Leading learners on a road to employability through enhanced assessment practices

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English qualifications for real-world communication
Overview

1. Introduction
2. Competences for a globalised world
3. OECD framework
4. CEFR Companion Volume
5. Washback and constructive alignment
6. Sub-skills and competences in ATs
7. Summary
Introduction - what’s in it for them?

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Whose perspective?

Do your assessment practices:

- Aid language acquisition?
- Develop communicative competence?
- Aid wider skill development?
- Develop global citizenship?
- Improve employment prospects?
Assessment can...

- Aid language acquisition
- Improve employment prospects
- Develop global citizenship
- Aid transferable skill development
- Develop communicative competence

Go to www.menti.com and use the code 581133
Background – Education paradigm

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In your opinion, what has changed about the basic objectives of education over the last 50 years?
A shifting pedagogical paradigm: Education

• ...there has been a movement to a priming of individual agency. (Block 2010)
• Employment increasingly driven by evidenced competences, no longer just academic grades (ref. OECD)
• Learner status has shifted from that of student to client
A shifting pedagogical paradigm: Education

Content knowledge - established career path (educated Vs vocational)

Qualification repertoire and skill-sets

Competences for employability

<1980’s <c.2005 2010 >

Digital disruption
A shifting pedagogical paradigm: Education

Competences for employability

In primary and secondary education, in any sector, which discipline / subject is the best placed for competence (transferable skill) development?
A shifting pedagogical paradigm: Language

- Content knowledge (linguistic)
- Communicative ability
- Competences for employability

- <1980’s
- <c.2005
- 2010 >
Models of competence. E.g. reading

Skimming
Scanning
Expeditious reading
Careful reading

Functional comprehension and application of text in given context
Test-taker ability
What is the focus of our teaching and assessment?

- Competencies
- Sub-skills
- Cognitive processes
Communicative competence

Communicative competence

- Linguistic competence
- Socio-linguistic competence
- Discourse competence
- Strategic competence

Bachman & Palmer (2010): communicative competence model
21st Century Skills

Competences for a globalised world

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Perspectives of 21st Century Skills

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And (another) 4 C's...
Perspectives of 21st Century Skills
Another ‘4 C’s’...

Collaboration  Communication

Critical thinking  Creativity

21st C
## Skills for modern education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tony Wagner</th>
<th><strong>Critical thinking &amp; problem solving</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expert in Residence Innovation Lab of Harvard (2008)</td>
<td><strong>Collaboration</strong> and leading by influence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agility and adaptability</td>
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<td><strong>Initiative</strong> and entrepreneurship</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Effective oral and written communication</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Accessing and analyzing information</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Curiosity and imagination</td>
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</table>
Global employability survey:

"The most important criteria employers now use for recruitment decisions is skills profile."

OECD Framework

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OECD Framework

- Succeed in a multicultural world
- Changing labour market
- Use mobile platforms effectively
- Support sustainable development
Global competence defined

Global competence is the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well being and sustainable development.

OECD PISA Global Competence Framework, 2018
Global competence defined

- Examine significant issues
- Perspectives / world views of others
- Interact positively (across cultures)
- Constructive action towards well-being
Global competence defined

Knowledge
- Issues of importance
- Intercultural

Skills
- Cognitive
- Communicative
- Socio-emotional

Attitudes
- Openness
- Respect
- Global mindedness

Values
- Human dignity
- Cultural diversity
OECD – Specified skills summary

**Skills**

- Critical reasoning to form opinion (HOTS)
- Communicate effectively and respectfully across cultures
- Understand and appreciate others perspective
- Adaptability and flexibility – readiness to respond

Where would these sit in the curriculum?
CEFR Companion volume

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Companion volume
Building on the CEFR (commissioned 2013 – live 2018)

• Key aspects for teaching
• Developed descriptive scales (e.g. pre A1)
• New descriptive scales:
  • Online interaction
  • Mediation
  • Pluralingualism / pluricultural competence
• Rationale for each scale
• Outline of project and research
No longer 4 macro skills

Table 1 – Macro-functional basis of CEFR categories for communicative language activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>RECEPTION</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>MEDIATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative, Interpersonal Language Use</td>
<td>e.g. Reading as a leisure activity</td>
<td>e.g. Sustained monologue: Describing experience</td>
<td>e.g. Conversation</td>
<td>Mediating communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional Language Use</td>
<td>e.g. Reading for information and argument</td>
<td>e.g. Sustained monologue: Giving information</td>
<td>e.g. Obtaining goods and services Information exchange</td>
<td>Mediating a text</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluative, Problem-solving Language Use</td>
<td>(Merged with reading for information and argument)</td>
<td>e.g. Sustained monologue: Presenting a case</td>
<td>e.g. Discussion</td>
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</table>
Relaying / summarising / synthesising information from spoken or written sources (including translation).

Sources include:
- listening material
- reading material
- class discussions / conversations
- data, graphs, statistics
- visuals, diagrams,

Collaborating with others in order to come to a decision or solve a problem.

Includes:
- aiding the development of ideas
- asking questions to stimulate reasoning
- inviting/giving contributions and reactions
- asking for/giving clarification
- making and responding to

Enhancing the effectiveness of cognitive mediation by:
- creating a positive atmosphere
- showing cultural awareness
- facilitating collaborative interaction
Mediation

Processing Text in Speech B1

Can summarise (in Language B) the main points made during a conversation (in Language A) on a subject of personal or current interest, provided that the speakers articulated clearly in standard language.

Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers B1+

Can collaborate on a shared task, for example formulating and responding to suggestions, asking whether people agree, and proposing alternative approaches.
CV example - Mediate concepts summary
Solve a problem or come to a decision

- Reason with information
- Mediate concepts
- Communicate effectively and respectfully
- Invite contribution and reaction
- Seek clarification - Respond appropriately

Where would these sit in the curriculum?
CV example - Mediate communication
Enhance effectiveness of mediation (cognitive)

Create positive atmosphere

Seek balanced input for participant(s)

Mediate comm

Facilitate collaborative communication

Show cultural awareness

Where would these sit in the curriculum?
Competences for employability – reflection

How have our classroom and assessment practices changed to embrace the socio-political and economic shift to competence-based practice?

What claims can we make to our students about competence development?

How would studying at my institution facilitate a learner’s employability status?
Washback and constructive alignment

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Washback

Washback

Notion of washback can be embedded in test design
(Messick 1996 f)
‘Assessment is the engine of learning’
Constructive alignment

Cognitive alignment enhances learning (Biggs: 2011)
Sub-skills and competencies in assessment tasks - example

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Test or test task – fit for purpose?
A proficiency task – communicative exam

Example task – at CEFR B1
A stimulus task for assessment of communicative competence, subjectively assessed with a standardised rating criteria

Compare and contrast the two images and say why people spend their free-time doing these activities
OECD – Specified skills, comparison task

- Critical reasoning to form opinion (HOTS)
- Communicate effectively and respectfully across cultures
- Understand and appreciate others' perspective
- Adaptability and flexibility – readiness to respond
CV example - Mediate concepts
Solve a problem or come to a decision

Reason with information

Seek clarification
-Respond appropriately

Mediate concepts

Communicate effectively and respectfully

Invite contribution and reaction

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CV example - Mediate communication
Enhance effectiveness of mediation (cognitive)

- Create positive atmosphere
- Show cultural awareness
- Facilitate collaborative communication
- Seek balanced input for participant(s)
Test or test task – fit for purpose?
A proficiency task – communicative exam

Example task – at CEFR B1

A stimulus task for assessment of communicative competence, subjectively assessed with a standardised rating criteria

Compare and contrast the two images to your partner

Not a ‘bad’ task *de facto*
A question of being appropriate for 21st Century skills
The danger is *misappropriation*
Are tests doing what they need to?
Contemporary language examination tasks?

- Describe a picture
- Talk about [2 out of 3] pictures for one minute
- Talk about an experience (monologue to a computer)
- Speak about a topic you are given after one minute’s thinking time (for that topic)
- Listen and repeat sentences
- Listen and answer multiple choice questions about what you’re listening to
- Listen to a recording and select the correct answers
- Listen and write the correct answers
- Read aloud – words or sentences (to a computer)
- Read and select true, false or not given
- Transform sentences using knowledge of grammar/syntax
- Write about, and compare, pictures, graphs/charts

When did you last do any of these?

...when would your learners?

...are they fit for purpose?
Test or test task – fit for purpose?
Example task at B1 - Communicative

Example task – at CEFR B2
A stimulus task for assessment of communicative competence, subjectively assessed with a standardised rating criteria.

**Collaborative task**

| Task type and format | The Collaborative task is an integrated speaking and listening task. The examiner reads a prompt. The prompt may express a dilemma, situation or opinion. The candidate needs to ask the examiner questions and make comments to find out more information and keep the conversation going. |
OECD – Specified skills, comparison task

Skills

- Aid development of ideas
- Ask questions to stimulate reasoning
- Perspective taking
- Adaptability
CV example - Mediate concepts
Solve a problem or come to a decision

Reason with information

Mediate concepts

Seek clarification
- Respond appropriately

Communicate effectively and respectfully

Invite contribution and reaction

TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON
CV example - Mediate communication
Enhance effectiveness of mediation (cognitive)

- Mediate comm
  - Create positive atmosphere
  - Show cultural awareness
  - Facilitate collaborative communication
  - Seek balanced input for participant(s)
Trinity Integrated Skills in English

English qualifications for real-world communication
Trinity College London
ISE Overview

2 modules, 1 qualification

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening

Min. pass

Reading & Writing module

Speaking & Listening module

ISE qualification certificate

Distinction
Merit
Pass
Fail
Trinity College London
Speaking & Listening module

ISE innovations

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Trinity College London Speaking & Listening module

ISE innovations

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Trinity College London Speaking & Listening module
ISE innovations

**Long reading**
- Academic/subject-based texts. Questions from extensive to intensive

**Multi-text reading**
- Reading across texts - contemporary genres, including infographics, blogs, articles - calling upon digital literacies
- Includes a summary of all texts which is springboard to subsequent reading task

**Reading into writing**
- Planning, checking, using texts to answer a question

**Extended writing**
- Reflects academic skills, encourages language of grade
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<th>Reading into Writing</th>
<th>Use same texts from the reading task</th>
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<td>Encouraged to plan response</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Refer back to the summary notes (from task 2) as a spring board for planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify relevant information from all texts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paraphrase and summarise key words, phrases, sentences</td>
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<td>Incorporate the information in a response to a prompt</td>
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Summary

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English qualifications for real-world communication
Employability through assessment practices

Summary

• Pedagogical paradigm shift towards employability
• Frameworks map skills and competencies for employability
• Assessment practice drive teaching and learning (washback)
• Assessment needs to embrace 21st Century skill sets
• Positive washback and constructive alignment bring 21st Century skills into the classroom
• ALL STAKEHOLDERS RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICES
• Need to audit our tests and tasks
Assessment should...

- Aid language acquisition
- Improve employment prospects
- Develop global citizenship
- Aid transferable skill development
- Develop communicative competence

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Any Questions?

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Any questions for the presenter?
Selected references

Bachman, L F. (1990), Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing. OUP


Papageorgiou, S. (2007) Relating the Trinity College London GESE and ISE examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference


Leading learners on a road to employability through enhanced assessment practices

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English qualifications for real-world communication
Our understanding of language proficiency is constantly changing – Developments in:

- Assessment theory and application
- Language pedagogy and methodology
  - Neurolinguistics
  - Applied linguistics
- Social, cultural and political contexts