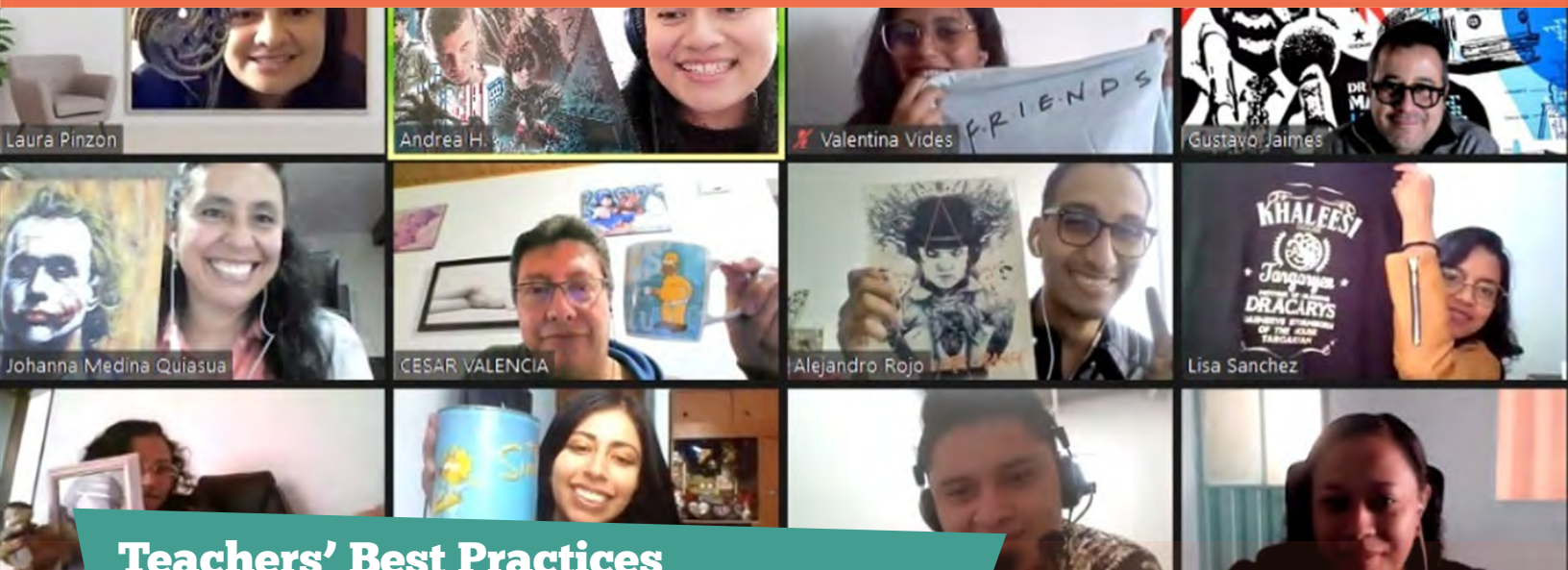


elt NOTES!

CCA Teachers' Newsletter UPDATES, TIPS AND RESOURCES

August 2022



Teachers' Best Practices

Global skills: teaching practice

By **Laydy Bernal** - Intensive and Semi-intensive programs teacher

Little do some students understand about all the settings it takes to run the show. They might not understand what it takes to deliver a class following our principles, which include global skills. However, these skills are part of our everyday teaching and learning dynamics, and intentionally or not, students and teachers are developing or implementing them in several moments of their interaction. According to the OTA, (Oxford Teaching Academy) there are 5 Global Skill clusters: Communication and collaboration, creativity and critical thinking, emotional self-regulation and well-being, digital literacies and intercultural competence and citizenship, which means, we have hundreds of possibilities to develop them in class.

I would like to briefly share an activity that was developed with C1 students in the Semi-intensive program, whose scope reached a better outcome than expected. Students were asked to think of a person they admired because of their social impact, and most of them selected people that are very well-known all over the world. When everybody had made their choices, I asked them to change them and instead of going global, select a local social leader they knew about, but in most cases, they did not have much information.

They started collecting material, including pictures and testimonials, and they found themselves immersed in a reality that seemed to be foreign and light years away from their own. It was not an easy task because it struck a chord among them, raised awareness, and revealed a closer reality that had been analyzed from afar or simply overlooked.

I honestly did not have to do much because they were analytical, objective, and empathic, and they managed to transmit those feelings to a different group.

In the presentation, they made an effort to include new structures and vocabulary, but this was not the main objective. The ultimate purpose for them stopped being language use. Instead, they focused on the narrative of real stories that were tinged with pain and sadness, also filled with resilience and hope. And I guess, that is what learning is all about: opening doors to information that changes lives. I hope it serves as inspiration for my fellow teachers to continue to make little changes in the lives of their learners; little changes that will result in powerful transformations.

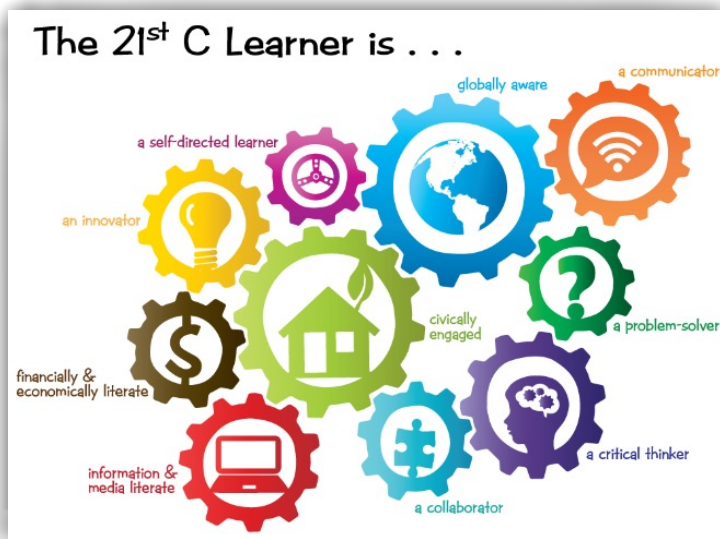
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From theory to Practice

Social Emotional Learning and 21st Century Skills:

When teaching and learning become a more comprehensive, relevant and meaningful process.

By Pilar Bravo. Editors: Johana Melo and Fabián Cruz



Mind culture is for life. (manual) skills are for living. They are for shaping material things so that they cater for the comfort of Man. Studies should be for shaping attitudes, feelings, desires, emotions and impulses of Man, so that they may confer more peace, more joy and more fortitude on Man.

-Sathya Say Baba

As most of our teachers must already know, a curricular renovation of significant proportions took place in 2021 in two of our most important English Language programs: The Intensive Program and the Kids and Teens Program (KTP). Among other aspects, this renovation implied profound modifications in the curricula: replacement of the textbook material, digital resources and platforms, creation of new syllabi, inclusion of new approaches, projects, tasks, procedures, among others.

One of the most salient additions to our instruction principles was a more notorious emphasis on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and 21st Century Skills; essential skills in our quest for innovation to stay relevant and faithful to our mission. These skills are not only explicitly present in our textbook contents but also, included in the syllabi in the form of recommendations and examples of possible practical applications. Moreover, training sessions were designed and delivered among all of our teachers and supervisors on

the practical application of these skills in our classes, on useful resources and on becoming familiar with the new curriculum, in general.

The present article is intended to provide teachers with an initial understanding of essential concepts, guidelines and practical recommendations regarding the role of SEL and 21st Century Skills in our new curriculum.



SEL in education

The Integrated Social Emotional approach to learning stems from the notion that intelligence and success are not limited to cognitive skills. In accordance to Gardner's (1983) theory, those who promote SEL also claim that there is more than one kind of intelligence and we all develop some of them better than others, which makes us all different and equally necessary for society. Thus, the social and emotional skills must also be given the attention that is given to other skills and intelligences so that we can all develop our full potential.

According to CASEL, a leading organization advancing the development of academic, social and emotional competence for all students in The USA, SEL can be defined as a personal and intellectual growth process through which people acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive

relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

At the CCA and more than ever before, we are convinced that SEL must be ingrained in our culture, part of our daily pursuits and a fundamental component of education. And it should, by no means, be a privilege, but a constant in all levels of society. “The new survival skills are no longer skills that only the elites in a society must muster; they are essential survival skills for all of us.” (Zhao, 2012)

21st Century Skills In Education

Experts usually use the term ‘21st Century Skills’ when referring to new, multiple skills or subcategories of skills citizens need to be trained on in order to succeed in future jobs, careers and their own personal lives; participate appropriately in an increasingly diverse society; use new technologies; and cope with rapidly changing workplaces (Voogt & Roblin, 2010).

Our new curriculum mostly suggests skills and sub-skills from The Framework for 21st Century Learning, designed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21). In general terms, this framework claims that academic subject knowledge should, undeniably, be the basis of the education we need. However, educators also need to guide learners to develop these additional, Global Skills that will help determine their success and life balance:

- **Learning Skills:** Also known as the “four Cs” of 21st century learning, these include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.
- **Life Skills:** Flexibility, initiative, social skills, productivity, leadership
- **Literacy Skills:** Information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy

Principles for the application of SEL and 21st century skills in our english classrooms

The term we will use hereafter in order to refer to both SEL skills and 21st Century Skills will be global skills. Next, we would like to present some general principles and guidelines for the implementation of these skills in our classes:

- a. Our curriculum suggests an integrated approach to these skills. This approach aims at the development of both communicative competence and global skills simultaneously and progressively as students advance in their learning process. Therefore, what is expected from teachers is not to address a global skills activity as a separate section of the class but rather, to find opportunities to train students in these skills as they approach the content of the lessons.
 - b. The academic content is mediated by the social-emotional or 21st Century skill being taught, which maximizes the development of their communicative abilities such as meaning negotiation, active listening, fluency, lexical variety, complexity, accuracy, speech, speech repair, checking for understanding, asking for clarification, among others.
 - c. Make it relevant. The relevance of learning Global Skills is much clearer to students and much more motivating if they understand how a given topic fits into the class context.
 - d. These Global Skills do not need to be taught every class. However, when they are addressed, they need to be explicitly introduced, taught and then, reflected upon. This so that students are aware that they are learning a new skill and they understand their usefulness in their learning experience and day-to-day life. Additionally, we strongly suggest recycling these skills whenever the topic allows.
 - e. In most cases, our syllabi offer plenty of suggested Global Skills per unit. However, it is the individual teacher’s decision which, when and how to teach them. To provide our teachers with better guidance in the beginning stages of curricular implementation, we strongly recommend formally addressing at least 1 Social-Emotional skill and one 21st Century Skill per unit.
 - f. When teaching Global Skills, it is important to bear in mind procedures and principles that are familiar to most of our teachers:
 - Smooth transitions: from the previous activity to the next one within which the Global Skill will be included. It should not appear to students as something additional to the class plan and lacking of coherence with the class objectives.
 - Engaging practices: The activity should be intellectually and emotionally challenging, motivating and meaningful.
 - Constructive closure and assessment: Time for students to reflect under the teachers’ guidance, make connections and think about the next steps in the application of the new skills in their personal and professional growth.
 - g. The integration of the Global Skill selected for a given lesson does not need to be part of the class objectives, unless it is closely related to the communicative goal of the class.
 - h. As aforementioned, there should be an intentional space for reflection after addressing the Global Skill. Teachers can intentionally create opportunities for students to discuss what they have learned in order to make meaningful connections to their present and future lives, self or peer-assess their learning and understanding. However, due to the newness of this component of our curriculum, we do not consider pertinent to make it a decisive factor to determine whether the student passes or fails the level.
 - i. Encourage transfer of learning. Students need to develop the ability to apply skills, concepts, knowledge, attitudes and/or strategies they develop in one context, situation or application to another. This will also facilitate recycling and reviewing previously learned skills.
 - j. Promote a class atmosphere that facilitates students’ expression of their emotions, concerns, insecurities, strengths and weaknesses, best practices as advice for others, etc. Avoid judgement, criticism, comparisons and discrimination.
 - k. Most importantly, we expect our teachers to learn, understand and reflect upon these skills, apply them to their own personal, intellectual and professional development. As a community of practice, we are committed to providing further training opportunities, spaces to discuss, share and learn about these concepts. We expect teacher’s feedback and ideas to improve their effective implementation.
- For the extended version of this statement, a glossary of global skills and subskills and the list of references, please, visit: <https://www.colomboenglishonline.com/useful-documents>

The Top 5 for CCA teachers

Games, quizzes and similar activities

Here's the Top 5 of websites our teachers seem to prefer to design or make use of already made games, quizzes and similar activities. They are totally recommendable. In case you are not familiar with them, please, check our brief reviews and... give them a chance!



5. QUIZZZ

It's a website, or better yet, a learning platform that offers different tools for to spice up our EFL classes and engage your students in F2F and mediated classes. Among those tools, we have games, of course, but you can also create lessons, conduct formative assessments and assign homework, among others. Quizizz uses gamification of quiz-based learning for a simple yet powerful experience for teachers and students. Highly recommended.

4. Baamboozle

Baamboozle is a quick and easy-to-use tool for playing and creating games. The teacher creates a set of questions with their corresponding answers. Students control their game and they get points and bonuses for their correct answers. Teachers can use already-made games on the site, or design games almost on any device.

3. Kahoot!

Kahoot is one of our favorite ones, indeed. It is a game-based learning platform that facilitates student engagement and practice of class contents in a fun and memorable manner. The games or "kahoots" that teachers create can be accessed via web or through the mobile app. Kahoot! can be used to review students' knowledge, for formative assessment or as a break from traditional classroom activities.

2. Learning Apps.org

LearningApps offers different customizable activities like: Word puzzles, word search, grouping, drag and drop, among other. You can create your own activities or use the ones made by other teachers. They are intended for practicing and deepening skills (e.g. in foreign language teaching) and are not suitable for explaining complex concepts. Exercises published by users vary in quality and need to be checked before being used in class. Still, it's one of the most preferred platforms among our teachers.

1. Wordwall

Wordwall is another great online platform for teachers to generate interactive activities, like games, for both mediated and face-to-face classes. It also offers you the possibility to print some activities. Wordwall provides teachers with a variety of templates, such as multiple-choice quizzes, matching activities or cloze questions, to name some. Teachers can create resources and host activities by sharing a link with students. They can work on those activities in or outside the classroom. Teachers can track students' progress.

If you liked these platforms and want to discover more, check David Cano's Sway: <https://sway.office.com/TUyYwFmMm8FDREFL>

What else is news?

In our next issue, we would like to start sharing some of our teacher's life stories in a section called Did I tell you about that time...? It's storytelling by and for our teachers. Write to Pilar if you want to share your stories or if you want to learn more about it. It's a great opportunity for those who like stories and to polish up our writing skills!

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Oxford is about to launch the Oxford English Hub for Oxford Discover Futures (Intensive program). A website that will facilitate access to the ebook and the Online Practice – the platform – from the same URL. It will be available for students soon, but for the time being, it is ready for teachers. If you already have access to the Oxford Bookshelf, you can use the same credentials to enter the Hub: <https://englishhub.oup.com/>. Feel free to explore all the benefits and additional teacher resources offered.

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The Ministry of Education has just released the resolution that regulates remote learning for the so-called Instituciones para el Trabajo y el Desarrollo Humano. And, as you probably know, we are one of them. This means that if we make the modifications on our PEI as they have mandated and send a formal request, soon, we will have the official permission to continue to offer mediated programs.

DID YOU KNOW?



The Colombo's first location in 1942 was a building on 24th Street, # 5-91, in front of the National Library. It belonged to the then President Alfonso López Pumarejo, who leased it for \$300 pesos a month.