Overall, I found the data in Figure 3 motivating, given the short period of time that the respondents spent working on PBL activities during the TEYL course. This positive spirit finds roots in Figure 4. The participants were requested to share their attitudes about the overall experience of learning in the TEYL course through a PBL approach. About half of them appreciated the experience, while five and two checked *very good* and *excellent* respectively. As I witnessed the progress of the learning process in class and reacted to the questions seeking clarification on how to proceed, the results of the students' negative

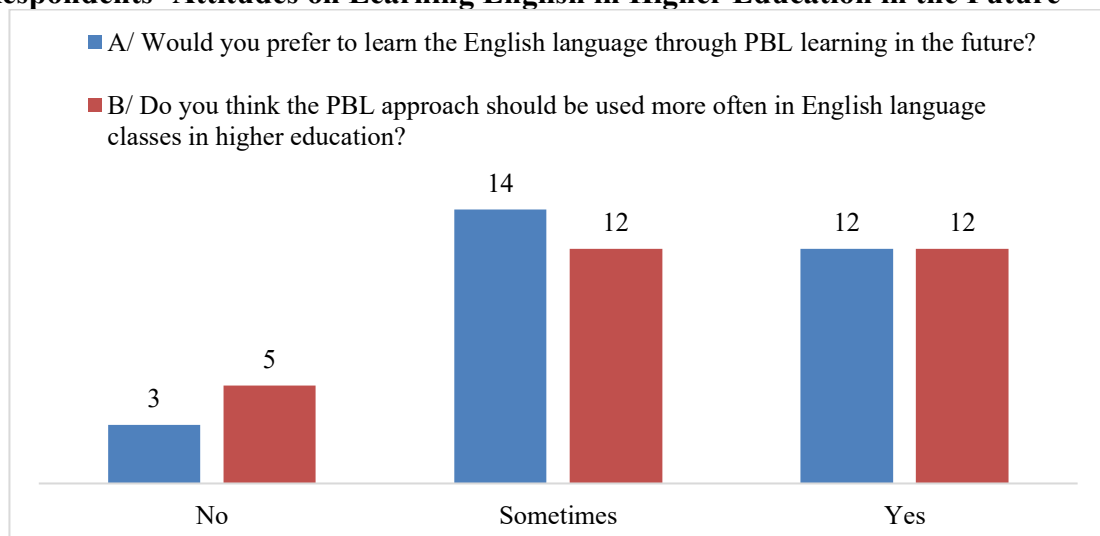
attitudes were expected. In fact, having more than half of the results tilting toward a positive trendline gave me momentum to co-work harder on increasing the level of engagement and learner-centered mode of instruction.

FIGURE 4
Respondents' Attitudes About the Overall Experience of Learning Through the PBL Approach



The last two questions of the survey project the experience of learning through PBL into the future (see Figure 5). On a three-point Likert scale, 12 of the 29 respondents expressed preference to learn the English language through PBL in the future, and the same number of respondents thought the PBL approach should be implemented more often in language classes in higher education. A similar number of respondents was less adamant on these issues, with 14 and 12 participants checking *sometimes* on the scale for these two questions respectively. I felt positive that these students could join the first group with enough hard and regular work.

FIGURE 5
Respondents' Attitudes on Learning English in Higher Education in the Future



Overall, the general attitudes of the participants tilt toward a positive learning experience with respect to the implementation of the problem-based learning approach in the TEYL course. The exploratory practice research was rewarding for me and for my students.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

A number of pedagogical implications can be emphasized in this exploratory study. One major implication is that the lecture style of instruction demotivated my students. Even some struggling students, while working with high-achievers through peer teaching and personalized learning, managed to learn through the learner-centered atmosphere that the PBL approach rests on. Though with a slow pace, the level of engagement in the learner process increased as the course progressed. This indicates that students and I managed to mitigate some parts of the puzzle and even solve a few others, namely collaboration and teamwork, critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, peer teaching, and self-directed learning. Most of the respondents came to the conclusion that learning through a PBL approach would prepare them better for their future job as fully-fledged primary school teachers.

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APPENDIX A

Didactics of English



الجمهورية التونسية
...
وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي

الإدارة العامة للتعليم الجامعي

البرنامج الخاص بالإجازة التطبيقية في التربية و التعليم

Didactics of English

Semester 4 (21H)

Code: LAEE 413

How to Improve the Teaching of English to Young Language Learners

I- Young Language Learners' characteristics:

a- Children have special characteristics and natural abilities that set them apart from other learners and which help them to learn a foreign language.

-Jane Moon (2005): Some of the natural abilities and characteristics:

- 1- *Trying it out*: children like to experiment and be creative with language.
- 2- *Having fun*: children usually have a great capacity to enjoy themselves. If children have fun they get absorbed in the activity and want to continue.
- 3- *Going for meaning*: Children tend to focus on the meaning of a situation rather than the words used to express the message. What they talk about is more important than how they say it.
- 4- *Joining in the action*: children learn language through doing something with the language, through physical activity and first-hand experience. The words are given meaning through the physical action they are associated with, like "clap your hands", "stamp your feet", etc. Understanding comes through their senses- eyes, hands, ears- they learn through their whole bodies! This also allows them to join in without being forced to speak if they are not ready.
- 5- *Feeling at home*: children need to feel safe and accepted to learn. If they feel comfortable, secure and happy, they are more likely to learn effectively.
- 6- *Copycatting*: children tend to be natural mimics or to copy what adults say. The ability to imitate is especially valuable in language learning as it enables the child to pick up new words, sounds, intonation and language patterns through listening and observing.

h- Other Characteristics:

- They respond although they do not understand.
- They learn from everything around them: they learn indirectly rather than directly.
- They like talking about themselves and respond to learning that uses their lives as the main topic.

- They love discovering things, making drawing things, using their imagination, moving from one place to another, solving puzzles.
- Young learners tend to have short attention spans; they can easily get bored after 5-10 minutes.
- Children are very much linked to their surroundings and are more interested in the physical and the tangible.

II- How can primary school teachers help make the transition to speaking English with confidence a little easier for children?

1- Games

- Good games seem to promote learning effortlessly, and children 'gamify' life all the time. Games can be used to promote speaking in two ways. First, by providing opportunities for direct practice. Second, games can stimulate very fruitful discussion. Ask children to talk about their favourite game and get them to talk through what they are doing. The enthusiasm for communicating the game's purpose will quickly overcome any inhibitions they may feel about speaking in English.

⇒ **Let games be an essential part of your teaching.**

2- Stories

- Stories provide children with a context for speaking English. Experiencing a story together in English places children in a small world where English is a given. The storyteller (either a parent at home or a teacher in class) reads a line and pauses. If the child is familiar with the story after having heard it a few times, she will be able to assume the role of storyteller. A practiced storyteller will also sense when to pause and ask questions; not just simple questions like 'What colour is this flower?' and 'What is the bear doing?' but more challenging ones that get the child to make predictions ('What will the mouse do next?'), reflect ('Why do you think the boy looks sad?') and explore their own emotions ('Have you ever felt like that?').

3- Songs

- Songs and rhymes give children the chance to play with spoken English in a stress-free way. By listening to songs and singing them, children begin to hear the sounds of the language and experiment with the way the mouth works to produce those new sounds. They notice relationships between words that sound similar through the rhymes at the end of the lines, and how words in combination create rhythm. Speaking and singing while clapping -- a familiar activity in any primary school -- reinforces this understanding.

4- Video

- Many parents (and teachers) worry that screen time is not only wasted time, but detrimental to the healthy development of a child's learning. However, used in moderation, video can be a pleasurable and stimulating English language learning tool, especially in situations where a native speaker model is unavailable.

***Giving instructions and monitoring:** - Important to get students' attention to help them understand instructions; different signals can be used to draw learners' attention; clapping hands, raising voice, raising hands, etc.

- Instructions should be as simple as possible and logical.

III- Things Primary School Teachers Can Do to Improve Learning for English Language Learners:

- Teachers are always looking for ways to improve in the classroom. Here are some specific and measurable actions that they can implement to assist English language learners in the classroom:

*Teachers should have a rich repertoire of activities to help young children receive information from a variety of sources and plan a range of activities for a given time period.

*Teachers should work with students individually or in groups (the idea of scaffolding, collaboration).

*For many children, the only source of exposure to English will be the teacher. For this reason, it is advisable to take all possible opportunities to speak English in the classroom. Hence, don't overload them with too much listening (or listening to a very long excerpt); remember the short attention span they have!

*Early stages will require practicing and drilling set phrases/ formulaic expressions and repeating some models.

*Rely more on the ostensive means of introducing new words rather than the verbal ones. For example pictures, visuals, objects etc as children prefer what is concrete.

*Straightforward error correction might be needed (particularly in tasks focusing on language form); in communication activities, getting the message across might be a priority, but the teacher should be ready to help out.

*Teachers cannot expect children to use English all the time. It is not only unnatural; it can also damage children's confidence. They are encouraged to use English in whole class activities and so while working with their peers in pairs and groups.

*Using pair and group work: if activities are done as a whole class, the children may not be directly involved in practicing and can become bored and distracted. While if working in pairs and groups, they will all have the opportunity to use English to be engaged in the activity. Also it can help children to develop other skills such as listening to others, co-operating and reaching a consensus.

*The use of rewards system, is of paramount importance, as it contributes to the success of a particular activity.

*Teachers must revisit material to enhance knowledge.

*Teachers should give feedback that is directed towards intrinsic motivation.



APPENDIX B

TC-Tunisia Project Program

The TC-Tunisia Project (2021-2022)
Capacity Building for English Language Educators of Young Learners in Tunisia

PROJECT SCHEDULE FOR YEAR 1 (JAN. – DEC. 2021)

Module	Time Frame	Dates	Time
Module 1: Planning and Assessment	Feb - Mar	Feb. 4, 8, 11, 15, 19, 22, 25 Mar. 1, 4, 8, 11, 16	10:00 -12:00 NYC 16:00 -18:00 Tunisia
Module 2: Pedagogical Training I	Apr - May	April 6, 8, 13, 15, 20, 22, 27, 29 May 4, 11, 18, 25	12:00-14:00 NYC 9:00-11:00 LA 17:00-19:00 Tunisia
Module 3: Pedagogical Training II	June - July	June 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, 18, 24, 25 July 1, 2, 8, 9	12:00 -14:00 NYC 17:00 -19:00 Tunisia
Module 4: Integration of Knowledge and Practice	Sept – Oct	Plan A: In person Sept 2-8 Plan B: Remote Sept 2, 3, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30 Oct 1, 14, 15, 21, 22	10:00-12:00; 13:00-15:00 (local time in Tunisia) 12:00 -14:00 NYC 17:00 -19:00 Tunisia
Capstone Project	Oct – Nov	Due Dec. 1	

APPENDIX C

Outline of the TEYL Course for Second-Year Students, Semester Four

University of Gabès
Higher Institute of Arts and Crafts-Tataouine
Department of Education
Learners (TEYL)

Academic year: 2021-2022
Level: 2nd year-Semester 4
Course: Teaching English for Young

Course Coordinator: Basma Bouziri, PhD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

I. OVERVIEW

The TEYL course for second-year students in education is a semestrial course aimed at introducing students to the Teaching of English to Young Learners (TEYL). Its goal is to increase their knowledge of the didactics of English for young learners and continue their pre-service teacher training in view of preparing them for their role as primary school teachers with a special focus on the Tunisian context.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the course are as follows:

1. Become acquainted with the different contexts where TEYL is implemented.
2. Develop knowledge of the specificities of young learners and the way they differ from adult learners
3. Develop knowledge of major learning theories underlying children (language) learning.
4. Develop classroom management techniques applicable to TEYL.

III. APPROACH

The approach adopted in this course combines the delivery and discussion of theoretical knowledge supported by group discussions, practical activities, and case studies. Whilst content is mostly delivered by the course lecturer, students are expected not only to become in command of the theoretical knowledge imparted, but to critically evaluate and assess their suitability and feasibility, particularly in the Tunisian context.

IV. CONTENT

Unit 1: Introduction to TEYL

- What is and why TEYL?
- Contexts of learning in TEYL
- Types of contexts: ESL, immersion/CLIL, EFL
- Focus on Tunisia: EYL programs in Tunisia, policy, expectations, multilingualism/Positive and Negative transfer, and issues in EYL in Tunisia.

Unit 2: Definition and characteristics of young learners

- Similarities and differences in adult learning
- Misunderstandings about young learners' learning
- Young learners' learning styles
- Motivation in young learners

Unit 3: Theories of (language) learning

- Piaget's cognitive development theory
- Vygotsky's sociocultural theory

Unit 4: Classroom management

- Management of the physical environment/Seating arrangement
- Group Dynamics: Grouping the learners (pair work; group work, individual work).
- Management of learning (e.g., feedback)
- Classroom procedures and rules.
- Managing discipline.

V. ATTENDANCE AND EVALUATION

Attendance is obligatory and is counted as part of your grade along with your participation. The TEYL course follows the '*Régime mixte*' and thus evaluation of students is conducted as follows:

- 30% Attendance, participation, and an oral and/or written assignment.
- 70% Written exam in May (S2).

APPENDIX D

Class Handout: A Brief Introduction to Problem-Based Learning

Course: Teaching English to Young Learners / 2nd year classes/ ISAMT/ 2022-23

A brief introduction to Problem-based Learning (PBL)

What is Problem-based learning?

Barrows defined problem-based learning as: “the *learning* that results from the *process* of working towards the understanding of a resolution of a *problem*. The problem is encountered first in the learning process” (Barrows and Tamblyn 1980: 1 my emphases) (in Barrett 2017, p. 2).

Many learning strategies use problems, but a key and defining characteristic of problem-based learning is that students experience the problem at the start of the learning process before other curriculum inputs. This motivates them to gain new knowledge through independent study, constructing knowledge together in tutorials and learning from other curriculum inputs. The four key characteristics of PBL are:

- 1) The problem
- 2) The PBL tutorial
- 3) The PBL process
- 4) Learning

(Barrett 2017, p. 2)

“PBL is an educational strategy where learning is driven by a problem. The problem could be a challenge or a description of a difficulty, a curious outcome, or an unexpected happening. It could also be an incident where there are interesting elements, or an episode or occurrence that requires either a solution or some explanation.” (Yew and O’Grady 2012 p. 4)

Why does PBL start the learning process with a problem?

Problem-based learning starts the learning process with a problem in order to:

- Engage students actively in their learning
- Motivate them to learn more
- Encourage them to see the relevance of the knowledge they will learn to their future career
- Activate the prior learning of all the students
- Develop their critical and creative thinking and
- Give them opportunities to construct knowledge together from elaborating their knowledge from their independent study and working together in tutorials to resolve the problem.

Figure 1: Operational definition of PBL

- 1) First students are presented with a problem
- 2) Students discuss the problem in a small group PBL tutorial. They clarify the facts of the case. They define what the problem is. They brainstorm ideas based on the prior knowledge. They identify what they need to learn to work on the problem, what they do not know (learning issues). They reason through the problem. They specify an action plan for working on the problem

- 3) Students engage in independent study on their learning issues outside the tutorial.** This can include: library, databases, the web, resource people and observations
- 4) They come back to the PBL tutorial(s) sharing information, peer teaching and working together on the problem**
- 5) They present their solution to the problem**
- 6) They review what they have learned from working on the problem.**
- All who participated in the process engage in self, peer and tutor review of the PBL process and reflections on each person's contribution to that process

(Barrett 2006, p. 15)

Example of problem definition template by students (G. O'Grady et al. 2012)

Problem Definition Template

What we know (based on prior knowledge And by reading/observing the content of the problem)	What we don't know (What are the questions in our minds when we think about the problem?)	What we need to find out (What are the specific areas which we think are important to examine to help us solve the problem?)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The problem is related to genes. - Genes are passed from parents to children. - Genes determine the colour of your eyes and.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a gene? - Is it an identifiable molecule? - What are the properties of a gene? - How is it related to DNA? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a gene? - How is it related to gametes, chromosomes, DNA? - What is the role of a gene in an organism?

Example of problem definition template by students (G. O'Grady et al., 2012)

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<https://discover.hubpages.com/politics/An-Example-of-Bad-Teachers-The-Yellers>

APPENDIX E

Class Handout: Lesson 01

Course: Teaching English to Young Learners / 2nd year classes/ ISAMT/ 2022-23

Unit 1: Lesson 01

Study the following classroom situation within the problem-based learning procedures specified below:

Mr. Garson should never have set foot in a classroom. Although he had a sound lesson plan and was deemed highly qualified, he was ineffective in terms of dispensing it to his students.

The problem was evident, at least for the teachers next door to his English class. They described hearing books slammed against a desk or on the floor. Also, they told administrators of hearing things crash and break. Most notably, they heard a lot of yelling. It was obvious who was doing all the yelling. Mr. Garson was screaming at the top of his lungs. In some cases, the verbal lashing would go on for nearly 20 to 30 minutes.

At first, many of his colleagues thought he had been dealt a bad hand; they believed he was given a group of rambunctious students. In fact, several would come over to help Mr. Garson whenever possible by trying to calm his class down or take a student out of the class. After a while, however, his colleagues, as well as the school security and administrators, stopped visiting. Students requested – and received – transfers, parents started complaining, and the process to non-rehire him was going before the district school board.

Faculty and staff (especially among the seasoned teachers) began to refer to him by a particular name.

They labeled him a “yeller”. It can be a “death nil” for any teacher who receives it.

(Dean Traylor, Aug 14, 2020)

<https://discover.hubpages.com/politics/An-Example-of-Bad-Teachers-The-Yellers>

Step 1: State what the problem is with Mr. Garson’s way of teaching. (Text Above)

.....

Step 2: Discuss the problem:

What you know (Activating prior knowledge)	What you don’t know (The questions in your mind when you think about the problem)	What you need to find out (Specify an action plan for working on the problem)
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Step3: Self-directed study: look for information about the problem from library, databases, the web, resource people and observations, etc.

Step 4: Share information, peer teaching and working on the problem.

Step 5: Present the solution to the problem to the whole class.

Step 6: Review what you have learned from working on the problem.

APPENDIX F

Class Handout: Lesson 02/Part A

Course: Teaching English to Young Learners / 2nd year classes/ ISAMT/ 2022-23

Unit 1: Lesson 02 (Part A):

**AN EYE ON THE CURRICULUM OF ENGLISH FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION/
 TEYL in Tunisia**

Study this excerpt from Curriculum of English for Primary Education:

“Exposing young learners to various languages not only helps convey societal values such as openness to diversity and respect for others, but also raises the children’s awareness of “universal cultures” – and thus of their own (Curriculum Général Tunisien 2017, p. 6). Because English is an international and intercultural language, it should be introduced at an earlier stage of primary school to help develop what Kramersch and Sullivan (1993) call a “sphere of interculturality”, one that promotes intelligibility by and of other speakers of the language.”

“Hence, this curriculum targets the development of the young learners’ competence in English for communicative purposes via spoken and written interaction channels with a particular focus on the aural/oral medium. To focus on the development of speaking and listening first, and then on reading and writing, is to favour the activation of the same mechanisms occurring when learning one’s native language” (2019, p. 4).

Curriculum of English for Primary Education (2019)

<https://cnp.com.tn/arabic/PDF/CurriculumOFENGLISH.pdf>

Step 1: With reference to the extract, make at least 4 research questions that reflect some of the criteria that a curriculum of English for primary education should take into consideration.

- a/.....
- b/.....
- c/.....
- d/.....

Step 2: Choose one research question to research.

What you know (Activating prior knowledge)	What you don’t know (The questions in your mind when you think about the problem)	What you need to find out (Specify an action plan for working on the problem)
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Step 3: Self-directed study: look for information about the research question you have chosen from library, databases, the web, resource people and observations, etc.

Step 4: Share information, peer teaching and working on research question.

Step 5: Present/Explain, to the whole class, the research question and its importance when designing a curriculum of English for primary education.

Step 6: Review what you have learned from working on the research question.

APPENDIX G

Class Handout: Lesson 02/Part B

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Unit1/Lesson 02: (Part B)

Profile of the learner	General context
<p>Name: Ana Sánchez Age: 6 years old Grade: First grade Mother tongue: Spanish Target language: English Learning Issue: Difficulty with reading (letter knowledge, phonemic awareness, beginning decoding, comprehension, and expressive English language skills) Language spoken at home: Spanish with parents and English and Spanish with siblings</p>	<p>Name of the school: Highland Park Elementary School, NY. The school population reflects the ethnic makeup of the surrounding community, with primarily Hispanic (62%) and African American (37%) students. School program: Supporting struggling English Language Learners through instructional intervention. Target skill: Reading</p>

Fernando's Gift (El regalo de Fernando) by Douglas Keister.

Ms. Yamura: Tell me about your picture, Ana.

Ana: It's about when my family went fishing during our *vacaciones*, just like in the story.

Ms. Yamura: Oh, you mean during your family's vacation?

Ana: *Sí, nuestras vacaciones.*

Ms. Yamura: Wow, *vacaciones* I think means *vacation* in English. [She writes both words on a whiteboard]

Both words sound, look, and mean the same thing, don't they?

[Ana nods her head.] Ana, can you describe your picture for me? Tell me about your vacation—your *vacaciones*

Ana: During our vacation my dad teaches me to fish. My family likes to eat the fish we catch from the river. Here I am with my fishing pole, and here is *mi papá*.

Haager, D., Klingner, J. k. & Aceves, T. C. (2009, pp. 97-98)

Step 1: State what the problem is.

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Step 2: Discuss the problem:

What you know (Activating prior knowledge)	What you don't know (The questions in your mind when you think about the problem)	What you need to find out (Specify an action plan for working on the problem)
.....

Step 3: Self-directed study: look for information about the problem from library, databases, the web, resource people and observations, etc.

Step 4: Share information, peer teaching and working on the problem.

Step 5: Present the solution to the problem to the whole class.

Step 6: Review what you have learned from working on the problem. _____

References

Haager, D., Klingner, J. k. & Aceves, T. C. (2009). *How to Teach English Language Learners: Effective Strategies from Outstanding Educators, Grades K-6*. Jossey-Bass