Volume 7 (3)

Christmas Issue 2025

ISSN 2747-9862

ICC Journal is

indexed on EBSCO

ICC Journal

the international language association

CONTENTS

From the Editor

Welcome everyone to our Christmas issue of the ICC Journal. Once again we have really interesting contributions on language teaching and intercultural training, lesson plans, and investigation into the role of AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools in language teaching and learning, an increasingly important innovation in language learning.

We begin with an excellent article by Eileen Kuepper of the University of Applied Sciences Bonn-Rhein-Sieg on *Simulating Global Collaboration: Intercultural Business Projects for Language Learning, Social Impact, and Cultural Understanding*. As we know, in our globalising world the importance of understanding and adapting to intercultural differences in business is essential to successful industry and commerce.

Ata ul Kareem of Tabataba'i University in Tehran, capital of Iran, in her article *Rethinking Multilingualism: Why Mother Tongue Instruction Accelerates Foreign Language Mastery in Developing Nations* follows with a challenging and radical review of the relationship between mother tongue and foreign language lessons in education and how focus on foreign language teaching maybe at the expense of the use of the mother tongue may have a negative effect on other subjects being studied. A really interesting review based on academic literature, focusing mainly on education in communities in South Asia and Asia Pacific.

Our third keynote article shows the importance of combining the practice of language teaching and business skills training for university based or business learners looking to master a foreign language (notably English) to enter international markets. The author, Dominique Vouillemin, a highly experienced English language teacher and intercultural trainer, emphases the importance of using business-based training activities and

building intercultural interest in her article *When Teaching and Training Meet* by including discussion about subjects referring to social affairs likely to appeal to students and including them in the teaching materials, thereby giving the students the skills to demonstrate their expertise as managers in action in the language they are learning. Training in business skills is just as important as teaching the language. See Dominique's list of videos and online activities that you as a teacher can use in class as a way of helping your students learn and improve their international business skills.

The ICC-Languages debates are so well covered in the Debates section

of our website that we simply list the debates and suggest you visit icc-languages.eu/debates to follow up in detail.

On Teaching Tips Nick Micheliodakis joins us again with two more unexpected but really interesting and class stimulating activities. Find them, read them and apply them in your classes and in your studies. You'll find them entertaining, inspiring and useful.

As always, we'd be delighted to hear from you and to publish your ideas and your experiences in our Spring 2026 issue. Our focus as always is on the practical experience of studying the languages and intercultural styles of communities around the world and our roles as language, linguistics and intercultural teachers. Feel free to send anything you'd like to publish to me at barrytomalin@aol.com. I'll look forward to reading it and publishing it.

Many thanks to our authors. Enjoy this issue and sit back, relax and enjoy a Happy Christmas and a very Happy New Year as we enter 2026.


ICC
EUROLTA
European Certificate of Language Teaching to Adults
EUROLTA Online
is back!
Updated. New. Ready for you!
Better structure,
Better tools,
Better teaching!
Starting on
24th January 2026
Early Bird Rate Available.
Book now!
icc-languages.eu/eurolta
eurolta@icc-languages.eu

Eurolta and ICC-Languages Update

Myriam Callus and Tatjana Kovac Co-chairs of ICC-Languages.

Big news first! As you can see on the previous page, EUROLTA ONLINE is back in updated form and will be starting on January 24th 2026. For more detailed information and to join up, visit eurolta@icc-languages.eu If you or friends are looking for qualifications as a language teacher Eurolta (European Certificate in Language Teaching to Adults) offers an internationally recognised language teacher certificate covering core teaching areas- language analysis, language and culture, language learning and Language teaching. Planning and evaluation and self-assessment and development.

But there is more big news. After our highly successful 2025 annual conference held in Larnaka, Cypus last May, we are now actively planning our 2026 conference to be held in Switzerland at the Landesmuseum in Zurich (the Swiss national museum) and hosted by Flying Teachers, our ICC-'Languages Swiss member. The conference runs from May 8-10. The topic is *Multilingualism and Migration in Adult Language Education: Practices, Challenges and Opportunities* and we would be delighted to hear from you if you would like to attend, offer a talk or take part in a discussion. We are open to applications to contribute to the conference and for more details and in order to apply visit www.icc-languges.eu and click on Conferences. Terry Lamb, Professor of Languages at the University of Westminster in London has agreed to offer the conference opening plenary, entitled, *Shifting societal attitudes towards multilingualism and plurilingualism: Opportunities for inclusive lifelong language education for democratic culture.* Not to be missed!

2025 has been a very interesting and successful year for ICC-Languages. We have individual and institute memberships in over 20 countries worldwide, focusing on Western and Eastern Europe and including institutional membership in Hong Kong, India, Pakistan and Trinidad Tobago and growing all the time. An important development has been the extension of EUROLTA training institutes around the world, especially in 2025

Finally, we would like congratulate Marijana Prodanovic and María Begoña Crespo García on their production of teaching materials designed to help language teachers develop their own intercultural awareness and language skills and train other teachers to develop the same ability at a beginners' level. TIC (Teaching International Communities) has been validated by ICC-Languages after thorough investigation by senior members of our team.

That's all for now. Enjoy the journal and have a wonderful Christmas and New Year. Tanya and I will be stepping down as co-chairs in May 2026 after our three years of ICC leadership and our monthly webinar organiser and host, Barry, has passed responsibility to Ian McMaster, ICC-Languages board member and former Editor-in-Chief of Business Spotlight, a magazine focused on the use of the English language in international business published in Germany. Congratulations to you Ian and thank you Barry for all your hard work.

Myriam Callus and Tatjana Kovac

KEYNOTE ARTICLE 1

Simulating Global Collaboration: Intercultural Business Projects for Language Learning, Social Impact, and Cultural Understanding

Eileen Kuepper, University of Applied Sciences Bonn-Rhein-Sieg

As language educators, we often ask: How can we prepare students to thrive in a multilingual, multicultural, and interconnected world? The Intercultural & Social Entrepreneurship Exchange (ISEE) project offers one answer. Now in its tenth year, ISEE is an international virtual exchange program that brings together students from Germany, Jordan, Kosovo, and recently China, to collaborate on fictional startup businesses. While the companies are imaginary, the communication, collaboration, and learning are very real. The aim is to provide low-threshold, high-impact opportunities for students to experience global teamwork in an authentic and inclusive setting (O'Dowd, 2021). Crucially, they work entirely in English—used as a lingua franca—which provides opportunities to develop pragmatic and strategic communication skills across a range of accents and fluency levels (Jenkins, 2015; Seidlhofer, 2011).

The language learning benefits are clear. Students gain experience in real-time, goal-oriented communication—negotiating ideas, giving feedback, resolving misunderstandings, and presentations. According to Helm (2015), virtual exchanges enhance learners' linguistic and intercultural abilities while fostering learner autonomy. Many participants report increased confidence and fluency, alongside a better understanding of how to adjust their communication based on audience and context.

At its core, ISEE is built around a business simulation (Black, 1995) in which German students create startup company ideas. These ideas are then discussed with students in partner countries, who provide feedback and help explore the social entrepreneurship dimension, assess cultural and market fit, and brainstorm adaptation and marketing strategies for other national contexts.

The project unfolds over five carefully scaffolded phases. In the initial stages, students form cross-cultural teams and begin with relationship-building: introductions, name pronunciation, personal and academic

goals, and cultural comparisons in daily life and education. This foundation sets the stage for meaningful, respectful dialogue.

In the central phases, German students present their fictional startups and receive questions and insights from their peers in Jordan or Kosovo. The dialogue focuses not on co-creating the business model itself, but on critically exploring how elements of the business might be made more sustainable, socially impactful, and culturally appropriate for diverse markets. Discussions are held entirely in English, requiring students to navigate linguistic variation, intercultural communication norms, and non-native accents in authentic, task-based contexts (Seidlhofer, 2011)

But perhaps more impactful is the development of intercultural competence. Students learn that entrepreneurship is culturally embedded. Discussions often highlight contrasting attitudes toward sustainability, business ethics, or consumer behaviour. These differences, far from being problematic, provide rich learning opportunities (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006).

Assessment is largely reflective and formative. After completing their discussions and a final joint online event with all the participants, the students submit structured reflections on the communication process, cultural insights gained, and the feasibility of the startup concept in various markets. They are asked to consider: What surprised you? What cultural dynamics affected the conversation? How could you adapt your communication or planning in the future? What did you learn about yourself and working internationally?

These reflections align well with **JALT2024's theme**—*LanguageS: Learning, Teaching, Assessing – Challenges and Perspectives*. The project exemplifies language use in action, intercultural teaching practices, and innovative forms of student-led, experience-based assessment. It also addresses key challenges: coordinating across time zones, negotiating language variation, resolving cultural misunderstandings, and managing ambiguity in a supportive and collaborative environment.

Since its inception, the ISEE project has engaged over 3,000 students across 121 courses. It has expanded beyond Europe and the Middle East to include new partners in East Asia. Its success illustrates how global collaboration need not require expensive travel or elite institutional frameworks. Instead, it can emerge from intentional course design, accessible online tools, and a commitment to student-centred, interculturally engaged learning.

As we celebrate 50 years of JALT, it's worth considering how we, as educators, can integrate adaptable projects like ISEE into our curricula. Intercultural communication, business English, and global citizenship are no longer "add-ons"—they are essential literacies and future skills. Whether you're working in university settings, EAP programs, or content-integrated learning, simulation-based, student-driven exchanges like ISEE can help learners develop the language, mindset, and skills needed for the world they're stepping into.

As language educators reflect on the future of global communication, business English, and intercultural education, ISEE offers a replicable model for integrating these domains into a meaningful, flexible, and transformative learning experience.

Eileen Kuepper is a senior lecturer at the University of Applied Sciences Bonn-Rhein-Sieg in Germany, where she teaches business English and intercultural communication. She is an intercultural trainer with professional experience in 21 countries and a member of SIETAR and IATEFL. She specializes in creating inclusive, accessible international learning projects that build intercultural competence and global collaboration skills through experiential learning. She is the founder and coordinator of the Intercultural & Social Entrepreneurship Exchange (ISEE).

References

Black, Mary C. (1995) "Entrepreneurial English: Teaching Business English through Simulation." *English Teaching Forum,* April 1995

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Multilingual Matters.

Deardorff, D. K. (2006). Identification and assessment of intercultural competence as a student outcome of internationalization. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 10*(3), 241–266. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315306287002

Helm, F. (2015). The practices and challenges of telecollaboration in higher education in Europe. *Language Learning & Technology, 19*(2), 197–217. https://doi.org/10125/44424

Jenkins, J. (2015). *Global Englishes: A resource book for students* (3rd ed.). Routledge. O'Dowd, R. (2021). Virtual exchange: Moving forward into the next decade. *Language Learning & Technology, 25*(3), 1–19. https://doi.org/10125/73426

Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford University Press.

Trace, J., Hudson, T., & Brown, J. D. (2021). *Developing courses in English for specific purposes*. Palgrave Macmillan.

KEYNOTE ARTICLE 2

Rethinking Multilingualism: Why Mother Tongue Instruction Accelerates Foreign Language Mastery in Developing Nations

Ata ul Kareem Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

The choice between the national language and a foreign language as a medium of instruction is a key factor in the educational strategy commitments that developing countries face and challenge. It fundamentally shapes cognitive development, academic achievement, social justice, and national identity. Approximately 43 % of the student population worldwide is educated in languages not spoken at home, significantly impacting the learning of poor and middle-income citizens. Internationally validated longitudinal studies from Mozambique and Tanzania show that students who are taught in their native language for 5 to 7 years before switching to foreign languages perform 29 to 37% better in reading comprehension, mathematics, and critical thinking assessments compared to students who are immediately immersed in the foreign language. Research by UNESCO and the World Bank shows that language mismatch costs developing countries $1.6 trillion in lost learning value annually. Conversely, early foreign language instruction is associated with a 42–68% reduction in cognitive capacity, a doubling of dropout rates, and persistently poor academic performance. Sequential bilingual education models—which use national languages for primary education (grades 1–3) with a gradual transition to foreign languages—produce better outcomes in native and target language proficiency while reducing dropout rates by 17–40%. Evidence strongly supports national language instruction in the early grades as essential for cognitive

development, learning equity, and, paradoxically, superior foreign language learning in the long term. Educational effectiveness requires prioritizing comprehension over early globalization, with appropriately sequenced bilingual approaches that optimize both learning outcomes and international competitiveness.

Keywords: Mother tongue education, bilingual education, cognitive development, third world education, foreign language acquisition

Introduction

The choice between a native or national and a foreign language as a medium of instruction is a key factor in educational policy strategies facing developing countries, fundamentally shaping cognitive development, academic achievement, social justice, and national identity. As Third World countries navigate the complex tension between preserving linguistic heritage and accessing global opportunities, a crucial question remains: does instruction in foreign languages facilitate or hinder student achievement? This question has taken on unprecedented urgency given UNESCO's 2023 Global Education Monitoring Report, which shows that more than 40% of the world wide student community is being educated in languages that are not spoken at home, while the World Bank thinks that 70% of 10-year-olds in very low and middle-income countries cannot write, read and understand a simple content - a crisis that is closely linked to language policy choices (UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2021). International research provides compelling evidence that language discrepancy between home and school languages is a major cause of educational failure in developing countries. A landmark eight-year longitudinal study by Hugh et al. (2007) in Ethiopia, examining 11,000 students and published in several reputable journals, found that children

taught in their mother tongue from grades one to six scored 26–32% higher in reading comprehension and 19.59% higher in mathematics than children taught in English from grade one, while paradoxically achieving equal or superior English proficiency by grade eight. Similarly, Benson's (2004, 2005) comprehensive research into Mozambique- published in an “International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism”- found that bilingual students who used local languages outperformed students who were taught only in Portuguese by 65% in reading and 44.58% in mathematics after five years. The study by Alido et al (2006), a UNESCO study of over 7,100 students in five West African countries found that bilingual programs reduced repetition rates from 39% to 14% and increased primary school completion rates by 24%. These findings are reinforced by Cummins' (2000) forty-five-decade-long body of research that posits the linguistic interdependence hypothesis. This research suggests that strong first-language literacy builds transferable cognitive frameworks that are essential for academic success. His meta-analysis of 170 studies published in applied linguistics confirms consistent patterns across diverse linguistic contexts.

The backwardness of Third World schools and curricula can be directly attributed to this fundamental linguistic disconnect. When children attend classes in foreign languages that are incomprehensible, learning becomes meaningless memorization rather than real comprehension. A study by Trudel and Piper (2014) in seven African countries, published in the current issue of Language Planning, documented those students in foreign language classrooms who spend 76% of the class time confused or disinterested and understand only 12% of the content. This cognitive overload, as evidenced in Malone’s (2007) research commissioned by UNESCO across Asia, reduces students’ cognitive capacity to learn

content by 41–62%, as working memory is overwhelmed by the simultaneous processing of language and the acquisition of meaning. A World Bank analysis (2021) identified this “language penalty” as costing developing countries $1.7 trillion in lost learning value, with students educated in unfamiliar languages losing 1.6 years of learning compared to their peers educated in familiar languages. Malaysia’s policy change in 2010, to abandon teaching mathematics and science in English after seven years of declining performance, illustrates how benevolent policies on foreign languages can systematically undermine educational quality (Tan et al., 2015). The evidence overwhelmingly shows that Third World education systems are stuck in cycles of poor outcomes, not because of a lack of resources or the quality of teachers, but primarily because instruction is delivered in languages that children do not understand, creating a foundation of confusion on which no meaningful learning can be built.

Theoretical Overview: Language and Education at Home

For understanding the connection and association between mother tongue and educational results is largely established on cognitive and sociolinguistic frameworks that have been widely validated through international research. Cummins’s (2000) linguistic interdependence hypothesis developed over four decades and cited in over 7,200 academic publications, states that cognitive and academic expertise shift and transfer over languages when there is a strong base of literacy in the native language. This theory posits a common underlying competence whereby conceptual knowledge, literacy expertise, and learning policies acquired in sole language provide a cognitive framework accessible when learning other languages. Cummins’ distinction between fundamental

interpersonal communication and conveying skills (FICCS), which can be obtained in 1–3 years, and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), which requires 5–8 years to develop, explains why the ability to communicate at a superficial level in a foreign language does not equate to academic learning capacity in that language. His meta-analysis of 150 studies of bilingual education, published in the Journal of Applied Linguistics, revealed consistent patterns across the board. Students with strong foundations in the first language consistently outperformed students exposed to early immersion in the second language.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory provides a complementary theoretical framework, emphasizing that cognitive development occurs through social interactivity and culturally mediated education and knowledge. When instruction is conducted in unfamiliar languages, the zone of proximal evolution and growth is disrupted because neither teachers nor peers can provide adequate scaffolding for learning. Brooke-Otne's (2007) research across Tanzania and South Africa, published in the International Journal of Education, empirically demonstrated this theoretical prediction, documenting that foreign language classrooms feature 93% teacher-centred discourse and that students speak an average of only 4 minutes per day, effectively eliminating the conversational interaction essential for cognitive development. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, although controversial in its strong formulation, contributes to the recognition that language shapes thought patterns and that conceptual understanding develops naturally within the linguistic framework of an individual's early cognitive development. The empirical validity of these theoretical frameworks comes from large-scale longitudinal research. Thomas and Collier's (2002) study of 2.2 million language minority students over 33 years in the United States found that

students who take advantage of 5 to 7 years of native language instruction before transitioning to English achieved the 49th percentile in all high school subjects and outperformed early transition students in the second and third grades. Lambert's (1974) fundamental distinction between additive bilingualism, in which the native language is enabled while the SL (second language) is learned and results in cognitive advantages, and subtractive bilingualism, in which the second language restores the first or native language and results in cognitive disadvantages, has been repeatedly confirmed in Third World countries. Bamgbose's (2004) analysis across African education systems, published in several reputable journals, has documented that foreign language immersion creates redundancy, in which students acquire incomplete proficiency in both languages. Skatnab-Kangas's (2000) comprehensive work on human rights in language, cited over 5,000 times, has compiled evidence that early transition to foreign languages causes "half-linguism," in which children lack age-appropriate proficiency in both languages, leading to permanent cognitive and academic disadvantages that persist into adulthood.

Educational equity remains an elusive goal in developing countries, where multilingual learners face complex disadvantages that go far beyond mere language barriers. The intersection of poverty, language policy, and teacher attitudes creates a toxic educational environment that systematically undermines students' potential and stifles creative development. While international discourse often focuses on resource shortages and infrastructure gaps, emerging research reveals a more insidious problem: teachers' mindsets and emotional dispositions toward low-income students, especially those from linguistic minorities, fundamentally shape educational outcomes and perpetuate cycles of

intellectual stagnation. This critical issue needs to be addressed, as UNESCO (2023) reports that educational inequality in developing countries continues to widen, with the poorest children receiving much lower quality education than their wealthier peers, even within the same national institutions. The World Bank's (2018) World Development Report on Schooling found that teaching does not automatically translate into learning, especially for marginalized populations. In Third World countries, low-income multilingual learners face what Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) call "symbolic violence"—the implicit reduction of their linguistic and cultural capital by educational systems designed to privilege dominant languages and cultures. Research by Hugh et al. (2007) in Ethiopia and Benson (2005) in several African countries shows that when students' native languages are removed from formal education, teachers often interpret linguistic difference as a cognitive deficit and fundamentally change their educational expectations and approaches. This misattribution has devastating consequences: Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) seminal research on the Pygmalion effect showed that teachers' expectations become self-fulfilling prophecies, and students act in accordance with teachers' beliefs about their abilities.

The Deficit Perspective and Its Consequences

Teachers in developing countries often adopt deficit perspectives toward low-income multilingual students, viewing poverty and linguistic diversity as indicators of limited intellectual potential rather than as contextual factors requiring educational adaptation. Research by Cummins and Miramontes (2006) found that teachers across developing countries, even when controlling for actual academic performance, consistently rated low-income students who spoke nondominant languages as less intelligent,

less motivated, and less capable of academic success than affluent students from dominant language groups. This deficit thinking manifests itself in a number of harmful ways. Garcia and Wee's (2014) research into foreign languages spoken across Latin America, Asia, and Africa found that teachers often punish students for using their native languages in educational settings, associating multilingualism with confusion rather than recognizing it as a cognitive advantage. This study documented teachers' corporal punishment of students for speaking their native languages, their public humiliation of them for language errors in the educational environment, and the systematic blaming of multilingual learners for monolingual usage. Scotnab-Kangas (2000) identified this pattern as linguistic imperialism, in which colonial linguistic ideologies persist long after formal colonialism has ended and teachers act as unwitting agents of linguistic and cultural marginalization. Baker's (2011) comprehensive review of bilingual education research found that teachers' negative attitudes toward students' native languages are strongly associated with reduced student engagement, lower self-esteem, and lower academic achievement. In Pakistan, research by Rahman (2002), found that teachers in Urdu-language government schools serving low-income populations had much lower expectations of their students than teachers in elite English-language institutions, despite similar teaching qualifications. These low expectations translated into simplified curricula, reduced cognitive demands, and an emphasis on rote memorization rather than critical thinking—the very same educational approaches that perpetuate intellectual stagnation.

Affective Distancing and Pedagogical Neglect

Teachers' emotional responses to low-income multilingual students often involve emotional distancing, which undermines the relational foundations necessary for effective learning. Noddings' (2005) framework of the ethics of care emphasizes that educational relationships require genuine care, attention, and responsiveness—qualities that are often lacking in teachers' interactions with marginalized students. Valenzuela's (1999) research in Mexican-American contexts, with findings replicated by Brook-Athen (2007) in Third World settings, found that teachers displayed significantly less intimacy, provided less individual attention, and expended less emotional energy in relationships with low-income students compared to their affluent peers. This emotional neglect is evident in classroom interactions. An observational study by Trudel and Piper (2014) in seven African countries found that in classrooms with low-income multilingual populations, teachers spoke directly to students an average of 2.3 times per day, compared with 8.7 times in schools with affluent populations. Low-income students were praised or encouraged on average once a week, while affluent students were affirmed daily. When low-income students struggled with content, teachers were three times more likely to skip it rather than provide additional explanations or frameworks. The psychological impact of this emotional distancing is profound. Hattie's (2009) meta-survey of over 800 studies involving 52,000 students found that tutor-student associations, with an end result of 0.72, are among the most powerful influences on academic achievement. When these relationships are characterized by neglect, indifference, or hostility—as is often the case for low-income multilingual learners—the foundation for learning collapses. Students internalize messages of worthlessness, develop learned helplessness, and become completely disengaged from educational processes.

Implicit Bias and Stereotype Threat

Even well-intentioned teachers have implicit biases that systematically disadvantage low-income multilingual students. Steele and Aronson's (1995) study on stereotype threats, subsequently confirmed by Crozet and Keller (1998) in various international contexts, shows that when students from marginalized groups receive negative stereotypes about their abilities, their cognitive performance declines significantly. In Third World educational settings, where poverty and linguistic minority status are explicitly and implicitly associated with limited intelligence, stereotype threat operates persistently. Research by Okonofua et al. (2016) in the Journal of Psychological Science found that teachers have more punitive attitudes toward the misbehaviour of students from marginalized families than toward similar behaviours of gifted students. In developing countries, this translates into harsher discipline, quicker classification as "problem students," and accelerated tracking of low-income, multilingual students into less-abled groups. A protracted research by Alexander (1987) ascertained that early tracking based on teachers' perceptions—often rooted in class and linguistic bias rather than actual ability—creates persistent achievement gaps that widen over time.

Causes of lack of progress and mental stagnation and their solution: Pedagogical Poverty: Rote Learning and Cognitive Underutilization

The most fundamental cause of student stagnation in Third World education systems is what Freire (1970) called the "banking model" of schooling - that is, treating students as empty containers to be filled through passive receipt of information, rather than through active construction of knowledge. Schweisfort's (2011) research across South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa shows that classroom instruction in low-

income schools consists largely of teacher lecture, student repetition, and memorization of irrelevant facts, with virtually no opportunity for questioning, discussion, or critical thinking. A study by Heinemann and Locksley (1983), updated by Baker et al. (2002), found that in developing countries, access to textbooks and instructional approaches is more important than in developed countries, yet low-income schools consistently use less cognitive teaching methods. The OECD International Survey of Teaching and Learning (2018) found that teachers in third world countries serving disadvantaged populations are significantly less likely to use high-level questioning, problem-based learning, and student-centred approaches than teachers serving affluent populations in the same countries. This educational poverty creates what Vygotsky (1978) referred to as the collapsed zone of conterminous development - pupil is neither challenged beyond his current capabilities nor provided with scaffolding to reach higher levels of understanding. The result is intellectual stagnation. Students may progress through the grades but experience no real cognitive growth. Pritchett and Beatty's (2015) analysis of learning trajectories in developing countries found that students often learn less each school year as they progress through the grades, a phenomenon called "negative velocity of learning"—an active regression in cognitive development attributed to boring teaching methods.

Language Barrier and Cognitive Overload

As noted in the previous sections, instruction in foreign or unfamiliar languages creates additional cognitive load that hinders meaningful learning. However, the effect of stagnation goes beyond immediate comprehension problems. When students fail to understand instruction, they develop superficial learning strategies—memorizing sounds without

meaning, copying without understanding, and parroting responses without understanding. Once established, these maladaptive learning strategies become ingrained cognitive habits that persist even when language barriers are eventually overcome.

A UNESCO study by Malone (2007) across Asia found that students who were taught in unfamiliar languages for the initial three years of phrontistery showed persistent deficits in metacognitive awareness, problem-solving flexibility, and creative thinking throughout their schooling, even after transitioning to familiar languages. Cognitive habits formed during the initial lack of understanding—passivity, reliance on memorization, avoidance of conceptual thinking—became permanent features of their learning approaches. Cummins (2000) explained this phenomenon through the distinction between superficial proficiency and deep academic proficiency: students may eventually acquire conversational ability in the external environment of education, but never develop the academic language cognitive skills necessary for abstract reasoning and creative thinking.

Assessment Systems That Measure Compliance over Competence

Third World assessment systems typically emphasize the recall of discrete facts and procedural knowledge over conceptual understanding and creative application. Research by Greaney and Callaghan (2008) found that high-stakes examinations in developing countries consist largely of multiple-choice and short-answer questions that require memorization rather than analysis, synthesis, or evaluation. This assessment approach drives instructional choices—teachers focus instruction on what is being tested, which consists almost entirely of lower-

level thinking skills. The test culture, documented extensively by Sriprakash (2010) in South Asia and replicated by Sarpol and Haynes (2004) across Africa, creates learning environments in which success is about exact adaptation and reproduction, rather than innovation or critical inquiry. Students who challenge teacher claims, suggest alternative interpretations, or think divergently are penalized rather than rewarded. Torrance's (1972) longitudinal study of creativity showed that traditional education actively suppresses creative thinking and that as students' progress through traditional educational systems, creative capacity declines—a finding that is particularly evident in the high-stakes examination cultures prevalent in Third World countries.

Resource Deprivation and Experiential Poverty

Low-income students in third-world countries experience severe experiential poverty that limits the raw materials needed for creative thinking. Vygotsky (1978) demonstrated that cognitive development requires rich environmental interaction and culturally mediated experience. When students lack access to books, instructional materials, cultural experiences, and exploratory opportunities, their conceptual frameworks remain impoverished. Hart and Risley's (1995) study of vocabulary development, while conducted in the United States, identified principles that are universally applicable: children from low-income backgrounds are exposed to significantly less language, hear millions fewer words, and encounter much simpler language structures than their affluent peers.

In Third World contexts, this experiential gap is exacerbated by language policies. When education is provided in foreign languages, low-income students are unable to benefit from the informal learning of their

communities because the linguistic and conceptual frameworks learned in school remain disconnected from lived experience. Research by Benson and Kosonen (2013) found that low-income students in mother tongue education programs demonstrate richer conceptual understanding and more complex reasoning because they are able to integrate school learning with community knowledge. Foreign language instruction creates an artificial separation between school and life, rendering education abstract and meaningless.

Malnutrition, anorexia and Health Factors

Although often overlooked in educational analyses, malnutrition and health problems are major causes of cognitive decline among low-income students in developing countries. A review by Grantham-McGregor (2007) in The Lancet discovered that childhood malnutrition, particularly during critical periods of development, causes permanent cognitive deficits that affect memory, attention, processing speed, and executive function. The World Bank (2006) evaluated that 205 million children in low-income countries fail to acquire their developmental potential and capabilities due to indigence-related factors, with malnutrition and anorexia being a major contributor. Iron deficiency, which affects approximately 55% of children in developing countries according to the WHO (2001), significantly impairs cognitive function, reducing attention span, memory consolidation, and learning capacity. A comprehensive review by Pollitt (1993) showed that even moderate nutritional deficiencies produce measurable cognitive impairments that manifest as overt learning disabilities. Teachers, unaware of these physiological factors, often attribute poor performance to low intelligence or laziness, perpetuating deficiency perspectives that further marginalize affected students.

Barriers to Creative Development - Authoritarian Educational Culture

Third World education systems typically operate within authoritarian cultural frameworks that view teachers as unquestioning authorities and students as passive recipients. Hofstede's (2001) research into cultural dimensions showed that cultures with high power distance—characteristic of many developing countries—refuse to question authority, challenge established ideas or offer new solutions. These cultural patterns, when manifested in educational settings, directly conflict with the conditions necessary for creative development. Amabile's (1996) component theory of creativity posits autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and freedom to explore as essential for creative thinking. Third World classrooms typically provide none of these conditions. Alexander's (2000) comparative study of education across cultures found that classrooms in developing countries feature rigid teacher control, predetermined responses, and punishment for deviations from expected responses. Students quickly learn that success requires conforming to teacher expectations, not generating original ideas.

Ng's (2001) cross-cultural study of creativity found that educational systems that emphasize conformity, respect for authority, and group harmony rather than individual expression—common in Third World countries—systematically suppress creative thinking. Students in these systems scored significantly lower on tests of divergent thinking, measures of originality, and flexibility in problem solving than students in educational cultures that value individual expression and inquiry.

Absence of Arts and Exploratory Learning

Budget constraints in low-income schools result in the exclusion of art, music, drama, and exploratory activities—the very experiences that foster creative growth. Eisner's (2002) research into arts education found that artistic engagement develops cognitive flexibility, symbolic thinking, and creative problem solving. However, Bamford's (2006) research in developing countries found that arts education exists almost exclusively in elite private schools, while public schools serving low-income populations focus narrowly on literacy, numeracy, and test preparation. Robinson's (2011) analysis argues that conventional education systems stifle creativity by prioritizing certain forms of intelligence and devaluing others. This limitation is particularly pronounced in Third World contexts serving low-income populations. Salberg's (2011) comparative study found that successful education systems offer broad, balanced curricula with significant time for play, exploration, and creative expression. Third-world education systems serving underserved populations do the opposite—they restrict curricula, eliminate exploration, and maximize rote learning time for critical exams.

Punishment of Errors and Risk Aversion

Creative thinking requires risk-taking, experimentation, and tolerance for failure—exactly what Third World educational cultures discourage. Clifford's (1988) research into tolerance for failure showed that students only develop creative confidence when educational environments view errors as learning opportunities, not failures to be punished. However, Schweizforth's (2011) research documented that Third World classrooms typically respond to student errors with general correction, humiliation, and sometimes physical punishment. This creates risk-averse students

who avoid trying anything uncertain, stick to known solutions, and suppress novel ideas that might go wrong. Baggett and Kaufman's (2007) research into creative self-efficacy showed that students' beliefs about their creative abilities directly determine their willingness to think creatively. When educational experiences consistently punish risk-taking and error, students develop creative helplessness—the belief that they are not creative and should not engage in original thinking.

Disconnection from Real-World Problems

Education in Third World countries is often disconnected from the realities of students' lives and the problems of society, eliminating opportunities for meaningful and creative problem-solving. Freire's (1970) critique of banking education emphasized that meaningful learning occurs when students engage with "generative issues"—problems and issues that are central to their lived experience. However, Tabulawa's (2003) research into African education systems found that curricula are largely composed of irrelevant academic content that has no connection to students' communities or real-world challenges. Creative thinking is developed through authentic problem-solving. Sawyer's (2006) research into creative learning environments showed that creativity flourishes when students confront real, meaningful problems that require innovative solutions. Third World education systems rarely provide such opportunities, especially for low-income students. The result is alienation—students perceive education as an irrelevant ritual rather than a meaningful preparation for life, and the inherent motivation necessary for creative engagement is destroyed.

Limited Exposure to Diverse Perspectives

Creative thinking requires exposure to diverse ideas, alternative perspectives, and diverse knowledge systems. However, low-income students in developing countries have limited exposure to intellectual diversity. Monopoly of textbooks, documented by Altbach (1983), means that students are exposed only to officially endorsed perspectives. Limited and restricted access to the Internet, deficient and lack of modern research materials, and deficient educational travel opportunities create intellectual isolation. Furthermore, when instruction is conducted in foreign languages and devalues local knowledge systems, students lose access to indigenous creativity, traditional problem-solving approaches, and community wisdom. Aikenhead and Ogawa's (2007) investigation of indigenous science pedagogy found that integrating local knowledge systems with formal education enhances creative thinking by exposing students to multiple ways of understanding reality. Foreign language education systems serving low-income populations typically completely dismiss local knowledge and undermine students' conceptual troves.

Removing Obstacles to Creative Development

The development of creativity among students of average intelligence in developing countries is systematically suppressed through inappropriate language policies that create cognitive, psychological, and cultural barriers to innovative thinking. While educational discourse often focuses on elite students or assumes equal effects across intelligence levels, the reality is that the selection of the language of directive disproportionately affects ordinary language learners, who constitute the large number of the population in third world countries. My article reviews evidence-based approaches to addressing barriers to creativity and concludes that

teaching the national language provides the essential foundation for creativity to flourish among average students, while early foreign language instruction systematically undermines creative potential.

The Cognitive Dimension: Freeing Mental Resources for Creativity

Sweller's (1988) cognitive load theorem states that the capacity of active memory-the mental workspace for processing new information—is severely limited, especially for students of average intelligence. When learning a foreign language, students must simultaneously decode unfamiliar vocabulary, analyse grammatical structures, translate meanings, and try to understand conceptual content. This creates what Pas et al. (2003) call "irrelevant cognitive load" and consumes mental resources that should be available for creative thinking.

Research by UNESCO-Malone (2007) in Asian contexts found that average-performing students in foreign language classrooms showed a 60–75% reduction in capacity for divergent thinking, deductive reasoning, and problem-solving flexibility compared to the same cognitive tasks presented in familiar languages. The practical implication of this is clear: foreign language instruction effectively reduces functional intelligence by loading cognitive resources with linguistic processing. Kahneman’s (2011) dual-process theory distinguishes between automatic System 1 processing and laborious System 2 processing, explaining that understanding a familiar language operates automatically while a foreign language requires conscious and sustained effort. National language instruction frees up System 2 resources for creative analysis, allowing average students to perform to their full cognitive potential. An eight-year longitudinal research project by Hugh (2007) in Ethiopia that tracked

10,000 students confirmed this prediction: average-intelligence students in native language programs demonstrated creative thinking capacities that were comparable to above-average students in English language programs, demonstrating that language policy can suppress or unleash creative potential, depending on cognitive access.

Psychological Foundations: Building Creative Confidence

Developing creativity requires what Bagtu and Kaufman (2007) call “creative self-efficacy”—confidence in one’s ability and approach to generate new and valuable ideas. Bandura’s (1997) research showed that self-efficacy beliefs determine the willingness to attempt creative challenges and persistence in the face of difficulties. Foreign language instruction systematically erodes creative self-confidence in average students through experiences of persistent failure: inability to articulate thoughts, failure to understand instructions, poor performance on assessments despite genuine effort, and general embarrassment during classroom participation. Nag et al.’s (2019) longitudinal study tracking 1,200 students in India found that students of average intelligence educated in English demonstrated significantly lower academic self-concept and creative self-confidence compared to their native-language peers, even when objective cognitive abilities were equivalent. Duke's (2006) research into mindsets explains the mechanism: repeated failure fosters a "fixed mindset," in which students believe that creativity and intelligence are innate, unchangeable traits, not developable capacities. This learned helplessness persists even after language competence improves, creating permanent psychological barriers to creative expression.

Furthermore, Horwitz (1986) documented that foreign language apprehension produces physiological stress responses—high cortisol, increased heart rate—that actively suppress creative thinking by straining the prefrontal cortex. Young's (1991) research found that students with average performance in foreign language contexts experience anxiety levels comparable to clinical populations. Edmondson's (1999) concept of psychological safety emphasizes that creativity requires environments in which risk-taking feels safe, precisely what foreign language classes deny to average students who face the constant threat of linguistic humiliation. National language instruction removes these psychological barriers and creates conditions in which average students experience success, develop a growth mindset, and feel psychologically safe in presenting unconventional ideas. Benson's (2004) research into Mozambique found that students in bilingual programs using local languages showed significantly higher classroom participation, willingness to come up with new solutions, and persistence in problem solving—all indicators of healthy creative self-efficacy that are essential for innovative thinking.

Knowledge Integration: Connecting Learning with Experience

Aubel's (1968) theory of meaningful learning states that true comprehension requires linking new information to existing knowledge schemas, not discrete memorization. For students of average intelligence, this integration depends heavily on linguistic accessibility. When instruction is in foreign languages, school knowledge remains confined to discrete linguistic compartments and disconnected from lived experience and societal wisdom. Benson and Kosonen (2013) documented that average students in foreign language programs develop "parallel

cognitive systems”—they can read academic content in a foreign language but cannot apply it to real-world problems, connect it to societal knowledge, or transfer it to new contexts.

This disconnection stifles creativity, which Boden (2004) showed requires “combined thinking”—generating new ideas by connecting existing concepts in unusual ways. When school knowledge exists in linguistic isolation, students lack the integrated conceptual frameworks necessary for creative synthesis. National language instruction allows ordinary students to build integrated knowledge structures in which academic learning enriches and is enriched by experiential understanding. This integration transforms education from an abstract ritual to meaningful preparation for creative problem-solving in students’ real-world communities.

Cultural Identity and Creative Voice

Bourdieu’s (1986) concept of cultural capital illuminates how language policies affirm or marginalize students’ cultural identities. Foreign language teaching creates what Bourdieu calls “symbolic violence”—the implicit devaluation of students’ languages, cultures, and ways of knowing. Skatnab-Kangas (2000) has shown that linguistic marginalization is correlated with the suppression of creative expression because students internalize messages that their cultural perspectives are inadequate foundations for complex thinking. For ordinary students navigating what Nandy (1983) calls “colonial mentality”—the psychological legacies in which formerly colonized peoples view their own cultures as inferior—foreign language teaching reinforces internalized oppression. Freire’s (1970) analysis emphasized that emancipation

requires rejecting dominant narratives of inadequacy and reclaiming indigenous knowledge as legitimate.

National language education provides this psychological emancipation and affirms local cultural knowledge, traditional problem-solving approaches, and community wisdom as creative resources. Robinson's (2011) creativity research argues that diverse cultural perspectives constitute the essential raw materials for innovation; foreign language education isolates average students from these cultural sources and undermines creative potential. The concept of "decolonization of the mind," introduced by Wa Tiongho (1986), is implemented through national language education, allowing ordinary students to develop authentic creative voices rooted in their own cultural identity, rather than imitating poorly understood foreign cultural norms. This cultural grounding is particularly crucial for students from collectivist Third World societies who struggle with creative expression due to cultural emphasis on conformity and respect for authority (Hofstede, 2001). Adding linguistic insecurity erodes any remaining creative courage that national language education could foster.

Pedagogical Enablers: Dialogue and Collaboration

Creative growth flourishes through interactive instruction that requires real communication. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development emphasizes that cognitive growth occurs through framed social interaction in which teachers guide students through challenges that are just beyond their independent abilities. This framing is fundamentally dependent on effective communication, which is impossible when language barriers separate teachers and students. Brook-Athen's (2007) classroom observations showed that foreign language instruction produces "pretend

learning”—the performance of instructional gestures without real communication occurring. A study by Trudel and Piper (2014) found that meaningful teacher-student conversation occurred for only 4 minutes per day in foreign language classes compared to 47 minutes in national language classes.

For the average students who benefit most from framed instruction, this communication breakdown destroys creative growth because teachers cannot probe thinking, challenge assumptions, or guide exploratory reasoning through the nuanced dialogue that national language instruction makes possible. Furthermore, Sawyer's (2007) research showed that innovation comes from shared "group ingenuity" rather than from individual effort. Johnson and Johnson's (2009) collaborative learning research showed that groups consistently produce more innovative solutions than individuals, but only when fluid communication allows for the rapid exchange of ideas. Foreign language barriers hinder effective collaboration among average students, forcing them to work silently as individuals. National language instruction unleashes shared creative potential and enables students to freely brainstorm, discuss different options, and build shared understanding through the social processes that generate creative ideas (Cohen, 1994). Furthermore, Cummins' (2000) distinction between IICS (initial interpersonal communication skills) (achievable in 1–3 years) and academic cognitive language competency (requiring 4-8 years) suggests that average students rarely acquire the sophisticated foreign language proficiency necessary for complex creative expression during their schooling. National language instruction enables the full linguistic complexity—broad vocabulary, nuanced expression, metaphorical language—that is essential for creative communication, and Bamgbose (2004) found that it

produces more original work compared to linguistically impoverished foreign language expression.

The Optimal Approach: Sequential Bilingual Education

Research evidence supports sequential bilingual education as a universal method for overcoming barriers to creativity for students with average intelligence. A study by Thomas and Collier (2002), which tracked 2.1 million students, found that 4 to 6 years of native language instruction before transitioning to foreign languages produced better outcomes in both languages. The proposed model includes: (1) full national language instruction in grades 1–3, building cognitive foundations and creative confidence while the foreign language is introduced only as an oral subject; (2) strategic bilingual transition in grades 4–6 with ongoing native language support for complex content; (3) balanced bilingual retention in grades 7–12 with strategic use of both languages (Baker, 2011). This approach optimizes the development of creativity while simultaneously building the foreign language competence needed for global interaction. Educationally, national language instruction enables inquiry-based learning, project-based approaches to tackling authentic community problems, and the integration of the arts—methods that have been shown to enhance creativity but are impossible when language barriers prevent real interaction (Hemlev-Silver et al., 2007; Eisner, 2002; Krajic & Shin, 2014).

Conclusion

Accumulated evidence from international research in diverse Third World contexts leads to a clear conclusion: national language education provides a fundamental foundation for the development of creativity,

cognitive growth, and academic achievement among students of average intelligence, while early foreign language instruction systematically suppresses these capacities through cognitive overload, psychological trauma, and cultural alienation. The benefits of national language education are comprehensive and empirically confirmed—it frees up cognitive resources for creative thinking by eliminating irrelevant linguistic processing demands, builds creative self-confidence through successful experiences and psychological security, enables meaningful integration of knowledge that connects school learning to lived experience, affirms cultural identities as sources of creative power, facilitates authentic pedagogical dialogue and collaborative learning, and provides the sophisticated linguistic tools necessary for complex creative expression.

On the contrary, FLT (foreign language teaching) imposes devastating disadvantages on the average student: consuming 60 to 75 percent of cognitive capacity simply on linguistic decoding, creating debilitating anxiety and learned helplessness that persist even after language acquisition, fragmenting knowledge into discrete linguistic chunks that prevent creative synthesis, inflicting symbolic violence that suppresses culturally informed creative voices, preventing the authentic teacher-student interaction that is essential for context-based learning, and confining students to impoverished linguistic repertoires that are inadequate for complex expression throughout their academic careers. Inevitable requirements for effective implementation of national language education include comprehensive teacher training in mother tongue teaching and creative teaching methods, development of high-quality teaching materials in national languages, reform of assessment systems to measure real understanding rather than rote memorization, community engagement in addressing parental concerns about global

competitiveness, and strategic integration of foreign languages through sequential bilingual models that prioritize comprehension before transmission. The peripheral conditions in Third World contexts—colonial mentalities that value foreign languages, examination cultures that emphasize conformity over creativity, resource constraints that constrain the development of teaching materials, and collectivist cultural norms that discourage individual expression—require explicit attention through culturally responsive pedagogies that frame creativity as serving the interests of society while challenging internalized oppression. Methods for developing intellectual maturity that are in tune with the mindset of Third World students must acknowledge cultural values while fostering creative courage through inquiry-based learning in accessible language environments, project-based approaches that address authentic local problems, the integration of the arts that affirm diverse forms of intelligence, and explicit instruction in creative thinking processes that are situated within familiar cultural frameworks. Historical examples show that genius emerges in all cultures and levels of intelligence, given the right conditions—mathematicians like Ramanujan who generated revolutionary insights through culturally informed thought patterns, innovators like Muhammad Yunus, the founder of Grameen Bank, who solved local problems through creative application of indigenous social structures, and countless anonymous members of society who use traditional knowledge systems to solve everyday challenges with their own creative adaptations. These examples prove that creativity is not culturally dependent on Western individualism nor limited to exceptional intelligence, but rather reflects a universal human capacity that only requires the comprehensible education, psychological security, cultural validity, and cognitive access that national language education provides, while foreign language education systematically deprives average students, who constitute

humanity's creative potential, of these possibilities. Ministries of education should conduct all curriculum development based on the priority of national languages and ensure that every curriculum document, every teacher training manual, and every assessment framework reflects the scientific fact that mother tongue education is the irreplaceable foundation for all subsequent learning, including the eventual mastery of foreign languages that globalization demands.

Conflict of interests: none.

Ata ul Kareem is a PhD student in Persian Language and Literature - Department of Persian Language and Literature, Faculty of Persian Literature and Foreign Languages, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.*attaulkareemmanzoor@gmail.com*

https://orcid.org/0009-0003-7904-9711

References

Aikenhead, G. S., & Ogawa, M. (2007). *Indigenous knowledge and science revisited*. *Cultural Studies of Science Education, 2(3), 539–620*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11422-007-9067-8

Alexander, K. L., Entwisle, D. R., & Thompson, M. S. (1987). *School performance, status relations, and the structure of sentiment: Bringing the teacher back in*. *American Sociological Review, 52(5), 665–682*. https://doi.org/10.2307/2095602

Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture and pedagogy: International comparisons in primary education*. Blackwell Publishers. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3593355

Alidou, H., Boly, A., Brock-Utne, B., Diallo, Y. S., Heugh, K., & Wolff, H. E. (2006). *Optimizing learning and education in Africa – The language factor: A stock-taking research on mother tongue and bilingual education in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA). https://biennale.adeanet.org/2006/doc/document/B3_1_MTBLE_en.pdf

Altbach, P. G. (1983). *Key issues of textbook provision in the Third World*. *Prospects, 13(3),* 315–325. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02195309

Amabile, T. M. (1996). *Creativity in context: Update to the social psychology of creativity*. Westview Press. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1996-97996-000

Ausubel, D. P. (1968). *Educational psychology: A cognitive view*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1968-35017-000

Baker, C. (2011). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (5th ed.). Multilingual Matters.https://www.academia.edu/96483170/Colin_Baker_Foundations_of_bilingual_education_and_bilingualism_Academic_consultant_Ofelia_Garcia_Clevedon_England_and_Philadelphia_Multilingual_Matters_1993_Pp_xvi_318_Pb_24_50

Baker, D. P., Goesling, B., & LeTendre, G. K. (2002). *Socioeconomic status, school quality, and national economic development: A cross-national analysis of the "Heyneman-Loxley effect" on mathematics and science achievement*. *Comparative Education Review, 46(3), 291–312*. https://doi.org/10.1086/341159

Bamford, A. (2006). *The wow factor: Global research compendium on the impact of the arts in education*. Waxmann Verlag.

Bamgbose, A. (2004). *Language of instruction policy and practice in Africa*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000218045

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1997-08589-000

Beghetto, R. A., & Kaufman, J. C. (2007). *Toward a broader conception of creativity: A case for "mini-c" creativity. Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, 1(2), 73–79.* https://doi.org/10.1037/1931-3896.1.2.73

Benson, C. (2004). *The importance of mother tongue-based schooling for educational quality*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000146632

Benson, C. (2005). *Girls, educational equity and mother tongue-based teaching*. UNESCO Bangkok. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000139542

Benson, C., & Kosonen, K. (Eds.). (2013). *Language issues in comparative education: Inclusive teaching and learning in non-dominant languages and cultures*. Sense Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-218-1

Boden, M. A. (2004). *The creative mind* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1986*). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.)* Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education (pp. 241–258). Greenwood.

Bourdieu, P., & Passeron, J. C. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society and culture*. Sage Publications.

Brock-Utne, B. (2007). *Language of instruction and student performance: New insights from research in Tanzania and South Africa*. *International Review of Education, 53(5–6), 509–530.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-007-9065-9

Clifford, M. M. (1988). Failure tolerance and academic risk-taking in ten- to twelve-year-old students. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *58*(1), 15–27. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8279.1988.tb00874.x

Cohen, E. G. (1994). Restructuring the classroom: Conditions for productive small groups. *Review of Educational Research*, *64*(1), 1–35.

Commins, N. L., & Miramontes, O. B. (2006). *Addressing linguistic diversity from the outset*. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *57*(3), 240–246. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487105285669

Croizet, J. C., & Claire, T. (1998). *Extending the concept of stereotype threat to social class: The intellectual underperformance of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds*. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 24(6), 588–594.* https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167298246003Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power, and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853596773

Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success*. Random House.

Edmondson, A. (1999). *Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams*. Administrative Science Quarterly, 44(2), 350–383. https://doi.org/10.2307/2666999

Eisner, E. W. (2002). *The arts and the creation of mind*. Yale University Press. 9780300105117

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum. https://fsi-ebcao.princeton.edu/sites/g/files/toruqf1411/files/media/freire.pdf

García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137385765

Grantham-McGregor, S., Cheung, Y. B., Cueto, S., Glewwe, P., Richter, L., & Strupp, B. (2007). Developmental potential in the first 5 years for children in developing countries. *The Lancet*, *369*(9555), 60–70. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(07)60032-4

Greaney, V., & Kellaghan, T. (2008). *Assessing national achievement levels in education*. World Bank. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-7377-2

Hart, B., & Risley, T. R. (1995). *Meaningful differences in the everyday experience of young American children*. Paul H. Brookes Publishing. https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=1728585

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge. ISBN 0-203-88733-6 Master e-book

Heugh, K., Benson, C., Bogale, B., & Yohannes, M. A. G. (2007). *Final report: Study on medium of instruction in primary schools in Ethiopia*. Ministry of Education, Ethiopia. http://mlenetwork.org/sites/default/files/Final report study on Medium of Instruction in primaryschools in Ethiopia - Heugh et al 2007.pdf

Heyneman, S. P., & Loxley, W. A. (1983). The effect of primary-school quality on academic achievement across twenty-nine high- and low-income countries. *American Journal of Sociology*, *88*(6), 1162–1194. https://doi.org/10.1086/227799

Hmelo-Silver, C. E., Duncan, R. G., & Chinn, C. A. (2007). Scaffolding and achievement in problem-based learning. *Educational Psychologist*, *42*(2), 99–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520701263368

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0005-7967 (02)00184-5

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, *70*(2), 125–132.

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2009). An educational psychology success story. *Educational Researcher*, *38*(5), 365–379. https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X09339057

Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux. DO10.1007/s00362-013-0533-y

Krajcik, J. S., & Shin, N. (2014). Project-Based Learning. In R. K. Sawyer (Ed.), The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences (pp. 275–297). chapter, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lambert, W. E. (1974). Culture and Language as Factors in Learning and Education. In F. E. Aboud, & R. D. Meade (Eds.), Cultural Factors in Learning and Education (pp. 233-261). McGill-Queen's University Press. https://www.scirp.org/reference/referencespapers?referenceid=4082807

Malone, S. E. (2007). Mother tongue-based multilingual education: Implications for education policy. In A. Mohanty, M. Panda, R. Phillipson, & T. Skutnabb-Kangas (Eds.), *Multilingual education for social justice: Globalising the local* (pp. 56–86). Orient Blackswan. https://www.sil.org/resources/archives/42737

Nag, S., Chiat, S., Torgerson, C., & Snowling, M. J. (2019). *Literacy, foundation learning and assessment in developing countries*. Department for International Development. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/305150/Literacy-foundation-learning-assessment.pdf

Nandy, A. (1983). *The intimate enemy*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1177/001946468402100

Ng, A. K. (2001). Why Asians are less creative than Westerners. Prentice Hall. DO - 10.1080/10400419.2003.9651423

Noddings, N. (2005). *The challenge to care in schools: An alternative approach to education* (2nd Ed.). Studies in Art Education, 48(4), 412–415. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25475845

OECD. (2018). *TALIS 2018 results (Volume I): Teachers and school leaders as lifelong learners*. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/1d0bc92a-en

Okonofua, J. A., Walton, G. M., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2016). A vicious cycle: A social–psychological account of extreme racial disparities in school discipline. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *11*(3), 381–398. https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691616635592

Paas, F., Renkl, A., & Sweller, J. (2003). Cognitive load theory and instructional design. *Educational Psychologist*, *38*(1), 1–4.

Pollitt, E. (1993). Iron deficiency and cognitive function. *Annual Review of Nutrition*, *13*, 521–537. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.nu.13.070193.002513

Pritchett, L., & Beatty, A. (2015). Slow down, you're going too fast: Matching curricula to student skill levels. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *40*, 276–288. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.11.013

Rahman, T. (2002). Language, ideology and power: Language learning among the Muslims of Pakistan and North India. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *23*(3), 175–192. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434630208666462

Robinson, K. (2011). *Out of our minds: Learning to be creative* (2nd ed.). Capstone.

Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. https://doi.org/10.1080/03621537.2025.2561360

Sahlberg, P. (2011). Finnish lessons: what can the world learn from educational change in Finland? New York: Teachers College Press. CEPS Journal 1 (2011) 3, S. 167-170. DOI: 10.25656/01:11098

Sawyer, R. K. (2006). Educating for innovation. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *1*(1), 41–48. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2005.08.001

Sawyer, R. K. (2007). *Group genius*. Basic Books.

Schweisfurth, M. (2011). Learner-centred education in developing country contexts: From solution to problem? *International Journal of Educational Development*, *31*(5), 425–432. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2011.03.005

Serpell, R., & Haynes, B. P. (2004). The cultural practice of intelligence testing: Problems of international export. In R. J. Sternberg & E. L. Grigorenko (Eds.), *Culture and competence: Contexts of life success* (pp. 163–185). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/10668-008

Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (2000). *Linguistic genocide in education – Or worldwide diversity and human rights?* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410605467

Sriprakash, A. (2010). Child-centred education and the promise of democratic learning: Pedagogic messages in rural Indian primary schools. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *30*(3), 297–304. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2009.11.010

Steele, C. M., & Aronson, J. (1995). Stereotype threat and the intellectual test performance of African Americans. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *69*(5), 797–811. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.69.5.797

Sweller, J. (1988). Cognitive load during problem solving. *Cognitive Science*, *12*(2), 257–285. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15516709cog1202_4

Tabulawa, R. (2003). International aid agencies, learner-centred pedagogy and political democratisation: A critique. *Comparative Education*, *39*(1), 7–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060302559

Tan, P. L., Yusof, M., & Abdullah, A. C. (2015). The policy of teaching mathematics and science in English: A study on the implementation strategy and impact on education in Malaysia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, *35*(4), 504–522. https://doi.org/10.1080/02188791.2013.860011

Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2002). A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement. UC Berkeley: Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved from https://escholarship.org/uc/item/65j213pt

Torrance, E. P. (1972). Can we teach children to think creatively? *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, *6*(2), 114–143. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2162-6057.1972.tb00923.x

Trudell, B., & Piper, B. (2013). Whatever the law says: language policy implementation and early-grade literacy achievement in Kenya. Current Issues in Language Planning, 15(1), 4–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2013.856985

Trudell, B., & Piper, B. (2014). Whatever the law says: Language policy implementation and early-grade literacy achievement in Kenya. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, *15*(1), 4–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2013.856985

UNESCO. (2023). *Global education monitoring report 2023: Technology in education – A tool on whose terms?* UNESCO. https://doi.org/10.54676/UZQV8501

Valenzuela, A. (1999). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. State University of New York Press.

VYGOTSKY, L. S. (1978). Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes (M. Cole, V. Jolm-Steiner, S. Scribner, & E. Souberman, Eds.). Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjf9vz4.

Wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). *Decolonising the mind*. James Currey. https://www.uib.no/sites/w3.uib.no/files/attachments/decolonising-the-mind.pdf

World Bank. (2006). *Repositioning nutrition as central to development: A strategy for large-scale action*. World Bank. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-0-8213-6399-7

World Bank. (2018). *World development report 2018: Learning to realize education's promise*. World Bank. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1096-1

World Bank. (2021). *The promise of education in South Asia*. World Bank. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-1683-9

World Healths Organization. (2001). *Iron deficiency anaemia: Assessment, prevention and control*. WHO. https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/iron-children-6to23--archived-iron-deficiency-anaemia-assessment-prevention-and-control

Young, D. J. (1991). *Creating a Low-Anxiety Classroom Environment: What Does the Language Anxiety Research Suggest?* Modern Language Journal, 75, 426-437. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1991

KEYNOTE ARTICLE 3

When Teaching and Training Meet

Dominique Vouillemin

As a language teacher with a special interest in intercultural management and communication I have worked as a teacher of English as a foreign language, a teacher trainer, an intercultural trainer and a trainer in business management and communication. In doing so I have had the opportunities to train international business students and business executives seeking to improve their business skills in order to work successfully in a globalised world where English is still used as a common language of international business communication.

What is important for learners, be they university students studying business as part of their preparation for their professional careers or international business executives working with clients or colleagues from other parts of the world is to have the opportunity to access resources used by native speakers in making presentations, negotiating, doing deals, attending meetings and making your points successfully, and networking, This is not just about learning a language but training to build practical business skills. to ensure success in establishing positive international business relations.

Teachers, trainers, and lifelong learners in Western Europe and North America value content that resonates with learners' experiences and expectations. We are expected to welcome and elicit critical thinking,

while fellow educators elsewhere in the world may not be trained in or practise this approach. The effective educator needs to pace (meet) the learners where they are and lead them to desired outcomes - believed to be fulfilling, beneficial and aligned with academic and business requirements. Educational cultures differ globally; questioning and debate may not always be encouraged. As we and our students face significant life choices, blending teaching and training methods helps bridge divides. Knowledge is power while wisdom is knowing how to use that power. What do we need to include in our online distant teaching and face-to face training to stimulate our students and give them tools which will help them both in their university lives and in their future careers?

Here are some of the supplementary RESOURCES I use in training that have been successful with my groups at university or business and administrative professionals from overseas.

(Core recommended resources included TED Talks, motivational speakers (Vinh Giang) and academic sources)

- Articles/features about the people my students represent in the workplace (management/behaviour/expectations)/ at play (health and lifestyle/expectations/ambitions.)
- Using the language of social media (Point of View (POV)/In Real Life (IRL)/Shade/Like)
- Regular IRL slots in lectures to relate what we were doing to the wider non-academic context – for example:

- The celebration of public holidays and national festivals.
- International business leaders/CEOs
- Dragons' Den (UK)/ /Shark Tank (US)
- Developments in marketing and advertising ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response); Christmas Ads/most popular advertisements
- Issues around AI
- Local drama and entertainment plots and vocal delivery
- National business reports/City of London news and trends
- Anglo-business nationality trade, diplomatic alliances and meetings

- International business and entrepreneurship in the UK and the US
- Musical heroes – stars from the business student's country and from the UK/US. (from students)
- Icons – Personalities whose qualities inspire successful international communication.

1. **Here are some of the supplementary METHODS and APPROACHES that I have used in training.**

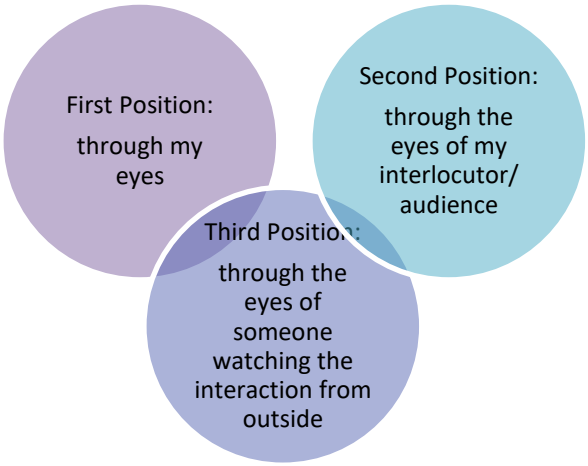
(Core: short training video slots/ leaders in the field eg: Stephen Covey/ Dr Dustin York/breakout rooms/ plenary discussion/evaluation of learning/ Voice in Action Toolbox for reflection and course diary)

1. **Regular quizzes in workshop sessions on lecture content**
   Animate the groups, elicit a competitive element and engage the gamers. I produce my own but they can be created by Chat GPT or Copilot if time is short.
2. **Feedback and contributions from students**
   Incorporate this into the next lecture or workshop, as educational compound interest. Learners were hearing fresh from each other across campuses and specialisms. They were hearing from their peers within their own cultural referents, not only from a far-off baby-boomer.
3. **The chat function**
   Used regularly by me so that students had a means of communicating even if they felt shy/reluctant/self-conscious about unmuting and switching on their cameras.
4. **Student uploads**
   Students could upload into the chat what were clearly the results of Google/ChatGPT searches which did show engagement – and could then elaborate and personalise the examples via chat or unmute.
5. **Acknowledge student contributions.**
   All contributions were acknowledged by me verbally and/or with emojis to respond rapidly.
6. **Repeat instructions regularly.**
   Instructions for room/group work, already on a slide, were repeated in the chat and again in the announcements to rooms. A few early requests in the students' mother tongue (thanks Google translate) asking each other 'What does she want us to do?' ensured clarity thereafter.

7. **Lesson/workshop plans**
   Make sure they have simultaneous ‘loose/tight properties’ so that maximum time could be given to student contributions if offered/shared – but were not relied upon or necessary to a full session.
8. **Allowing silent down time**
   Even if limited due to time restraints – to prepare classroom tasks and responses. – It takes away the pressure to respond on the spot.
9. **Give background/mini summaries to video clips**
   If you are using video clips play twice if necessary to embed and ease listening/viewing. Allow moments of silence post-viewing to absorb and process.

2. **Here are some of the BUSINESS/PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS, borrowed from training and coaching that were incorporated into the sessions to cut through complexity and personalise learning:** (Core: Empathy Map/Feedback Sandwich/STAR + Give Me an Example)

- The KISS principle ‘Keep It Short and Simple’ (or ‘Keep It Simple Stupid’)
    - Always raises a laugh and is a useful mnemonic for keeping documents, emails, proposals, cover letters and Powerpoint slides as clear and brief as possible. Keep it short and Simple – but no simpler.
- **The Napkin Test** –These frameworks be used super-fast – Use a napkin to summarise key information. ie in the campus food court jot down/brainstorm ideas on a napkin to useful effect. Students can transfer it to their notebooks when they gey back to their studies.
- **Perceptual Positions** - looking at interactions from different angles. Make notes using a napkin comparing points of view (POV) – noting/observing/ learning (napkin test!)



- **Presentation Frameworks –**
  Get your students to use this framework to plan their presentation.

  Step 1 Take-off > 'What I'm going to say'

  Step 2 Flight > 'What I'm saying'

  Step 3 Landing > 'What I've said'

- **SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats**
  - This well-established framework is obviously essential in preparation for job interviews, in personal audits of skills and abilities and in decision-making.
- **Total Quality Management (TQM)**
  Training frameworks and aphorisms (Plan, Do, Check, Act PDCA; Test, Operate, Test, Exit TOTE; Six Sigma).'The good news about quality management is that you can start today. The bad news is that you can never stop'.
- **Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Digital, Olfactory, Gustatory learning/encoding styles.**
  These are used in many types of communication, for example in ads or to create engaging presentations and are a useful tool for self-assessment.

Conclusion

To build rapport in any teaching or cross-cultural setting, it is essential to understand campus layout(!), learners' specialisms, and regional or historical context. Cultural issues were always of interest, comparing the country of the trainee/s with the country they are working in or doing

business with. I often gave French examples in business culture, to contrast and compare with the UK. By blending academic study and discipline with business psychology and best practice, students were offered knowledge of techniques and tools which if applied with wisdom will give help and options for finding work that they love, for leading fulfilled lives and will enable and encourage them to speak their own truth.

Bibliography

Hanh, Thich Nhat (2013/2014) *The Art of Communicating*), publisher Harper One ISBN 978 0062224668 (US) Rider ISBN 978 1846044007 (UK)

Jobs, S 2005 Stanford Commencement Address (Accessed 8 December 2025) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF8uR6Z6KLc

Kissinger H and Lord W https://tinyurl.com/yf7mj8k9

O'Connor J and Seymour J (2003) *Introducing NLP Harper Collins ISBN 978 1855383449*

Swallow, D Dr Intercultural Communication Adventure with Little Pilot (Accessed 8 December 2025) The Diversity Dashboard:A Manager's Guide to Navigating in Cross-Cultural Turbulence (Currently out of print)

Taleb, Nassim Nicholas (2007) *The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable* Random House ISBN 978 1400063512 (US); Allen Lane ISBN 978 071399952 (UK)

Tomalin B and Nicks, M (*2014) World Business Cultures - A Handbook (Leadership & Strategy)* eBook ISBN 9781854188120

WEBINARS OVERVIEW 2025

The following webinars were delivered by leading language and intercultural experts in 2025.To follow the recordings, visit www.icc-languages.eu/ Webinars. The presenters and titles of the webinars are listed below.

November 16 2025 Geoff Tranter, 'Book or no Book?'

September 25 2025 Professor Thomas H Bak, 'Why our Brains and our World Need Languages to Cross Borders'

June 26 2025 Nik Peachey, 'Prompting for AI-Mediated Autonomous Teacher Development'

March 26 2025 Russell Stannard, 'Key AI Technologies that are impacting Language Education'

March 7 2025 Rob Williams, 'Decolonising the Curriculum – What Does this Mean for Language Teaching?'

January 23 2025 Alan Maley, 'Using Wisdom Stories and Related Inputs for Continuing Professional Development'

TEACHING TIPS

by Nick Micheliodakis

Teaching Tip 1‘I’LL DO THE RIGHT THING TOMORROW’ [Psychology for Educators]

You think there is only one of you, but actually there are more. Imagine you come back from work, feeling exhausted. You have to order something to eat. Quickly – what is it going to be: a pizza or a salad?

OK – now consider the following study: researchers divided some students into two groups. Students in the first group had to choose one movie each day, which they would have to watch later in the evening. Students in the second group however, had to choose all three movies on the first day (and they would still have to watch one of them over the following three evenings). All the movies came from the same list. Some of the films were ‘serious’ movies (e.g. ‘Schindler’s List’) while others were just entertainment (e.g. ‘Batman Returns’). What kind of films do you think the students chose?

Well, students in the second group chose low-brow films for that evening, but they chose more quality stuff for the future. The students of the first group however, chose silly stuff every single time… 😊 [‘Think Small’ – pp. 67-68].

What does this show do? It shows that inside each one of us there is a ‘Present Me’ and a ‘Future Me’; ‘Present Me’ wants to have junk food and watch TV; ‘Future Me’ is more virtuous: they want to eat healthy stuff and go to the gym – so long as this takes place in the future.

So, this is the take-away for us, educators: if you want your students to do what they too want to do (study, develop good learning habits, revise, etc.) you need to get them to commit in advance. The same goes for lessons: if students have to schedule the lesson at the last minute, they will keep putting it off – get them to commit a few days ahead.

Odysseus knew what he was doing; he knew that when in the presence of the sirens, he would never be able to resist their song (‘Present Me’). So, his other self (‘Future Me’) made sure that the other guy was tied to the mast when the time came. 😊

[Read: Service & Gallagher: ‘Think Small’ – pp. 67-68]

Teaching Tip 2 TESTING – TESTING…
[Psychology for Educators]

Here is a question for you: imagine you run a charity which raises money to help children with cleft palates. You are planning a poster to encourage people to help by donating money. You know that pictures always attract people's attention. You want to include an image which gives people an idea of what the charity is about. Which image would you choose? i) The picture of a child with a cleft palate? ii) The smiling face of the child after the operation? iii) A 'before and after' image?

Intuitively, one would go with the third option – that was the received wisdom. The 'before and after' picture shows exactly what the aim of the campaign is and it should be the most effective. Only it was not. Before producing the final poster, the charity tested all three options, and it turned out that option (i), the one with the single 'before' image was 17% more effective. Why? It seemed that the face of the child haunted people and they felt they had to contribute.

And this was not the only picture that the campaign designers played with. They also tested 49 different versions of donation envelopes. Each of them featured the face of a child, but some were black, some were Asian, some were Caucasian; their facial expressions also differed. Which one would be the most effective? The answer turned out to be a sad

Caucasian child. It seems that because the target donors in the pool were mostly white, they found it easier to empathise with that particular child.

So, is there anything that we as educators can learn from this? Yes. Sometimes we feel in our bones that something (say a particular activity, or a game) ought to work and yet it does not. More often perhaps, we have a feeling that something is going to be a total flop, so we do not even try it out. Yet we can only know for sure if we test things. Testing trumps intuition any day.

[Read: Gneezy & List 'The Why Axis' – pp. 202-203]

ICC Journal

ICC
the international language association