

# INTRODUCTION



## ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

# 1. Introduction

This English Language curriculum is designed for students in Educación General Básica (2nd to 10th) and Bachillerato General Unificado (1st to 3rd), whose mother tongue is not English. Since the Ecuadorian population is comprised of groups from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, this curriculum acknowledges that not all learners in Ecuador are L1 Spanish speakers and there are varying degrees of bilingualism across communities. In keeping with the needs of a linguistically and culturally diverse population, this curriculum presents a rationale and framework for learning English while acknowledging authentic, culturally relevant production and practices in order to facilitate educational inclusion of learners regardless of their L1. This curriculum is built with monolingual and multilingual learners in mind, including those who speak Spanish and those who have little or no Spanish. It aims to support the policy of developing citizens in Ecuador that can communicate effectively in today's globalized world. The curriculum also supports general educational goals of justice, innovation, and solidarity, by developing thinking, social, and creative skills in the context of language learning. These are the skills Ecuadorian learners will need to engage successfully in local and international communities in the 21st century.

## 21st Century skills developed through learning English

Global Engagement	Social and thinking skills	Foundation for lifelong learning
To develop learners' understanding of the world, of other cultures and their own, and to communicate their understanding and views to others through English	To develop the personal, social and intellectual skills needed to achieve their potential to participate productively in an increasingly globalized world that operates in English	To create a love of learning languages starting at a young age, in order to foster learners' motivation to continue learning English throughout EGB and BGU, as well as work and beyond, by means of engaging and positive learning experiences

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## Core principles

The core principles in the curriculum can be summarized as:

- **The communicative language approach:** language is best learned as a means to interact and communicate, rather than as a body of knowledge to be memorized.
- **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL):** a model used to integrate the learning of language with cultural and cognitive aspects of learning such that language **acquisition** serves as a driver for learners' development.
- **International standards:** the curriculum is based on internationally recognized levels and processes of teaching and learning languages.
- **Thinking skills:** learning English should support the development of the thinking, social and creative skills needed for lifelong learning and citizenship.
- **Learner-centered** approach: teaching methodologies should reflect and respond to learners' strengths and challenges, and facilitate the process of learning by supporting learners' motivation for and **engagement** with learning.

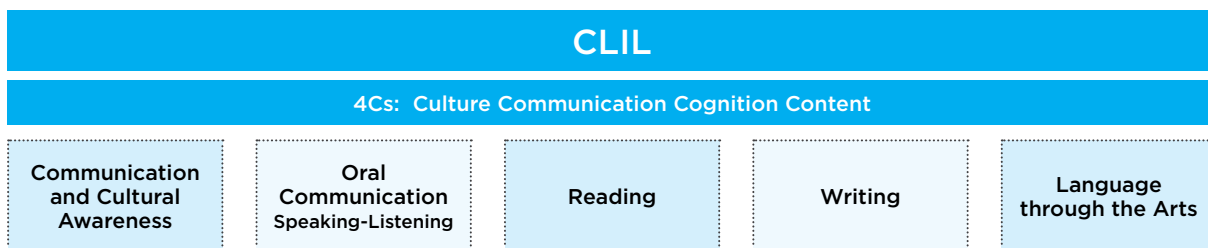
**Communicative language approach.** The proposed EFL curriculum's focus is communicative, consistent with the intention expressed by the Ministry of Education Documents: *Updating and Strengthening the Curriculum 2010*. Within this approach, the proposal emphasizes the development of the four communicative skills rather than linguistic content learning, because the goal of foreign language learning is not to turn learners into experts in linguistics who can conceptualize and decipher the various components of the language, but rather future citizens who are competent in the use of a second language for oral and written communication. In this context, language competence is defined as the ability to effectively communicate. That is, although language [systems] knowledge will be present [grammar, lexis, etc.], these should not be the main focus of the learning process. Rather, the emphasis should be on the **performative aspects of language** as a means for engaging in **purposeful communicative interaction** and making meaning. This is accomplished through a range of activities to support lively interaction, awakening learners' consciousness and abilities, and creating positive engagement to support **intrinsic motivation** to learn English.

**Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL).** This curriculum is based on a language-driven CLIL approach, where content from other disciplines is used for meaningful and purposeful language use (Met, 1999). It supports the overall curriculum, developing cognitive and social skills needed for other subjects, and reinforcing content covered in other areas. The integration of **critical thinking skills** as defined in Bloom's Taxonomy and the development of communicative linguistic competencies are presented in this proposal as interdependent processes within a CLIL model, where critical thinking skills serve as the mechanism for implementing



the 4Cs framework (content, culture, communication, and cognition) such that the 4Cs framework becomes a “conceptualization of CLIL” (Coyle, 2007). English is used as a driver for broadening, deepening, and expressing learners’ knowledge of themselves and others.

This curriculum conceives of the 4Cs through the integration of five curricular threads: Oral Communication (includes speaking and listening), Reading, Writing, Language through the Arts, and Communication and Cultural Awareness. Linguistic functions will be framed within the international standards of the Common European Framework for Language Reference (CEFR), guided by and assessed according to the “Can do” statements associated with each proficiency level. The Language through the Arts and Communication and Cultural Awareness threads support the CLIL component of the curriculum by providing written and oral texts, authentic content-based and cross-curricular materials, Information and Communications Technology (**ICT**), and the learners’ social, cultural, and epistemological knowledge. Critical thinking skills and **learning strategies** are interwoven into all aspects of the curriculum as means of linking concepts and driving the development of communicative language skills and knowledge.



Integration of the five curricular threads with the 4Cs.

The methodology and classroom procedures to be applied when teaching within a CLIL model form part of the teaching and learning specifications of this curriculum. CLIL models are diverse, making them flexible enough to be context-specific and complementary to a range of teaching methodologies, but they do share characteristics favorable to constructivist approaches and communicative language teaching (CLT). These characteristics include learner-centered approaches, **text-based learning, task-based learning**, the necessity to use different types of activities to encourage foreign language use for different purposes, high levels of interaction between teachers and learners and learners themselves, intensive language **input**, teacher **modeling** and **scaffolding**, and teacher enthusiasm (Coyle, 2007; Çekrezi-Biçaku, 2011; Kilmova, 2012). This proposal will include documents to guide and inspire teachers on ways to develop communicative abilities from a range of skills that students already possess, through activating and developing communication strategies and critical thinking skills during their participation in real or simulated communicative situations in **L2**, perhaps with a problem solving element. With sufficient practice, students may autonomously transfer all these communication capabilities to other situations in their future academic and social lives.



**Thinking skills.** Meaningful interaction in a foreign language requires the application of communicative skills upon users' existing knowledge and perspectives through the integration of oral skills, written skills, comprehension, and critical thinking skills, evinced in the expression of communicative purpose and production of texts in authentic contexts. The inclusion of "thinking" as a fifth skill in the context of language acquisition has been proposed as a key component in multi-lingual educational contexts as a means of forming and challenging meaning between L1s and L2s (Baker, 2002), and the process of making meaning has been correlated to learners' motivation and language achievement, especially in young learners (Coyle, 2013; Lasagabaster, 2011; Pérez-Cañado, 2012).

**Learner-centered approach.** The proposed EFL curriculum's focus is "learner-centered". In other words, although the curriculum is standardized across the country of Ecuador and the objectives are set by the Ministry of Education (rather than set by teachers or learners themselves), teachers will not simply be required to deliver a set of facts and information to the nation. They will be encouraged to recognize that their learners are individuals, with different learning styles, personalities, and interests, as well as differing levels of motivation and ability (Nunan, 1998). As such, teachers will take these needs into account and adapt their methodology accordingly.

The key features of this **learner-centered curriculum** are as follows:

- Teachers are focused on what and how the students are learning, not on their performance as a teacher or on specific facts to be transmitted.
- Teachers recognize that students learn in different ways and at different rates, and that a personalized approach to teaching is needed.
- A positive learner attitude is the key to successful learning. Teachers seek to involve learners affectively and psychologically as well as intellectually (Savignon, 2002).
- Learners need to develop their own personality English. Teachers respect this personality and the personal feelings involved when learners express themselves. The respect is increased when teachers focus on meaning as well as form (Savignon, 2002).
- Learning is an active, dynamic process. It occurs more effectively when students are actively involved, rather than passively receiving information.
- Teachers are committed to a constructivist approach by building upon knowledge that the learners already know.
- Assessment is more formative than summative in nature. It provides the teacher with frequent feedback, which will be used in order to shape and support future learning.



- There is an emphasis on interdisciplinary knowledge, namely on skills that transfer across subjects.
- There is a recognition that learning is not just acquiring facts but also developing skills that support lifelong learning. Creating motivated and independent learners is a key goal of the curriculum.

To summarize, this curriculum assumes a learner-centered teaching methodology in terms of *how the content is delivered*.



## 2. How English as a Foreign Language Contributes to the Exit Profile of Ecuadorian High School Students

The Ecuadorian High School Exit Profile aims to prepare Ecuadorian high school students for successful participation in a globalized, democratic society in the 21st century by focusing on the development of life skills, work skills, and entrepreneurship skills.

The EFL curriculum embraces the development of creative and critical thinking skills, as well as attitudes such as ethical conduct, through the values of academic honesty and integrity. The skills are integrated within the five curricular threads, and encourage learners to act responsibly and to respect themselves as well as others while participating in the communication process. In doing so, the curriculum endorses the values of solidarity and justice.

The curriculum is designed to stimulate linguistic intelligence through language analysis and the comprehension of oral and written texts, which require critical thinking skills such as inference, analysis, and synthesis. Recognizing that the competencies based on the four macro-skills are indispensable tools for verbal reasoning, the EFL curriculum guides learners towards being able to communicate and learn through a foreign language, in this case English, by placing importance on clear oral expression according to international standards (CEFR). The strong emphasis placed on verbal communication through group work and the development of problem-solving skills has the purpose of strengthening learners' ability to interact socially in a variety of situations, thus fortifying principles such as tolerance and social inclusion. Foreign language learning harnesses the processes needed to establish logical relationships between different notions and concepts. Studies show that foreign language learning foments critical thinking skills, creativity, and flexibility of mind in young children. As such, the EFL curriculum contributes to the development of logical, critical, and creative thinking.

English is considered the **lingua franca** of the science and technology community (Gordin, 2015), and being able to communicate in English opens up access to not only current and relevant information and primary sources, but also communication with people from around the world. The Oral Communication, Reading, and Writing curricular threads comprise specific skills that relate to the use of ICT to support and enhance the capacity for oral and written expression, facilitating organization, autonomy, and independence, along with other 21st century skills. Consequently, learners will be equipped with learning strategies that will help them to become independent, self-motivated, lifelong learners (Medel-Anonuevo, Oshako, & Mauch, 2001).

The EFL curriculum includes a thread called Communication and Cultural Awareness and another called Language through the Arts. Both contribute significantly to students' approaching the socio-cultural reality of the country in a thoughtful and inquisitive way by exposing students to other cultures and languages, so as to better understand and strengthen their own sense of identity. The Language through



the Arts and Communication and Cultural Awareness threads also encourage the use of ICT to awaken intellectual curiosity and breed tolerance and **interculturality** through the use of **authentic language**. According to Marczak (2013), “the ability to cope with otherness, communicate successfully with strangers, be it from one’s immediate or more remote social circles, and use ICT is now an indispensable key with which to unlock the cultural riddles of reality” (p. xi).

Learners will be brought up to a B1 level as identified by the Common European Framework of References (CEFR). At this level, they will be able to communicate in everyday situations in English, able to solve basic problems, and communicate basic needs in situations such as travel, school, and work. Thus, the EFL curriculum has a two-fold purpose: develop future global citizens aware of their national and personal identity, as well as provide future opportunities for work, travel, academic scholarship, and access to information and resources through ICT.

Through the EFL curriculum, learners will be given opportunities to discover how linguistic diversity contributes to the construction of an intercultural and multinational society and world. In addition, studies have shown that by learning a foreign language, learners can develop a better understanding of their own, native language (Fernandez, 2007), giving learners new insights into how to improve their mother tongue. Learning a foreign language gives learners a greater global understanding of the world we live in, making them socially responsible, global citizens.

In terms of L2 English competence, by the end of BGU learners will demonstrate at least a CEFR Level B1 (Threshold) and have a limited but effective command of the spoken language. They will:

- Be able to handle communication in English in most familiar situations.
- Be able to construct longer utterances, although may not be able to use complex language except in well-rehearsed utterances.
- Sometimes have problems searching for language resources (structures, lexis, and functional exponents) to express ideas and concepts, which may result in pauses and hesitation.
- Have generally intelligible pronunciation, although L1 features may put a strain on the listener.
- Usually be able to compensate for communication difficulties by using repair strategies, but may sometimes require prompting and assisting so as to avoid **communication breakdown**.

A **B1 user of English** can be expected to:

1. Speak quite confidently on everyday topics, especially in relation to personal interests and routine contexts. Produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.



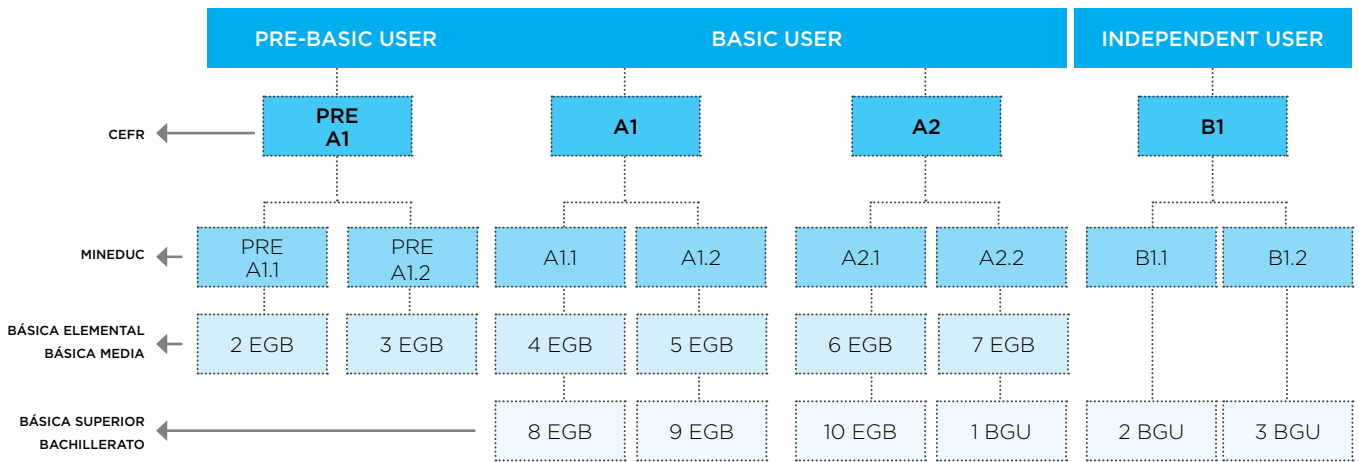
2. Express opinions and feelings. Describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions, and briefly give reasons and explanations for beliefs and plans.
3. Deal with most situations likely to arise whilst traveling in an area where the English language is spoken, including the exchange and checking of factual information.
4. Read straightforward texts on subjects of interest. Understand the main points of clear, standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.
5. Write a personal letter, email or note on a familiar topic, describing an event or situation for an intended purpose with sufficient accuracy and coherence to be followed most of the time.

### Bridging the gap between Educación General Básica Media and Educación General Básica Superior (Primary and Secondary)

It should be taken into account that although learners are expected to reach a certain level of English when graduating from Educación General Básica Media, in this case graduating from 7th EGB with an A2 level, a large amount of the language learned in these levels will be recycled in the first years of Educación General Básica Superior (8th, 9th, 10th EGB) but within a different context and combined with new language, more appropriate in this case for young teenagers.

Consequently, learners in their first years of secondary education will be taught what they have already learned in terms of grammar and vocabulary, with new, context-specific vocabulary being added. One of the main reasons for this being the case is the gap between stronger and weaker learners, which increases in secondary education, due to the coming together of students from different primary schools. It also needs bearing in mind that when learners move from primary to secondary school, they also experience important changes in methodology and teaching approaches. As primary learners, they are instructed mainly through games, songs, rhymes, and playful activities. When in secondary school, teaching becomes more formal, assessment is more demanding, the pace of the lesson is often faster, and students benefit by recycling language previously seen.

The following chart, Levels of Proficiency: Branching Approach, illustrates the English levels that are expected for learners in both EGB and BGU.



Levels of Proficiency: Branching Approach.

### 3. Epistemological Foundations and Pedagogical Responses

The epistemological foundations of the EFL curriculum refer to how learners learn languages and therefore, how they should be taught. In this curriculum we take a constructivist approach, beginning with the assumption that all learners entering schools are users of their mother tongue, have cognitive, emotional, and motor skills that facilitate communication, and have an understanding of how their L1 works derived from intensive input and production in real life contexts. This previous knowledge forms the foundation upon which learning takes place and meaning is grounded. Knowledge and meaning are accessed, developed, and expressed through language.

#### English as a Foreign Language and Content Language and Integrated Learning

Within a CLIL framework expressed as the 4Cs, language facilitates 1) communication, 2) cultural awareness and understanding, 3) cognition, and 4) content. Another way to conceptualize this is to see the acquisition of language as an outcome of, for, and through learning (Coyle, 2007). Language *of* learning is understood as the acknowledgement that learners need to have access to linguistic concepts, systems, and skills in order to communicate and develop knowledge about subjects, themes, and topics. Functional need is determined by context, is encountered through authentic communicative situations and texts, and can be **scaffolded** to support progressive acquisition. Metalinguistic reflection (such as understanding grammar) is discovered via functional need. Language *for* learning speaks to the metacognition of learning how to learn. It includes the development of learning strategies and communicative skills for interaction between teachers and learners and learners with each other in order to acquire input, seek clarification, and make and express meaning. Language *through* learning refers to the high level of what van Lier (1996) calls “participability” in CLIL contexts as a means of developing language and higher order thinking skills. The higher the participation, interaction, and use of higher order thinking skills, the higher the quality of learning (Met, 1998).

Communication, cognition, content, culture  
(cultural awareness and intercultural understanding)

Language *of* learning: the **what** of communication (language systems and skills)

Language *for* learning: the **how** of communication (learning strategies, communicative skills)

Language *through* learning: the **why** of communication (new knowledge, multiple perspectives)

CLIL, language acquisition, and the 4Cs.

## Communicative Language Teaching

Constructivist theories of knowledge and the central role of language and communicative competencies in CLIL frameworks can be best expressed through a communicative approach to teaching. A communicative approach to teaching can accommodate a range of practices, grounded in ten core assumptions of current communicative teaching as outlined by Richards (2006):

1. Second language learning is facilitated when learners are engaged in interaction and meaningful communication.
2. Effective classroom learning tasks and exercises provide opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning, expand their language resources, notice how language is used, and take part in meaningful personal exchange.
3. Meaningful communication results from learners processing content that is relevant, purposeful, interesting, and engaging.
  - Communication is a holistic process that often calls upon the use of several language skills or **modalities**.
  - Language learning is facilitated both by activities that involve inductive or discovery learning of underlying rules of language use and organization, as well as by those involving language analysis and reflection.
4. Language learning is a gradual process that involves creative use of language, and trial and error. Although errors are a normal product of learning, the ultimate goal of learning is to be able to use the new language both accurately and fluently.
5. Learners develop their own routes to language learning, progress at different rates, and have different needs and motivations for language learning.
6. Successful language learning involves the use of effective learning and communication strategies.
  - The role of the teacher in the language classroom is that of a **facilitator**, who creates a classroom climate conducive to language learning and provides opportunities for learners to use and practice the language and to reflect on language use and learning.
7. The classroom is a community where learners learn through collaboration and sharing.

These assumptions of how language learning happens have led to what Jacobs and Farrell (2003) have described as a paradigm shift that can be seen in eight major changes within a communicative orientation to language teaching (as summarized in Richards, 2006):



1. Learner autonomy: Learners are given more choice over their own learning both in terms of content and processes. Examples include working in small groups and evaluating their learning using measures of self-assessment.
2. The social nature of learning: Learning depends on interaction with others. An example of this would be cooperative learning.
3. Curricular integration: Connections between different strands or threads of learning are emphasized such that English is connected to other subjects. Examples of this include text-based learning as a means of developing fluency in text types that can be used in other contexts.
4. Focus on meaning: Meaning is viewed as the driving force of learning.
5. Diversity of learners: Learners learn in different ways and have different strengths. Teachers acknowledge these differences and use them to facilitate learning by developing learners' awareness of learning strategies.
6. Thinking skills: Language serves as a means of developing higher order thinking skills that can be applied in situations beyond the language classroom.
7. Alternative assessment: New and multiple forms of assessment are needed to move beyond the limited assessment of lower order thinking skills. Multiple forms of assessment, like observations, interviews, journals, and portfolios are used to build a comprehensive picture of what learners can do in a second/foreign language.
8. Teachers as co-learners: The teacher is viewed as a facilitator who learns through doing and responds to learners' needs as they arise.

## Resources

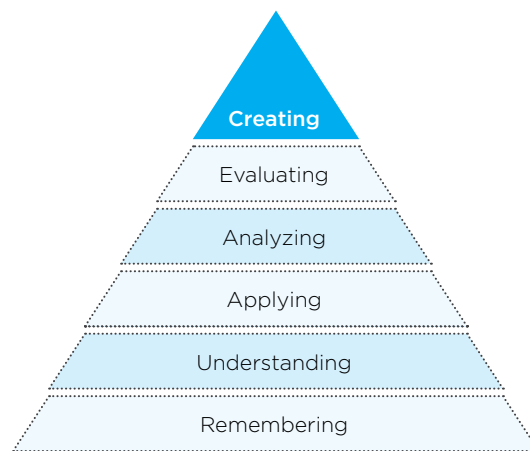
The role of the school in the area of English Language Teaching (**ELT**) is to expand, enhance, support and enrich all learners' linguistic, aesthetic, and thought capabilities in the course of their learning process. Education, or access to language learning, must be accompanied by availability. Availability has to do with the physical presence of objects (books, newspapers, magazines, encyclopedias, posters, CD-Rom, the internet, etc.) that can be sources for language input. This is especially important in EFL contexts, where learners may have limited opportunity to engage with the language outside of the educational context.

## Critical thinking skills

While communicative approaches in ELT focus on developing competencies for real life contexts, the quality and breadth of competencies are developed through a range of thinking skills. The CLIL focus on critical thinking skills draws upon Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives, a tool used to link thinking skills with outcomes through the use of descriptive learning objectives created with verbs classi-



fied as representative of specific domains: Remembering, Understanding, Application, Analysis, Evaluation, and Creation.



Bloom's Taxonomy (revised, 2001)

The domains are classified as lower order thinking skills (remembering, understanding, and applying) and higher order thinking skills (analyzing, evaluating, and creating). A curriculum that incorporates the teaching of critical thinking skills consciously teaches all domains, using lower order thinking skills to **scaffold** the development of higher order skills while facilitating a range of cognitive processes and expression linked to linguistic production through functions. The hierarchical representation as a pyramid emphasizes the importance of scaffolding to build critical thinking skills.

It is important to note that learning goals should support learners' ability to develop critical thinking skills that allow them to function in all domains, as well as work within multiple domains as determined by linguistic functions and contexts. For example, the ability to work with and create media draws upon facility with all domains (Paul & Elder, 2004), and skill development in higher orders of thinking is necessary for developing global focus and working within multiple literacies and modalities in the learning process (Kress & Selander, 2012).

Learning objectives that include critical thinking skills are expressed through specific verbs commonly associated with each domain. The verbs also serve as descriptors of activities and student production suitable to each domain. The relationship between domains, verbs, and production can be seen using the Bloom's Taxonomy Wheel.



## 4. Curricular Threads

The three main goals of the EFL curriculum are:

To develop learners' understanding of the world - of other cultures and their own - and to communicate their understanding and views to others through English.

To develop the personal, social, and intellectual skills needed to achieve their potential to participate productively in an increasingly globalized world that operates in English.

To create a love of learning languages starting at a young age, by means of engaging and positive learning experiences, in order to foster students' motivation to continue learning English throughout EGB and BGU, as well as work and beyond.

For both school levels, Educación General Básica (EGB) and Bachillerato General Unificado (BGU), the ELT area has been organized into five sections, or threads: 1) Communication and Cultural Awareness, 2) Oral Communication (Listening and Speaking), 3) Reading, 4) Writing, and 5) Language through the Arts. Each of these threads, in turn, can be further divided into sub-threads as shown in the following table:

4Cs	Curricular Threads	Sub-Threads
Culture / Citizenship	Communication and Cultural Awareness	Intercultural Awareness and Identity Social Competence and Values
	Oral Communication: (Listening and Speaking)	Listening Skills Spoken Production Spoken Interaction
Communication	Reading	Literacy-rich Environment Reading Comprehension Use of Resources & Study Skills Cross-curricular Content
Cognition		
Content	Writing	Initial Literacy Text Production
	Language through the Arts	Literary Texts in Context Creative Writing Creative Thinking Skills

CLIL, critical thinking skills, and curricular threads.





The EFL curriculum considers CLIL as a means to access and learn English in an authentic, meaningful context. Thus, the focus will be on language and language use, rather than knowledge of content.

Within each curricular sub-thread, CLIL and critical thinking skills will be distributed coherently according to the learning outcomes, taking into account the way these aspects interconnect to make language development and acquisition possible.

The CLIL content will be the vehicle for the context in which the language will be practiced, and through CLIL, learners will be provided with opportunities to develop and improve their critical thinking skills. In today's world, critical thinking skills are indispensable for becoming highly functioning adults. Some of these skills are highlighted below:

- Hypothesizing through prediction and conditions of probability and possibility.
- Comparing and contrasting by showing how things relate to each other.
- Describing cause and effect in natural and social processes.
- Classifying and grouping concepts and content by drawing relationships between objects and ideas and underlining differences.
- Measuring and using numbers.

Through a variety of reading sources, such as picture texts and articles, learners will implement and improve predicative skills and relational aspects, such as association, categorization, and finding meaning through context.

In conclusion, the content was constructed and organized keeping in mind the following criteria:

- Content is organized as related to the curricular threads.
- Language is **graded** and adapted by level of complexity and abstraction.
- Skills are developed gradually.
- Writing is seen as a means to achieving learning objectives, not as an end to learning.



## Curricular Thread 1: Communication and Cultural Awareness

The Communication and Cultural Awareness thread is comprised of two aspects: 1) Intercultural Awareness and Identity and 2) Social Competence and Values.

**Intercultural awareness and identity.** Today in our increasingly globalized world intercultural awareness is more important than ever. “To communicate internationally inevitably involves communicating interculturally as well” (Çakir, 2006, p. 1). By participating in the process of foreign language learning, learners can be given much-needed opportunities to do so, using the target language (English) as the vehicle to a richer understanding of one’s own culture, as well as cultures around the world. Through activities that promote intercultural awareness, learners can become aware of their own culture by understanding how they view other cultures from the viewpoint of their own, and how their culture is viewed by others. It involves being able to genuinely communicate with an understanding that goes beyond the four walls of the classroom into the real world. By talking about where they come from and learning about children in other countries, learners will develop a wider perspective of reality as well as cultural sensitivity.

**Social competence and values.** Social competence, or the ability to interact socially and appropriately in a given situation, also plays an integral role in the development of young learners. Learners develop social skills in the EFL classroom by learning to work together cooperatively, accepting points of view that are different from their own, negotiating, and learning about reciprocity. Through the use of conversation, role plays and group work, learners acquire the skills needed to develop self-efficacy and morals, as well. By becoming socially competent children, we set the stage for later, improved social interactions as adolescents and adults.

The content of this sub-thread promotes tolerance by leading learners to learn respect for themselves and the natural environment, which in turn will develop respect for others. Other values such as exercising discipline, sharing, and turn-taking are interwoven throughout the thread in order to create well-developed, social beings.

## Curricular Thread 2: Oral Communication (Listening and Speaking)

Listening and speaking are skills that should be seen as a holistic process (Richards, 2006). The two skills are closely related, and therefore the EFL curriculum takes the position that they should be considered within the same curricular thread, Oral Communication. With this in mind, the two macro-skills of listening and speaking should be integrated in the classroom, taking care to assure that they be taught within a meaningful, communicative context.

The EFL curriculum recognizes the importance of listening and speaking as skills essential in the communicative competence of English language learning, although this does not disregard the permanent, ongoing relationship between oral communication and reading and writing skills. In other words, we talk in order to write and vice versa.



The Oral Communication thread is divided into three sub-threads: 1) Listening Skills, 2) Spoken Production, and 3) Spoken Interaction.

**Listening skills.** The act of listening is a highly complex process in which the listener must activate **schema**, infer, predict, construct meaning, and use short and long term memory functions almost simultaneously. In order to minimize problems that could occur within this process and assure that learners are able to apply L1 listening strategies to L2 comprehension, learners must be given the opportunity to listen to texts that relate to their age, interests, background, and language needs.

Throughout the EFL curriculum, learners will be introduced to listening strategies intended to improve their listening comprehension. Some of these strategies include listening for **gist**, listening for detail, inferring, and predicting. Learners can be led to practice and implement these strategies through the use of listening tasks that focus on each one in a meaningful context. The use of ICT is recommended as a means to expose learners to a variety of authentic listening texts, from songs and poetry to short dialogues and informative texts such as advertisements and announcements. In turn, these authentic texts will aid learners in terms of pronunciation skills such as stress, rhythm, and intonation.

**Spoken production.** The Spoken Production sub-thread focuses on the principle of **fluency** over **accuracy**. Learners will learn the sounds of English through motivating and engaging tasks aimed to increase their confidence levels in regards to the language. The focus on fluency over accuracy (or we could say meaning over form) will also increase learners' self-confidence and motivation and, in turn, lower the **affective filter**, thus leading to motivation to continue learning and producing L2 (Krashen, 1985).

Studies have shown that in young children, inhibition is low and the tendency to imitate is high. Thus, in EGB, learners will start on their journey of spoken production through imitation, using songs, rhymes, tongue twisters, and **chants**. As learners develop more cognitive and social skills, they will engage in more direct forms of spoken production, such as can be developed in short dialogues, role plays, and speeches.

Spoken production is also closely related to pronunciation and **intelligibility**. For instance, learners will practice the individual sounds of English and speaking strategies aimed to improve clarity and effective expression.

**Spoken interaction.** Oral communication comprises a set of key skills that can be used for collaborative learning. This includes not only what is traditionally thought of as the skills of speaking and listening, but also other abilities needed for developing skills of interaction: the role of group work as well as the social element of group work, which augments confidence and motivation; problem-solving; participation in risk-taking by accepting trial and error and the role of mistakes in language learning; and encouragement of linguistic creativity and expression. Tasks involving spoken interaction must be carefully scaffolded and the language graded in order to meet the production needs of the learners.



Spoken interaction as conceived in this sub-thread includes both verbal and non-verbal communication. Communication strategies (e.g. asking for clarification and paraphrasing what was said), along with the function of language in various communicative situations (i.e. online interaction, phone, presentations), can be considered the backbone for using language as a social construct in spoken interaction. Learners should therefore participate in a variety of spoken contexts, from informal expression such as talking with friends, to more formal levels of expression such as presentations and speeches, in order to assure that they are experiencing diverse communication situations in which to apply the various communication strategies.

### Curricular Thread 3: Reading

The principal goal of the Reading curricular thread is to develop learners who are willing and able to interact autonomously with written texts in order to do a variety of tasks, such as extract information, learn about the world around them, and communicate.

Four sub-threads are considered: 1) Literacy-rich Environment, 2) Reading Comprehension, 3) Use of Resources and Study Skills, and 4) Cross-curricular Content.

**Literacy-rich Environment.** Recent research has shown that children who are raised in “print-oriented societies are engaged, from very early in their lives, in making sense of the printed word, in figuring out the symbolic nature of print, in discovering that print may serve a variety of functions” (Hudelson, 1994, p. 131). Therefore, this sub-thread is based on the consideration that the acquisition of written, and even spoken, language can improve in literacy-rich environments. Classrooms that support a literacy-rich environment will include elements such as displays of student work and student-produced posters on the walls; classroom libraries; computers or access to other ICT, such as Wi-Fi; time for independent reading; word walls; and labels on classroom objects that help English language learners with vocabulary and literacy.

Literacy-rich environments also create access to a particular culture, the “print culture”, which perceives written language as a social practice. If we define literacy as more than just knowing *how* to and being *able* to read and write, but in addition consider it to be a language process as a means to self-expression and a better understanding of the world, then clearly we can see that print culture signifies identifying with and belonging to a particular community with particular intentions. In other words, in learning to read and write not only does one gain mastery of a code of graphic symbols, but also a set of social practices that each community is building, rebuilding and categorizing in a certain way. As Susan Hudelson (1994) notes:

literacy serves people by providing one medium through which individuals can learn about the world and share their understandings with others, accomplish some of the daily tasks of living, make and maintain connections with other people, express both uniqueness and commonality with others, reflect upon and try to act upon individual and

community problems, make some changes in the world, enjoy the richness of language, understand their cultural heritages and the heritages of others, and struggle with the human condition and what it means to be human (p. 130).

Along this vein, it is clear that students who become literate in both their mother tongue as well as a foreign language have ample opportunities to not only find new ways to express themselves, but also comprehend their national and personal identity on a more complex, deeper, and richer level.

In addition to recognizing that there are a variety of experiences and uses for reading and writing depending on the purpose and the different social and cultural contexts, students should explore the broad range of possibilities offered in the print culture of a foreign language. In today's world, knowing another language is an essential component of being a global citizen. One who knows English, for instance, can communicate with a broad range of people from other countries and contexts. English has become the language of science and technology as well, and those who cannot read or write in English may be limited in future opportunities that would contribute to their personal and/or academic development, such as traveling for pleasure or being considered for scholarships and future job positions. In this sense, learning English as a foreign language is seen as an act of inclusion.

Learning within a literacy-rich environment strengthens and supports speaking, listening, reading, and writing in a variety of authentic ways, through both print and digital media. With the teachers' support, students discover the benefits and advantages of becoming literate. Primary and secondary school are the ideal places to encourage students to access and participate in literacy-rich activities, such as forums, poetry recitals, book contests, theater performances, writing for school magazines or newspapers, corresponding with students from other schools, or creating a collection of stories, etc. All of these activities will help students to understand that mastery of language skills goes beyond learning about spelling rules or grammar rules, and that becoming truly competent users of the written language guarantees better personal and social development.

**Reading comprehension.** There are myriad reasons for developing reading skills in and outside of the classroom. Through reading, learners will improve their critical thinking skills, learn to communicate more effectively, develop coding and decoding skills, improve study skills, and use reading texts as sources of information. Reading for pleasure is promoted essentially through the Language through the Arts thread.

Reading is seen as a highly complex cognitive process in which many mental operations are involved and by which each reader constructs meaning and gives meaning to the text. Reading is, then, tantamount to understanding, and the purpose of education is to train people to self-regulate their reading through the discriminating and autonomous application of a range of reading strategies. In EFL, reading will also become a way to access meaning without translating, as in silent reading vs. reading aloud.

In addition, various studies, including those made famous by Stephen Krashen in *The Power of Reading* (2004), have shown that reading promotes learning across subjects. Students who read show improvement not only in language use but also in all other subjects - math, science, arts. In terms of its importance to the EFL curriculum, Harmer (2007) notes that reading is useful for acquisition of English. Through reading, learners can improve grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation since written texts are good **models** for language itself. In fact, studies show that reading is more effective in improving learners' structure and lexis than other traditional classroom activities like substitution drills, clozed activities, and transformation exercises. Krashen (2013) states that reading increases vocabulary in L2, knowledge of the language, and how it is used in real-life contexts. In this sense it could be said that reading provides the backbone for success in the other macro- and sub-skills.

Reading comprehension also involves noticing how texts are organized, understanding discourse analysis such as occurs by contrasting L1/L2 styles, activating schema, and recognizing connectors and linking words that help with the organization of texts. Learners should be able to identify and understand simple informational texts such as emails, labels, messages, advertisements, etc. Skimming for gist, scanning for specific information, reading for detail, and making inferences are part of the skill set which allows readers to process these texts. Emphasis has been placed on making inferences, which could be considered one of the principal skills for successful comprehension as well as a higher order thinking skill. In addition, strategies that help the reader overcome obstacles to understanding when construction of meaning becomes difficult are also considered within the Reading Comprehension sub-thread. Some of these strategies include drawing conclusions and making assumptions, using schema to activate prior knowledge, and focusing on what is known in order to help inform what is not known.

**Use of resources and study skills.** Another goal of the EFL curriculum in terms of reading is to educate people to make use of the variety of resources and sources of information that surround us on a daily basis. These sources include but are not limited to ICT resources, printed sources, and interpersonal written communication, with an emphasis on the use of libraries and internet access. Reading is also considered a resource for improving and developing study skills, which makes it an essential component of any language curriculum. The Reading thread develops the skills needed to use these resources to be able to identify, select, collect, organize, and analyze information, while building autonomy and the ability to critically evaluate the sources consulted.

**Cross-curricular content.** The purpose of this sub-thread is to overlap subject content from the other curricula of EGB and BGU onto English language use, in order to create interest, increase motivation to learn, and establish authentic context for communicating with the foreign language.



## Curricular Thread 4: Writing

Writing can be defined as a highly cognitive and metacognitive intellectual act which takes into consideration a plethora of pre-requisites: intention of author; the desire to communicate and share ideas; knowledge of vocabulary, text types and the organization of each; identification and understanding of audience and purpose; and ability to manipulate the written “code”. Because of these considerations, competence in writing is a complex process which must be developed gradually and progressively throughout an individual’s school years and beyond.

At this point it should be mentioned that although the curricular threads have separated the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing up to this point, they are, by nature, interrelated and must be integrated in the classroom. For instance, one speaks and reads in order to write, and writes and reads in order to speak. Thus, the four skills are part of an integrated approach to language learning and as such must not be completely separated from one another. Taking these thoughts into consideration, the Writing curricular thread has been further broken down into two aspects: 1) Initial Literacy and 2) Text Production.

**Initial literacy.** For most people, literacy events are a part of everyday life. Reading an email, receiving a birthday card, jotting down an idea, reading a street sign - all contribute to form the literate person. With the advent and proliferation of access to ICT, literacy skills have become a part of many learners’ contexts not only at school but at home as well. Literacy skills are an integral part of a person’s life.

Initial literacy can be problematic, even in one’s first language. Not only is writing “less natural” than speaking, but the fact that the writer is much more distant from the reader (which is not generally true in terms of the speaker and listener), makes it that much more difficult. The learner has to construct meaning from the written word in contexts that offer less support for meaning (Cameron, 2001), which can complicate literacy not only in L1 but also in L2.

In addition, initial literacy in L2 is influenced by a few essential factors. According to Cameron (2001), these are as follows:

- “The nature of the written forms of the first language;
- The learner’s previous experience in L1 literacy;
- The learner’s knowledge of the foreign language (in this case English);
- The learner’s age” (p. 134).

Because of these four factors, initial literacy in L2 will be largely influenced by the learner’s knowledge and level of literacy in L1. The natural process of learning one’s first language means that as another language is encountered, the brain attempts to apply what it knows about L1 by looking for familiar cues. In addition to what



can be transferred from L1 to L2, learners will also need to develop understandings of new cues in order to develop literacy in the foreign language. Furthermore, because the grapho-phonemic relationships in English will most likely vary from those learned in Spanish (or other languages), learners will need to learn extra reading skills, as well as some new letter-sound relationships, in order to become a literate user of English.

To complicate matters further, learners who are struggling with literacy in L1 will be faced with added challenges to becoming literate in L2 or a foreign language (**FL**). If literacy is only partly developed in the L1, then the learner will have fewer strategies to transfer to the L2/FL. “Backward transfer”, where learners apply L2/FL literacy skills to L1, may even occur (Cameron, 2001).

The learner’s knowledge of the L2/FL also plays an essential part in acquiring FL literacy. Oral skills and oral communication are important in L2/FL literacy. Through listening and speaking, learners can develop an awareness of phonological relationships between letters and sounds. Knowing vocabulary assures that learners can use the words they already know to build word recognition and hold ideas and thoughts in short term memory as meaning is constructed.

Finally, the learner’s age is important to consider as well. The younger the child, the more likely he/she is still developing literacy skills in L1, which means he/she is still learning how the written word and written texts function. Since children are still mastering the motor skills needed to form letters and shapes and join letters into words and words into sentences, it is recommended that literacy skills built in the FL be done so at a very simple level. Some ideas for this include tracing letters and words and reading single words and/or simple sentences based on very familiar subjects (i.e. family, objects in the classroom).

EFL literacy instruction must find a balance between a focus on meaningful exposure and explicit instruction (Kang Shin, 2015). Even though there may only be a few hours a week for EFL instruction, teachers should focus on literacy and not just on oral communication. Because literacy is all-pervading in most societies, it is an important consideration in both L1 and L2/FL. In order for the EFL learner to develop literacy skills in English, the learner should be immersed in print and literature (Kang Shin, 2015), as described in the curricular threads Communication and Cultural Awareness and Language through the Arts. Thus, important connections between the four macro-skills of English (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) and the use of CLIL and the arts to immerse students in the language have been made throughout the EFL curriculum.

**Text production.** According to Penny Ur (2012), the purpose of writing is the expression of ideas, where the ability to convey a message to the reader takes precedence over other aspects of writing. Massi (2001) sees writing as “...an interactive process by nature since it evolves out of the symbolic interplay between writer, text and reader”. Thus, throughout the EFL curriculum, writing is treated as a social practice. In other words, it always has a context, a purpose, and an audience. This curricular thread of Writing considers written production to be a communication





tool, used for transmitting information, ideas, and knowledge. Creative writing is considered separately in the thread of Language Through the Arts.

As mentioned above, writing is a communicative tool. One writes for an audience with a particular purpose in mind, and based on this audience the writer chooses the **register** (formal/informal), **tone**, lexis, and content.

Writing is a way to learn. Through writing, people express what they know and thus discover what they don't know. While writing, various cognitive skills are put to use: analyze, compare, classify, deduce, relate, and interpret, all of which are specified in language skills. Thus we see that in the process of writing, learners are encouraged, if not obliged, to work within the higher domains of Bloom's taxonomy: analyze, evaluate and create (as revised in 2001).

Writing is a method with epistemic potential. **Process writing** encourages learners to think about and use language in a creative and critical manner. As students work through each stage in the process, from **brainstorming** to editing, they gain valuable insight into giving and receiving feedback and finding ways to express themselves clearly and effectively.

Written expression for EFL learners can be conceptualized in a variety of manners. Writing can be used to describe and write about the self, thus exploring and understanding personal and national identity. Writing can be used for learning purposes, as the process of writing makes thoughts and ideas visible to others, facilitating reflection and self-regulation of thoughts and beliefs. Writing can be used as a link to connect with others. This is especially evident in the use of ICT, where learners may engage in writing activities such as messaged conversations and email, or projects of another nature such as collaborative writing assignments.

The act of writing includes important aspects such as:

- Handwriting and the mechanics of writing (including the use of ICT for written texts, known as typography).
- Spelling patterns and the role of phonetics in English language spelling, such as non-correspondence of **phonemes** and **graphemes**, irregular spelling rules, and silent letters.
- Layout and organization as dictated by text type: recognizing differences between L1 and L2 writing styles, identifying specific formats within text types (recipes, songs/rhymes, newspaper articles, essays).

As learners of EGB develop a more sophisticated understanding of how other people think, they begin to develop empathy, or what Frith (as cited in Cameron, 2001, p. 155) refers to as "theory of mind". This empathy is the basis of all writing, as learners must learn how to write for a particular audience. Writing done by EGB learners should be "APT"; that is, have a clear Audience, Purpose, and Topic (Cameron, 2001, p. 156). Writing tasks can be constructed around CLIL content, but it should be kept



in mind that all writing, whether for pleasure or academic purposes, must be centered on learners' interests, motivation, and need to communicate.

In addition, as learners progress in their writing skills, special attention to the process of writing (as opposed to the final product) should be given to ensure learners are allowed opportunities to develop their own intentions as authors, to share and elaborate on ideas that matter to them, and to work collaboratively with others using ICT as a means to help organize, arrange, and edit/clarify their ideas.

## Curricular Thread 5: Language through the Arts

Dewey (as cited in Upitis, 2011, p. 15) claimed, among many other things, that “the role of education was not only to prepare students for later life, but also to engage students wholly in life at the present moment”. He further claimed (as cited in Upitis, 2011, p. 15) that the most effective way to stimulate this engagement is by involving what he referred to as the “four occupations of childhood”: conversation, inquiry, making things, and artistic expression. If we consider that the arts can engage the learner wholly, that is intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically (Upitis, 2011), then it goes without saying that the thread of Language through the Arts is a fundamental component of the EFL curriculum.

Considering the above, three sub-threads have been established for this curricular thread: 1) Literary Texts in Context, 2) Creative Writing and 3) Creative Thinking Skills. Here we make distinctions between responding to literature (both oral and written texts), written production to clearly express thoughts and ideas, and the potential to develop learners' creative thinking skills through their engagement in content within the arts.

**Literary Texts in Context.** This sub-thread takes the broad philosophy that literary texts are sources of stories and themes. These stories and themes represent holistic approaches to language learning by considering both oral and written texts as rich resources for learners' involvement with authentic uses of the foreign language (Cameron, 2001). Stories and themes provide opportunities for students to find and construct coherence and meaning on one hand, and to engage with the language out of pure enjoyment, on the other. Stories invite learners to enter an imaginary world created solely by language, and through interaction with this imaginary world, engage in the language in a variety of contexts, learning the language as they go. Themes, which encompass broad, overarching ideas or topics, offer opportunities for students to pursue personal interests through the foreign language, in this case English (Cameron, 2001).

Within this curricular thread, “literary texts” should be considered not just written texts (such as signs, rules, instructions, poetry, stories, legends, and myths), but also oral texts (such as chants, stories, verbal instructions, rhymes, songs, riddles, and jokes). It should also be mentioned and noted that story telling is an oral activity, meant to be listened to and perhaps even participated in.



In EGB, students will be given increased exposure to literary texts, in the hopes of making them better, more active readers while at the same time kindling a love for reading that will last the child's entire life. In these early years of education, it is not about turning the learner into a specialized reader. It is not necessary to have learners analyze formal structures of texts or deconstruct the text for meaning. Instead, the purpose is to stimulate a joy of reading and to instill reading habits for the future. The use of literary texts in the EFL classroom should be viewed as a means for awakening and enhancing the learner's aesthetic sensibility, imagination, symbolic thought, memory, and language macro-skills.

At the BGU level, in contrast, the study of literary texts, in this case "literature", is more specialized. Learners at this higher level must be capable of examining, enjoying, and appreciating literary texts in terms of structure and genre, thus entering into a type of dialogue with the history, tradition, and culture of the literature itself. In doing so, the learner develops a sense of ownership with respect to this literary tradition, which is a part of his/her national history and identity, while also belonging to a worldwide tradition of culture and history.

Regardless of the specific objectives at each level of education, the one thing they both have in common is the goal of creating lifelong readers with the creative and critical thinking skills needed to interact with literary texts in order to express global, humanistic concepts of a personal, social, and cultural nature.

It must be noted that in contrast to L1 language learning, L2 literary texts should be based on learners' interests and the opportunities the texts offer for language learning, as well as entertainment value. In other words, the EFL curriculum puts a focus on literary texts as a vehicle to facilitate language learning and as a stimulus for motivation in the classroom, rather than an introduction to the great literary works of our age. Consequently, for each level a list of recommended titles, based on language level, interests by age, and relevance to foreign language learning, will be provided to teachers so that they may create a selection of texts that are appropriate to their particular classroom and learners.

In the words of Stephen Krashen (2015, p. 28),

Most people don't care about language acquisition. For most people, it's the story and/or the ideas that count. Instead of trying to motivate our students by urging them to work hard and reminding them how important it is to know English, let's take advantage of the natural process, and make sure they have access to input that they find compelling, in class and outside of class.

**Creative Writing.** This sub-thread considers the nature of creative writing in the EFL classroom. The act of creative writing builds another level in the relationship between learner and literary texts. This relationship stems from the interaction the learner has with the function of language and how humans co-exist with words, and not from the dogmatic idea that creative writing is something that every learner must do and must do in a certain, "correct", way. Instead, the sub-thread of Creative writing emphasizes learners' responses to literary texts, how they relate to the writ-

ten and spoken word, making it their own and playing with it in order to reflect their personal experiences, cultural context, and surrounding environment.

Creative writing should be developed in workshop format, in which the learner writes during class time in order to receive feedback from both teacher and peers. Starting with short texts, such as a riddle or short song lyric, learners will eventually learn to express their emotions, feelings, and dreams through the written word. Therefore, the creative writing tasks should come from learners' interests and be relevant to their daily lives, forcing them to look deep within themselves as a source of inspiration. Such tasks may include exercises in free writing, completing very simple short stories, and journal writing.

In addition, as learners attempt to express their ideas in English, they interact with the language on a level that cannot be replicated in other ways, thus creating avenues of expression that not only build reading and writing skills, but can also foster self-esteem and enhance communication skills.

**Creative thinking skills.** By participating in creative activities such as music, art, dance, and poetry, students will be stimulated and motivated to integrate multiple modes of communication and expression through the use of language. The application of an arts education has the potential to promote all communicative, educational, intercultural and aesthetic outcomes (Gehring, n.d.) and prepares students for lifelong learning opportunities. An arts education contributes to the education of the child in that it encourages risk-taking, improves self-confidence and self-awareness, nurtures social skills development, and increases metacognition, while improving self-regulation, memory, motivation, and attention.

Learners immersed in language learning through an arts education program enjoy improved creative thinking skills, which are indispensable for becoming highly functioning adults later in life. Some of these skills are highlighted below:

- Problem-solving skills through participation in games and puzzles.
- Generating and extending ideas by responding to and evaluating oral and written texts (e.g. myths, legends, stories, riddles, songs, poems, rhymes, etc.).
- Making mistakes and learning from what worked and what did not.
- Risk-taking and having confidence in one's judgment.
- Imagining and looking for innovative outcomes.
- Brainstorming and not judging ideas early in the creative process; accepting all ideas as potential "seeds" from which something wonderful can grow.

As outlined above and in conclusion, one of the primary functions of the EFL curriculum is to engage learners in the language by learning *in*, *about*, and *through* the arts (Upitis, 2011).

## 5. Profile of the Ecuadorian High School Graduate and Ideal Citizen for 2015

Justice	Innovation	Solidarity
<p>J.1. We understand the needs and strengths of our country and commit to building an equal, inclusive, and democratic society.</p> <p>J.2. Our actions are carried out with ethics, generosity, integrity, coherence, and honesty, in mind.</p> <p>J.3. We act with respect and responsibility both towards ourselves and others, nature, and the world of ideas. We meet our obligations and demand respect for our rights.</p> <p>J.4. We accept and act on our strengths and weaknesses in order to become better human beings and fulfill our life plan.</p>	<p>I.1. We have creative initiatives and proceed with passion, open minds, and a vision of the future. We assume authentic leadership, are responsible and proactive when making decisions, and prepare ourselves to face the risks brought on by our actions.</p> <p>I.2. We are driven by intellectual curiosity, question both local and international realities, reflect on and apply our interdisciplinary knowledge to cope with problems in a collaborative and codependent manner, so as to take advantage of all possible way using all possible resources and information.</p> <p>I.3. We can communicate in a clear manner, in our own and other languages. We make use of different codes of communication such as numerical, digital, artistic, and gestures. We take responsibility for what we say.</p> <p>I.4. We perform our actions in an organized manner, with independence and autonomy. We use logical, complex and critical thinking skills and practice intellectual humility throughout our learning process in life.</p>	<p>S.1. We take on social responsibility and have the ability to interact with heterogeneous groups from an understanding, tolerant, and empathetic standpoint.</p> <p>S.2. We build our national identity in search of a peaceful world and we value our multi-ethnicity and multi-cultural background. We respect the identity of other people and individuals.</p> <p>S.3. We look for harmony between the physical and the intellectual. We use our emotional intelligence to be positive, flexible, friendly, and self-critical.</p> <p>S.4. We adapt to the demands of working as part of a team, understanding the context and respecting the ideas and contributions of other people.</p>

## 6. General Objectives of the English as a Foreign Language area by the end of the Bachillerato General Unificado

### The Ecuadorian High School Student's Exit Profile

The Bachillerato General Unificado (BGU) aims to shape young people who are well-prepared for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and are ready to participate in a globalized, democratic society, through ongoing learning, work, and entrepreneurial activities.

By the end of high school, and as a result of the skills developed and subject knowledge acquired through the EFL curriculum, learners will be able to:

OG.EFL 1	Encounter socio-cultural aspects of their own and other countries in a thoughtful and inquisitive manner, maturely, and openly experiencing other cultures and languages from the secure standpoint of their own national and cultural identity.
OG.EFL 2	Draw on this established propensity for curiosity and tolerance towards different cultures to comprehend the role of diversity in building an intercultural and multinational society.
OG.EFL 3	Access greater flexibility of mind, creativity, enhanced linguistic intelligence, and critical thinking skills through an appreciation of linguistic differences. Enjoy an enriched perspective of their own L1 and of language use for communication and learning.
OG.EFL 4	Deploy a range of learning strategies, thereby increasing disposition and ability to independently access further (language) learning and practice opportunities. Respect themselves and others within the communication process, cultivating habits of honesty and integrity into responsible academic behavior.
OG.EFL 5	Directly access the main points and important details of up-to-date English language texts, such as those published on the web, for professional or general investigation, through the efficient use of ICT and reference tools where required.
OG.EFL 6	Through selected media, participate in reasonably extended spoken or written dialogue with peers from different L1 backgrounds on work, study, or general topics of common interest, expressing ideas and opinions effectively and appropriately.
OG.EFL 7	Interact quite clearly, confidently, and appropriately in a range of formal and informal social situations with a limited but effective command of the spoken language (CEFR B1 level).



<b>accuracy</b>	The ability to produce language that is clearly articulated and grammatically and phonologically correct, with few errors. If any errors are made, they are non-impeding, i.e., they don't affect the <i>meaning</i> . Accuracy usually refers to the degree to which the language conforms to the accepted rule of the language.
<b>acquisition</b>	A term used to describe language that is absorbed spontaneously, without conscious effort, much like the way children pick up their mother tongue.
<b>affective filter</b>	This term was coined by Stephen Krashen. Learners do not digest everything that they are taught. Some features are digested, while others are "filtered" out, depending on affective factors such as motivation, attitudes, emotion, and anxiety. Krashen suggests that in order for learners to learn better, teachers should try to reduce the affective filter (which acts as a wall to block learning) by reducing negative emotional and motivational factors such as feelings of anxiety, boredom, fear, etc. and instead make learning fun, enjoyable, and low-anxiety.
<b>articulators</b>	The movable organs that are involved in the production of speech sounds, e.g., the lips and tongue.
<b>authentic</b>	This term refers to texts, tasks, and material taken from the real world, created and produced for native speakers of the language, and not manipulated or adapted for learning purposes.
<b>authentic language</b>	Real or natural language as used by native speakers of a language in real-life contexts, as opposed to artificial or contrived language which is used for purposes of learning grammatical forms or vocabulary.
<b>backchanneling</b>	A way of showing a speaker that you are following what he/she is saying and understand. Some examples are the phrases I see, yes, and OK.
<b>brainstorming</b>	The process where learners work together freely to contribute their ideas on a topic or subject in order to generate additional ideas and thoughts.





<b>chants</b>	Also known as jazz chants, these are repetitive lines of rhythmic text that learners say out loud in a group.
<b>chunks (of language)</b>	Short phrases learned as a unit and that frequently occur together. These may include collocations, idioms, and phrasal verbs.
<b>communication breakdown</b>	A failure in communication that occurs when the message is not comprehensible to one of the people involved.
<b>cooperative learning</b>	A teaching method in which learners are placed in small groups of different levels and given a task to complete together. Some examples of cooperative learning tasks include <b>jigsaw</b> activities and <b>information gaps</b> . Cooperative learning has been shown to improve intergroup relations, especially among culturally and linguistically diverse learners.
<b>critical thinking skills</b>	Critical thinking skills entail a variety of skills that go beyond memorization and recall of information and facts. Some examples are evaluating, interpreting, or synthesizing information, and using creative thinking to solve a problem.
<b>digital literacy</b>	Digital literacy is the ability to find, evaluate, create, store, and communicate information using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Digitally literate individuals can communicate and work more efficiently, especially on the computer.
<b>ELT</b>	English language teaching
<b>emergent readers</b>	These are readers who are just beginning to understand the relationship between sound and symbol, and that print carries meaning. Texts for emergent readers should have strong picture and visual support.

<b>engagement</b>	In education, this refers to the attitudes learners bring to a task. It is the degree of attention, optimism, curiosity, interest and passion they exhibit as they are being taught. In the classroom, learner engagement means the students are active: taking notes, interacting with each other, reacting to a task, exploring ideas by asking questions, etc. Learner engagement is directly related to the level of motivation a learner has to learn and progress in their own learning.
<b>environmental print</b>	The print of everyday life, such as that found on street signs, logos, labels, price tags, candy wrappers, and road safety or warning signs.
<b>extended reading</b>	Reading for enjoyment.
<b>extensive listening</b>	Listening for gist, or the overall, global meaning of a spoken text.
<b>facilitator</b>	One way to describe a teacher's interaction with the learners. Teachers who act as facilitators work in partnership with their learners in order to develop their language skills and do not tend to dominate the classroom.
<b>FL</b>	foreign language, as opposed to a first or second (or third, etc.) language
<b>fluency</b>	Natural, normal, native-like speech that is characterized by the ability to express oneself with little or no effort, i.e. without undue pauses or hesitations.
<b>form</b>	The structure, or grammar, of the language.
<b>formative</b>	A type of assessment that monitors student learning. Some examples would be asking learners to draw a concept map in class to represent their understanding of a topic, or asking learners to summarize a reading text in one or two sentences. In formative testing, teachers use the results to inform themselves about their teaching.
<b>gist</b>	The main points of a piece of text (or audio segment).



<b>graded</b>	Language or text that has been adapted for language learners and targets the specific language level of the learner.
<b>graphemes</b>	The written symbols for the sounds in a language, i.e. the letters of the alphabet or a character in picture writing.
<b>graphic organizers</b>	Graphic organizers are types of visual support used to express knowledge, concepts, thoughts and ideas and the relationships between them. Examples of graphic organizers are: concept maps, knowledge maps, and story maps.
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communication technologies. The use of a variety of technological tools in order to communicate, to store information, and to create material. Some examples of tools include: smartphones, Internet, computers, audio and video, etc.
<b>impeding errors</b>	Errors in meaning and language conventions that obstruct meaning.
<b>inductive</b>	An inductive approach to learning is one in which the students discover the rules of a language through extensive use of the language and exposure to many examples, which are taught in context or in a practical situation.
<b>information-gap tasks</b>	A type of activity where learners must fill in missing information, with each learner holding a part of the information that the other student does not have. Learners communicate with each other in order to obtain the information they are missing and be able to complete the task.
<b>input</b>	The language that the learner is exposed to through hearing or reading. In <b>ELT</b> it can also refer to the instructions or information that the teacher provides in order to help students understand the objectives.
<b>intelligibility</b>	The capacity of being clear and easy to understand. It refers to how well the speaker's message is actually understood by the listener.
<b>intensive listening</b>	Listening for specific information and details.

<p><b>interculturality</b></p>	<p>Refers to interaction between people of diverse cultural backgrounds, using <b>authentic language</b> in a way that demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the cultures. The intercultural classroom celebrates and recognizes the diversity of all humans and world views, and promotes equality and human rights while challenging discrimination.</p>
<p><b>interlanguage</b></p>	<p>The language a student speaks at any given time during the learning process of the foreign language. It refers to the learner's current command of the language and will change and develop as the learner becomes more proficient.</p>
<p><b>intrinsic motivation</b></p>	<p>A type of motivation which comes from the learner's genuine interest in learning the language. An intrinsically motivated learner is one which wants to communicate and learn the language and culture of the speakers of that language for his/her own, personal, purposes. It is believed that the level of a learner's intrinsic motivation often determines whether he/she embarks on a task at all, how much energy he/she devotes to it, and how long he/she perseveres at the task.</p>
<p><b>jazz chants</b></p>	<p>Repetitive lines of rhythmic text that learners say out loud in a group.</p>
<p><b>jigsaw task</b></p>	<p>A <b>cooperative learning</b> technique where students work in groups to teach each other something. Each individual student is assigned one part of the task and must become the expert on it in order to teach the other members of the group.</p>
<p><b>journal</b></p>	<p>A journal is a notebook which learners can use to practice free writing, express thoughts, and reflect. The learners receive feedback from the teacher on a regular basis.</p>
<p><b>L1 / L2</b></p>	<p>L1 refers to a person's mother tongue, the first language learned at home and in his/her environment.</p> <p>L2 refers to the learner's second language, although in ELT it often refers to English being learned as a foreign language (FL).</p>



<p><b>learner-centered</b></p>	<p>Also known as student-centered, this refers to the approach in which the focus is on the learners as opposed to the teacher. In a learner-centered classroom, students' goals, needs, and interests are given priority and the teacher becomes a facilitator of learning rather than a director of learning. In learner-centered classes, learners are actively involved and spend more time talking than the teacher.</p> <p>A <b>learner-centered curriculum</b> requires learners to participate and play a responsible role in deciding what they will learn and how. For example, learners set themselves linguistic goals, and decide how they intend to achieve the goals.</p>
<p><b>learning strategies</b></p>	<p>Using a plan or conscious action to achieve an objective. For example, learners might decide consciously how they plan to learn more vocabulary, or how they want to remember a grammar rule. Teachers should encourage learners to experiment with new strategies, so that they learn what works best for them.</p>
<p><b>lingua franca</b></p>	<p>A lingua franca is a language that has been adopted by people whose native languages are different in order to make communication possible, especially in commercial, trade, or educational contexts.</p>
<p><b>modalities</b></p>	<p>Used to refer to a speaker's or writer's attitudes towards the world or a topic. For instance, a speaker can express possibility, certainty, willingness, necessity or ability by using modal words and expressions.</p>
<p><b>modeling/model</b></p>	<p>The instructional strategy in which the teacher provides learners with an accurate example of the language or task they are being asked to produce. Through modeling, learners can first observe what is expected of them so that they feel more comfortable in the production stage.</p>

<p><b>noticing</b></p>	<p>The techniques that refer to the process in which a learner - consciously or subconsciously - notices the language around them, such as spelling, grammar, collocation, stress, etc.</p> <p>There are two kinds of noticing: 1) noticing the language one sees and hears, and 2) noticing the difference between what one produces and what one sees and hears (usually called “noticing the gap”). When teaching grammar, teachers often call upon the learners to look at examples and notice a particular form that is new to the learners.</p>
<p><b>performative aspects of language</b></p>	<p>Refers to a view of the language by which words take on more than just their dictionary definitions, and begin to “do” something as a meaningful unit. One example is the phrase “I do,” which weds two people. In <b>ELT</b>, what is usually meant is the actually demonstrated ability of a speaker to use the language, as opposed to the speaker’s knowledge about the language.</p>
<p><b>phoneme</b></p>	<p>The smallest unit of sound, it carries no meaning on its own.</p>
<p><b>process writing</b></p>	<p>An approach to writing in which learners work through the various strategies of the pre-writing, writing, and revision and editing stages.</p>
<p><b>purposeful communicative interaction</b></p>	<p>This is communication that has a purpose and an intention; in other words, there is a clear reason to communicate. Some examples may include ordering food at a restaurant or greeting people.</p>
<p><b>register</b></p>	<p>A variety of language used for a particular purpose or in a particular social setting.</p>
<p><b>rote learning</b></p>	<p>Learning something in order to be able to reproduce it from memory rather than in order to understand it.</p>
<p><b>scaffold / scaffolding / scaffolded</b></p>	<p>Techniques teachers can use in order to help support student learning. Some examples might be providing visual support for a text or breaking a larger task down into more manageable parts that can be completed separately.</p>



<b>schema (plural) / schemata (singular)</b>	A learner's previous, background knowledge. It considers what learners know about a topic before they come to class. Current learning theory builds from the fact that we construct meaning by connecting new learning to old learning.
<b>segmental</b>	The discrete elements of speech, such as consonant and vowel sounds.
<b>suprasegmental</b>	In linguistics, those features of speech pertaining to stress, pitch, intonation, and length that may extend over more than one segmental element.
<b>summative</b>	A type of assessment in which the goal is to evaluate student learning at the end of a unit by comparing it against a standard. Some examples include a midterm test, a paper, or a final project.
<b>task-based learning</b>	A way of learning that is based on the learners' completing tasks. The focus is more on the task, therefore language is learned purely through exposure, <b>acquisition</b> , and use, and is not taught directly.
<b>text-based learning</b>	Text-based learning shares features with <b>task-based learning</b> , but in this type of learning texts are chosen as the framework of teaching. In it, students master the use of different text types for specific contexts, such as working in an office or working in a restaurant.
<b>text types</b>	A text is a collection of written or spoken sentences or utterances that form a cohesive and coherent whole. Texts have features of a particular genre and perform a specific function. Some examples of text types are: narratives, descriptions, and processes.
<b>tone</b>	A variation in the quality of the voice that expresses the speaker's feelings or thoughts.
<b>TPR</b>	Total Physical Response: a way of teaching language, which requires young learners to respond physically to spoken instructions or stories. In TPR, learners are encouraged to respond with actions before they learn to say the words.

<b>typography</b>	Writing on the computer.
<b>Venn diagram</b>	A type of graphic organizer in which two circles intersect in order to show how two concepts or ideas are related. Similarities are placed in the part where the two circles overlap, and differences are placed in the outer part of the circles.





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