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Cambridge Papers in English Language Education

Getting the most from every moment of learning

The power of integrating learning and assessment



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Author biographies



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Jasmin Silver is an educational consultant and researcher who works with teachers, learners and educational organisations to implement evidence-based teaching and learning strategies. Her work bridges the gap between academic research and classroom practice and is focused on ensuring learners can reach their full potential. She has over 13 years' experience in the education sector. She is a qualified teacher and has taught English as a Foreign Language, German, Psychology, PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) and Mindfulness in the UK, South Korea, Germany and online. She holds Master's degrees in Research in Second Language Education and Psychology.

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Introduction

How can teachers best help their learners to succeed?

We know that the teacher's role in the classroom is crucial in positively impacting learners' success (Hattie, 2009; OECD, 2021, 2023). Nothing else in schools, from coursebooks to curriculum to class size, has such a major effect on how much students learn. You can probably remember the teachers in your own life that made the greatest difference to your learning outcomes and engagement with a subject. But effective teachers are made, not born: the most successful teachers use techniques and strategies in their classrooms that can – and should – be learned and implemented by all teachers, not just the memorable ones.

At the heart of successful teaching is a resolute focus on student learning, and the understanding that learning will rarely happen exactly as planned during each lesson. Instead, there will be learners in the class that require additional support in some form, while others will need greater challenge.

> **And so effective teaching is a process of setting appropriate goals for learning, finding out how far each learner has progressed towards those goals, delivering feedback that moves learning forward, and taking action to promote further learning.**

It's a process of noticing and responding to learner needs, moment by moment. In other words, 'teaching and learning have to be interactive' (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 2).

What makes this difficult is that the learning journey will be different for each learner, and it can be difficult to know when and what learning is taking place. For example, how can we really know what our learners have learned? What does progress actually look like? And how can we help each learner in the classroom take the appropriate next step in their learning?



To meet these challenges effectively, we need an approach to teaching that focuses not only on teaching and learning, but also on assessment. Assessment in this case doesn't simply mean tests, but any activity that yields information about student learning. Assessment can present teachers with information about a class as a whole, enabling effective lesson planning and evaluation, but it can also yield information about individual learners. By assessing where a learner is on their learning journey, a teacher can provide evidence of progress that shows learners what they have successfully achieved and motivates them to keep improving (Leenknecht et al., 2021).

Assessment gives teachers the information needed to deliver feedback with specific and relevant next steps, so that students also understand what to do to improve. In fact, it is such a powerful catalyst to learning that Professor Dylan Wiliam concluded that 'the use of assessment to inform instruction, particularly at the classroom level, in many cases effectively doubled the speed of student learning' (Wiliam, 2011, p. 36).

> "The use of assessment to inform instruction, particularly at the classroom level, in many cases effectively doubled the speed of student learning."
>
> **Wiliam, 2011, p. 36**

This paper will outline how teachers can integrate learning and assessment in their teaching practice in a way that maximally supports learner progress and is fully integrated into the learning process. We provide evidence-informed strategies, insights from research, and practical advice to help you apply this approach effectively in your classroom. In doing so, we aim to support you in getting the most from every moment of learning, ensuring that your learners reach their full potential.



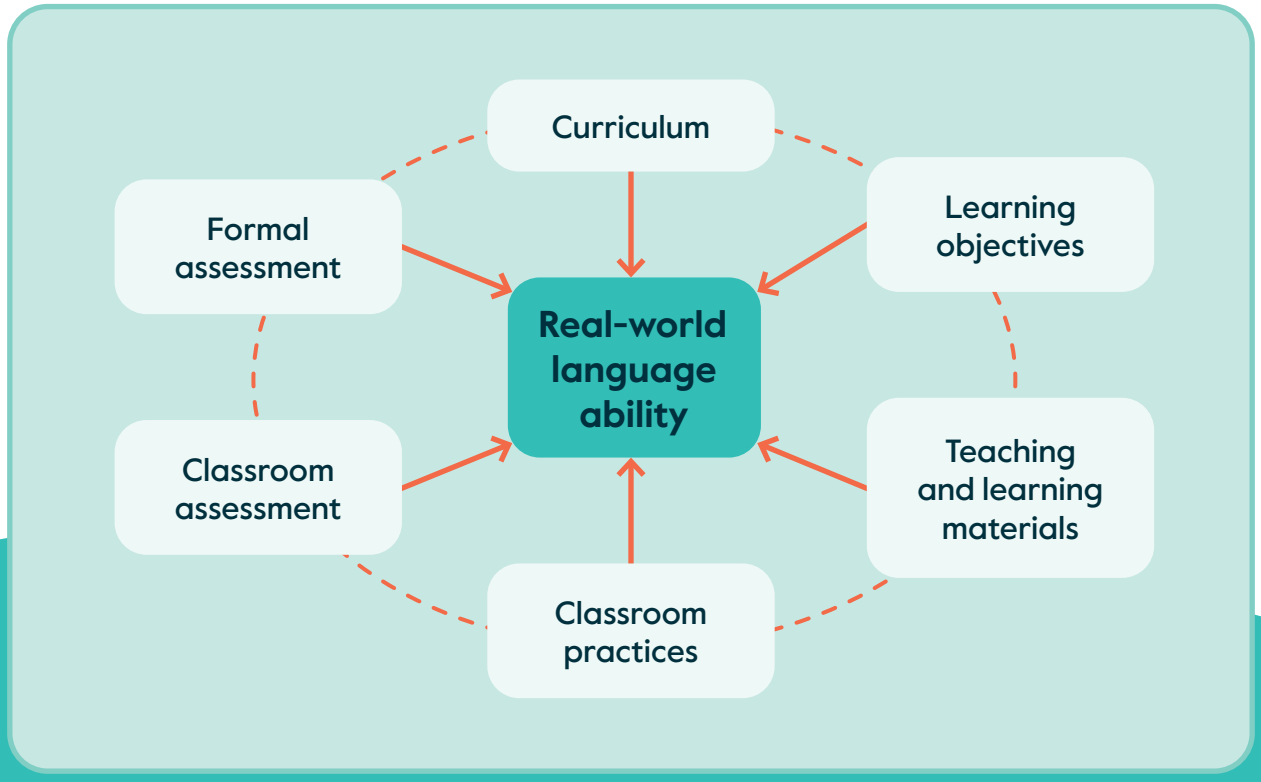
Integrating learning and assessment to improve outcomes

Cambridge has brought together decades of research on effective learning and assessment to articulate an approach that optimally supports learner success. Learning and assessment have traditionally been seen as separate, with the focus of teacher training and development being mostly, if not exclusively, on learning. However, if we want to provide evidence of progress and give actionable feedback, and ultimately improve our learners' outcomes, we need to use proven assessment principles integrated into the learning process. Cambridge's approach, *Integrated Learning and Assessment* (ILA), seamlessly combines learning and assessment, and shows how they can be integrated to maximise outcomes (Jones & Saville, 2016; Salamoura & Morgan, 2021; Salamoura & Unsworth, 2015).

In its simplest form, integrating learning and assessment means combining teaching, learning and assessment methods to plan, measure and improve outcomes for learners. The implementation of this approach requires action at the level of the classroom, but also at an institutional level.

> "You know, I think one of the greatest mistakes perhaps that we have made in the history of education was to divorce learning from assessment."
>
> **Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2024)**

At the institutional level, integrating learning and assessment involves an alignment of goals across all parts of the institution. Learning potential is not fully realised if curriculum, learning objectives, teaching materials, classroom practices and assessment tools are not aligned to the same end goals, so educational leaders must ensure that alignment.



Alignment of institutional and classroom intentions

Alignment of institutional and classroom intentions

For English language learners, the end goal of learning is to be able to communicate in the language, and the CEFR[1] offers descriptors to break down the language learning journey into objectives at all levels. As the CEFR itself states, these enable 'alignment between curriculum, teaching and assessment, particularly teacher assessment, and above all between the "language classroom world" and the real world' (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 44).

The CEFR, then, can be adopted as a point of reference for curriculum goals and more granular lesson objectives in the classroom. But the formal assessment instruments adopted by an institution should also align with the communicative goals of learners, since testing exerts an influence on teaching and learning. If a course includes an external summative test (such as one of the Cambridge English Qualifications), course outcomes improve when the final summative test, learning resources and activities, and classroom assessments are closely aligned. This alignment creates positive effects on teaching and learning, known as positive washback or impact. The summative test needs to fit the curriculum, learning objectives and pedagogical approach set for the course (Jones & Saville, 2016).



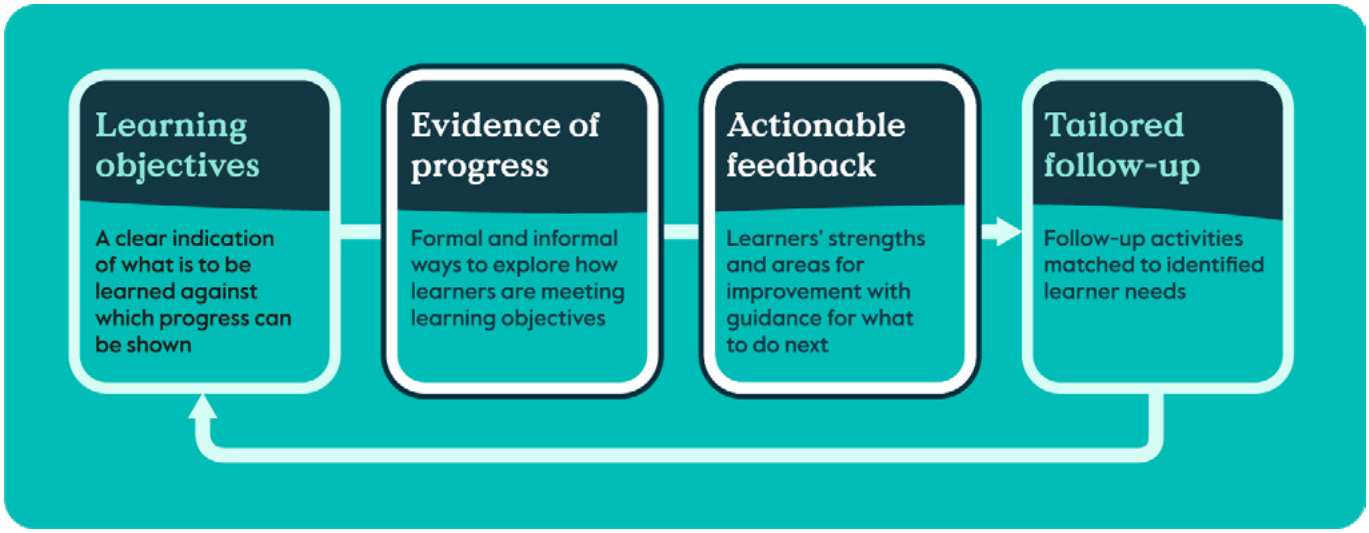
What the evidence says: Alignment of goals and assessment

The benefits of aligning assessment with learning objectives can be seen in research in Japan and Vietnam. When one high school in Japan introduced Cambridge English Qualifications, which align well with the national curriculum objectives, researchers found that both teachers and students willingly embraced a communicative, four-skill approach to learning. This was one of the factors that led to a steady increase of language proficiency scores for all skills, with the highest scores in speaking, which was attributed to the fact that students were engaged more in speaking activities during classes. Overall, the study found that the introduction of Cambridge English Qualifications aligned and supported well the national English curriculum in Japan by encouraging a balanced focus on all four skills and providing valuable feedback to teachers and learners via the exam reports (Allen et al., 2023).

In Vietnam, the Ministry of Education introduced a CEFR-aligned English curriculum and Cambridge English Qualifications for Young Learners to support communicative language teaching and learning. Again, researchers found that the close alignment of the curriculum and exams led to positive learning outcomes, particularly in relation to speaking production. Teachers changed their teaching practices by prioritising speaking and listening because they recognised the importance of these skills in both the assessments and the curriculum. Learners also reported increased motivation to learn English and more confidence in taking English language assessments because classroom activities reflected exam tasks (Khalifa et al., 2012).

[1] The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2001) is widely used in language education, assessment and certification, and is recognised by institutions around the world. It provides a common reference point for teachers, learners and language professionals to assess and communicate language proficiency in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and to set goals for language learning and development.

At the classroom level, providing evidence of progress and actionable feedback (in other words, feedback that makes it clear what the learner is doing well and what they should do next) are at the heart of successful ILA. However, these rely on the clarity of learning objectives and the 'next steps' planned by teachers, creating four key 'pillars' that underpin the ILA approach:



We will explore each of these pillars in the rest of this paper.

> **The integration of learning and assessment at both the institutional and classroom levels is united by a common feature: the intention to promote learning at every opportunity.**

Learners, teachers and the institutions they work within need to be aligned to achieving the same goals from every moment of learning if learners are to make progress.

How does ILA compare to formative assessment or assessment for learning?

ILA, formative assessment and assessment for learning share a common goal of using assessment activities to gather evidence about learning to inform future learning steps. While formative assessment and assessment for learning mainly focus on ongoing classroom assessment, ILA includes the full range of assessment activities, including formal assessments such as tests and exams which measure achievement or proficiency at the end of a course or period of study (summative assessment or assessment of learning). If these forms of assessment are aligned to the same goals as the other elements of teaching, and if they are used by teachers for formative as well as summative purposes, the processes of learning and assessment are fully integrated and support one another to achieve better outcomes for learners.

Learning objectives

In the following sections we look more closely at each of the four pillars of ILA in a classroom setting.

Clear learning objectives

Successful teaching and learning begin with a clear understanding of what students should know and be able to do by the end of a course.

The first step is for teachers and educational leaders to understand their curriculum goals, what success looks like for their course, and what resources are available to help students meet those goals. Resources can include learning materials and various types of assessments. All this knowledge helps set clear learning objectives (Clarke, 2021) and success criteria.

Learning objectives should:

- Be aligned to overall goals for the course or period of study
- Be appropriate for the level of the learner
- Clearly articulate what needs to be learned

When using the ILA approach in the classroom, it is also important to share the objectives and success criteria with learners. This way, everyone knows what they are working towards, which helps to create an environment in which students are able to take a more active role in their learning. Students can reflect on their own learning better when they understand the criteria used to measure their progress (Clarke, 2021).

What the evidence says: Setting and sharing learning objectives

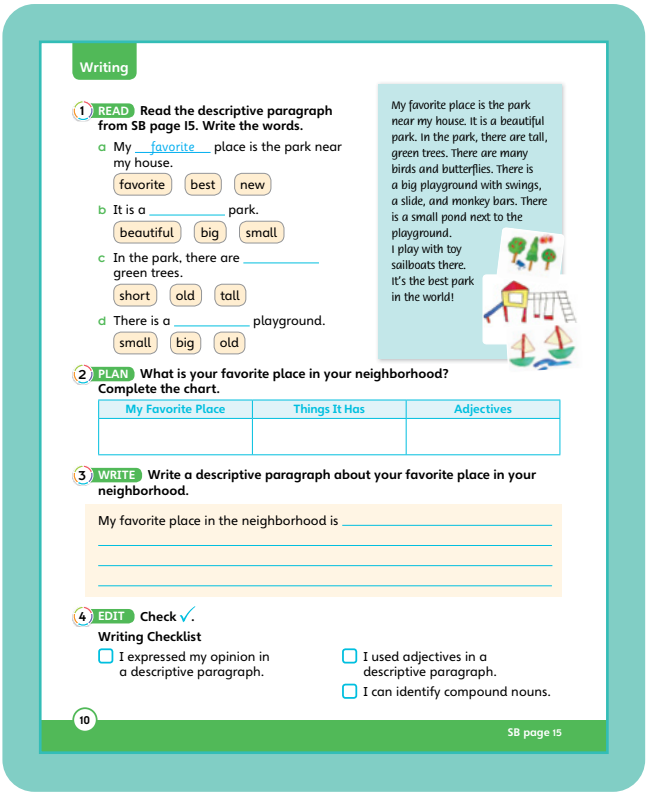
Several studies and educational experts highlight the benefits of setting clear learning objectives and sharing them with students. Insights include:

- Clear goals and objectives are among the best strategies to boost student achievement (Marzano et al., 2001)
- Goal-setting and clear learning objectives significantly improve student learning by providing a clear roadmap for both students and teachers (Hattie, 2009)
- Clear learning goals help students understand what success looks like (Wiliam, 2011)
- Learners welcome clear success criteria (DeLuca et al., 2018)

Several teacher-led studies indicate that helping students understand speaking and writing criteria improves their skills in these areas (Edwards, 2013; Fyfe & Vella, 2012; Warwick, 2016). These students are also better at reflecting on their learning, which can lead to better learner autonomy and outcomes.

Learning objectives in practice

Below is a clear learning objective from *Cambridge Primary Path 2*. The objective (to write a descriptive paragraph) is at the end of the page and a series of activities leads the learner to write their own paragraph step by step. The final activity is a checklist which explains what learners should include in their paragraph – a way to detail and track success criteria. Learners can use this checklist to edit and improve their work.



Writing

1 READ **Read the descriptive paragraph from SB page 15. Write the words.**

a My favorite place is the park near my house.
favorite best new

b It is a _____ park.
beautiful big small

c In the park, there are _____ green trees.
short old tall

d There is a _____ playground.
small big old

My favorite place is the park near my house. It is a beautiful park. In the park, there are tall, green trees. There are many birds and butterflies. There is a big playground with swings, a slide, and monkey bars. There is a small pond next to the playground. I play with toy sailboats there. It's the best park in the world!

2 PLAN **What is your favorite place in your neighborhood? Complete the chart.**

My Favorite Place	Things It Has	Adjectives

3 WRITE **Write a descriptive paragraph about your favorite place in your neighborhood.**

My favorite place in the neighborhood is _____

4 EDIT **Check ✓.**

Writing Checklist

- ☐ I expressed my opinion in a descriptive paragraph.
- ☐ I used adjectives in a descriptive paragraph.
- ☐ I can identify compound nouns.

10

SB page 15

Cambridge Primary Path 2 Activity Book, p. 10

Finally, detailed, clear objectives also help teachers design their lessons 'backward' (Thornbury, 2024). This means starting with the learning objectives as the lesson outcomes, and only then deciding on lesson content that will help the learners reach those outcomes and enable the teacher to assess success and give feedback. This is why clear learning objectives are crucial for ILA. Our next focus in integrating learning and assessment is the assessment itself.



Collecting evidence of progress

Setting and sharing clear learning objectives is essential if those objectives are to be achieved. But to understand where students are on their journeys to achieving these objectives, it is necessary to collect evidence of their progress.

Teachers following an ILA approach use various ways of collecting evidence that give meaningful insights into learning. Learners and teachers can see what has been understood or what skills have been developed, how learners are performing, and where they may need more support or challenge.

Teachers use assessment to collect evidence of progress, but assessment does not only mean formal tests. In ILA, assessment can range from a teacher asking a concept checking question or learners doing quizzes and practice activities, to learners taking progress or exam practice tests – anything that is designed to show what learners know and can do.

For example, learning or practice activities can also serve as assessments if they are aligned to learning objectives, because they will show progress towards those goals. The teacher then monitors how students complete those activities. The evidence the teacher collects will show which students are learning and which need more help. For instance, if a teacher has recently taught learners how to talk about events in the past, and given students a paired speaking task for practice, the teacher can note examples of usage while observing the learners as they complete the task. Some of these examples will be of effective usage, and others might need correction to, for example, grammar, pronunciation or appropriacy. This information helps determine if students need more practice or if they have achieved the learning objective well enough according to the curriculum standards.

What the evidence says: Collecting evidence of progress

The value of collecting evidence of progress is in the information it provides to teachers about student learning, which can then be used to deliver actionable feedback. Most of the research in this area is therefore focused on the impact of feedback (see next section), rather than the collection of evidence. Evidence of progress can be collected through formal language assessment (e.g. Bachman & Damböck, 2018; Phakiti & Leung, 2024).

However, evidence of progress can also be collected through classroom dialogue and questioning, with some notable research findings:

- Introducing teacher 'wait time' after asking learners a question, or after a learner response, improves the quality and quantity of student answers (Rowe, 1974).
- After hearing a student speak, teachers should avoid indicating agreement or validating correct answers. Instead, they should invite other students to comment (Scrivener, 2012).
- Black et al. describe how many of the teachers they worked with found it helpful to have a 'no hands up' rule in class: the teacher would instead nominate students to speak and would expect a considered answer. This could then be discussed further (Black et al., 2003).

This is ILA in action. It is not necessary to stop the learning and carry out a formal test to gain insights into learner progress (although this can be useful periodically). ILA helps teachers and learners to see progress towards smaller objectives that lead to their overarching goals on an ongoing basis; and ILA allows teachers to respond 'in-flight' to support and challenge learners as appropriate.

Collecting evidence of progress in practice

Cambridge courses have practice and assessment activities that are designed to provide valuable insights into learning. In the example below from *Power Up*, the Mission activity provides the teacher with crucial insight into how successfully learners have acquired the new vocabulary on the first page, as well as the grammar (adverbs) on the second page.

This Mission activity is a vehicle for learning, but also for assessment of the learning outcomes for the unit up to that point. These are given in the Teacher's Book, and include: *By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to talk about natural features.*

Activities such as this can encourage learners to produce evidence of their learning, but the teacher's role is crucial in actually collecting that evidence. Teachers need to monitor learners as they perform such activities and listen for evidence of successful performance. Equally important is evidence of unsuccessful performance, as this will form the basis for feedback and improvement.

In addition to activities, teachers can elicit evidence of progress through the questions they use in the classroom, and through classroom talk. They can also invite learners to reflect on what they have learned and what they are finding challenging, and this can provide valuable evidence of progress for informing follow-up work. (See the Cambridge Guide to Integrating Learning and Assessment for more.) Recording the evidence of progress that is collected in class will enable teachers to build up a meaningful picture of learner progress over time, as well as learner strengths and weaknesses.

Evidence of progress is only useful to the extent that it informs future teaching or learning activity, particularly feedback to learners. So, let's focus on feedback now.

Learning outcomes By the end of the lesson, learners will be able to talk about natural features.
New language *island, jungle, moon, plant, sky, star, waterfall, wave, world*
Recycled language animals, countryside, *costume*, superlatives (*the …est in the world*), questions
Materials video, Natural features flashcards, word cards (optional), audio



Power Up Level 3 Student's book, p. 45 and p. 47

Providing actionable feedback

Feedback is a response to a learner's performance, understanding or behaviour. It can range from a minimal comment or correction at one end of the continuum to a full explanation, guidance or re-teaching intervention at the other.

It can come from the teacher (delivered verbally or in writing), from other learners, or as part of a process of self-assessment. Actionable feedback is feedback which makes it clear what the learner should do next.

Feedback is at the heart of ILA. Teachers collect evidence of progress to gain insights that can feed back into learning and teaching. That evidence is then used to provide targeted, actionable feedback to help learners make progress and improve their performance.

It has been said that 'to teach is to give feedback' (Fanselow, 1987, p. 267) and this reflects the professional judgement and expertise that goes into delivering feedback effectively. There is no formula for successful feedback that can apply to all teaching situations, and so adhering to universal principles of effective feedback is likely to be more useful than focusing on techniques for delivering it (Collin & Quigley, 2021).[2]

Principles of effective feedback

Linked to learning objectives – Feedback should relate directly to the learning objectives and success criteria for the task or lesson. This ensures that it is targeted and relevant. Learning objectives and success criteria provide a benchmark against which evidence of progress can be compared. Feedback is then used to close the gap between student performance and the expected level of performance (Black et al., 2003).

Incorporates evidence of progress – It is essential for learners to know when, why and how they have performed well, so that they can continue to perform well. Feedback on correct responses is actually more effective than feedback on incorrect responses (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996), and so positive comments that are specific are a feature of effective feedback.

Is actionable – Learners also need to understand how they can perform better. Giving learners a grade tells them nothing about what they should do to improve, and so grades do not lead to improvement (Butler, 1988). Instead, feedback should specifically address what the learner must do to better achieve the learning objectives. This feedback may deal with the task at hand, with the subject (English language, in our case), or with learning strategies (Collin & Quigley, 2021; Hattie & Timperley, 2007), but it should be remembered that 'the purpose of the feedback is to improve the learner, and not the work' (Wiliam, 2018, p. 17).

Timely – Feedback needs to be delivered at a time when learners are attentive and when it is perceived as relevant.

Is planned for – Teachers should allow time in their lesson plans both for giving feedback to learners, and for learners to act on the feedback that they have received (Collin & Quigley, 2021), for example by repeating the task they received feedback on.

[2] For further discussion of the techniques for giving feedback see the following Cambridge publications: *Giving feedback on speaking* and *Giving feedback to language learners*.

Actionable feedback in practice

Impact research on the *Empower* language learning course shows the usefulness of providing evidence of progress. *Empower* featured integrated progress tests and personalised practice activities based on the results from those tests. The impact study found that 77% of students reported that they better understood their strengths and weaknesses because of the progress tests, while 71% said these tests helped them improve their English (Cambridge Assessment English, 2017).

Although digital learning resources like *Empower* can provide some level of feedback to learners, the high level of professional judgement required to deliver feedback effectively means that this crucial element of learning is likely to remain a core part of the teacher's role. Teachers know and understand their learners more than digital tools can – even those powered by generative artificial intelligence, which can support and complement the role of teachers.

As well as delivering actionable feedback to improve learning, teachers also need to consider the next steps for the class or individual students. Let's focus on this next.

What the evidence says: actionable feedback

Feedback is among the most important factors affecting learning outcomes (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie, 2009; Hattie & Clarke, 2019; Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Why? Because feedback is a form of scaffolding that helps learners notice and think about their understanding of a language feature or approach to learning. They can then make a change which will help them move toward an improved performance (Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Lyster, 2013; Purpura, 2004). Effective feedback can also help learners persist and increase their effort when learning becomes challenging. It focuses learner attention on the possible actions to take to achieve success (Brooks et al., 2019; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996).



Tailored follow-up

One of the main benefits of the ILA approach is gaining insights to inform future teaching so that it can better meet students' needs.

These insights can be used to inform whole-class lesson planning as well as to provide support and challenge to meet the needs of individual learners, so that learning can become more personalised and differentiated.

Personalised learning

While the goal for each learner in a learning environment is challenge and maximum growth, teachers will often define challenge and growth differently in response to learners' current, diverse interests and starting points (Tomlinson, 2017). The aim of personalised learning is to thoroughly engage learners in the process, building on their interests, aptitudes and strengths, and thereby developing their intrinsic motivation for achievement and success.

This usually involves personalisation of aspects of teaching and learning, since it is practically impossible to provide a completely personalised learning experience to every student (Kerr, 2022). Nevertheless, small changes to accommodate learner preferences, such as allowing students the option of reading or listening to a text intended to present vocabulary, can be very welcome. Such interventions can be informed by the evidence of learning that teachers collect as part of an ILA approach.

What the evidence says: Personalised learning

Researchers in the US found that schools which implemented personalised learning approaches achieved greater learner progress in mathematics and reading when compared to peers in schools not engaged in personalised learning (Pane et al., 2015). More importantly, lower-performing students made substantial gains, often catching up to their higher-performing peers. Key features of the personalised learning approach adopted in these schools were the use of data to make teaching decisions, sharing and discussing learning data with students, and the use of technology for personalisation.

However, the same researchers later found that the effect of personalised learning on student achievement is very modest, so evidence for the efficacy of personalised learning is not clear-cut (Pane et al., 2017).

Differentiated instruction

Differentiated instruction involves using tailored pedagogical strategies, educational materials, and learning content to cater for individual learning needs, abilities, and interests (Tomlinson, 2001). For example, imagine a language classroom with mixed-ability learners working towards a common learning objective, such as writing a persuasive paragraph. When using differentiated instruction, a teacher might have some students focus on writing a topic sentence and supporting details, others on using persuasive language, and a few on responsibly and critically using outside sources to support their viewpoints.

Grounded in assessment, differentiation uses evidence of learning as a catalyst to tailor content and processes, helping each learner maximise their potential and talents. It is therefore ideally placed in an ILA approach. Effective content differentiation practices require an understanding of each learner's needs, knowledge base, and readiness. This understanding is based on the evidence of progress that teachers collect through formal instruments (such as written questionnaires, placement tests, and needs analysis) or informal ones (such as observations, learner training activities, and conversations).

Whether at the class level or the level of the individual learner, differentiation is intended as a response to learning needs identified by assessment.

What the evidence says: Differentiated instruction

Differentiated instruction can positively impact learning outcomes. As part of a large-scale school improvement program, researchers found that students who received differentiated instruction achieved better learning outcomes compared to the general student population (McQuarrie et al., 2008).

In the English language classroom, differentiated instruction led to increased motivation, engagement and learning outcomes. One study, for example, used tasks that allowed students to practice skills at different levels of complexity and challenge. The researcher found that students in her speaking and listening class had increased motivation and confidence in their English skills as a result of this differentiated instruction (Chen, 2007). Similarly, other researchers found improved second language reading outcomes in response to differentiated instruction when compared to control groups (Aliakbari & Haghighi, 2014; Smadi & Al Masri, 2018).



Tailored follow-up in practice

There are many ways of offering personalised learning and practising differentiated instruction. For example, some of the most widespread strategies for content personalisation are:

- Give learners choice of which sub-topic of the main subject they want to learn
- Use materials about the same topic in different levels of complexity
- Use multimodal materials (written text, infographics, videos, podcasts, etc.)
- Vary the delivery format
- Arrange the content to be taught in parts of different sizes
- Use the jigsaw approach (assign different portions of a text to different learners)

The ILA cycle

The ILA approach is a cyclical rather than a linear process. As we have seen, it is centred around collecting evidence of progress and using this evidence to help learners achieve their learning goals through actionable feedback and tailored follow-up. But the ILA process does not stop there. Once learners have completed tailored activities matched to their identified needs, it is time for the teacher to look at their performance again and evaluate it against the learning objectives. Depending on whether the learners are on track to achieve their objectives or not, the teacher may wish to modify or set new learning objectives. In this way, learning objectives always incorporate follow-up decisions, and the lesson plans deriving from those objectives also form an opportunity to act on evidence of progress.



Tips for successful implementation

In conclusion, to integrate learning and assessment in the classroom effectively, you need to take account of the four pillars of ILA:

In the classroom:

Learning objectives	Evidence of progress	Actionable feedback	Tailored follow-up
Set or choose clear learning objectives based on your course. Share the objectives and success criteria with students. Help the students understand the learning objectives and success criteria so they know what they are working towards.	Observe and assess your learners' progress using a variety of assessment and practice activities. Ensure any external summative test you use fits your curriculum and learning objectives and has a positive impact/ effect in your classroom.	Use the evidence of progress you get from assessment to give feedback. Make sure your feedback is effective and actionable (see the section 'Principles of effective feedback').	Use the insights and information gained by the assessment activities to offer students personalised learning opportunities. Differentiate instruction to better meet individual learners' needs and help them improve.

In the institution:

Learning objectives	Evidence of progress	Actionable feedback	Tailored follow-up
Select learning materials and assessments that align with curriculum goals.	Promote teaching methods that provide opportunities for learners to demonstrate what they can do. Ensure any external summative test you use fits your curriculum and learning objectives and has a positive impact/ effect in your classroom.	Support teachers to deliver actionable feedback, not just grades.	Make time, and allow the freedom, for teachers to plan lessons that meet the needs they have identified through collecting evidence of progress. Compare the results of external summative tests to country averages to identify institutional training needs or to make improvements to curriculum.

Conclusion

To sum up, ILA offers significant benefits to learners, but also to teachers and institutions. Learners receive evidence of progress and actionable feedback, which enhances their understanding and guides their future learning decisions. This is underpinned by ongoing assessment which allows teachers to identify individual and collective learning gaps, enabling them to plan subsequent lessons that are more targeted and responsive to the needs of the entire class and specific students. By aligning instruction with assessment, educators can create a more dynamic and effective learning environment that continuously adapts to and supports students' evolving needs. That process of alignment will generally be driven by the institution, which benefits from the clarity of purpose that results when teaching, learning and assessment are all aligned to the same goal.

To learn more, visit: cambridge.org/ILA

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Quiz

How integrated are learning and assessment in your context?

Use this quiz to identify your strengths and areas of potential development in further integrating learning and assessment. Read each statement and choose the option that best describes your current teaching practice. You will find specific guidance to help you learn more about each element of ILA and choose some next steps in the relevant sections of this paper.

	Always	Most of the time	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never	Your score
Points:	5	4	3	2	1	
Sharing clear learning objectives						
I set or choose clear learning objectives based on my course or syllabus	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
I share learning objectives and success criteria with learners	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
I help my learners understand the learning objectives and success criteria so they know what they're working towards	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
Collecting evidence of progress						
I observe and assess my learners' progress using a variety of assessment and practice activities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
I record the evidence of learning that I collect from learners, to build a picture of their progress	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
I use the results of summative tests to help me give feedback and plan future learning	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
Providing actionable feedback						
I use the evidence of progress I get from assessment activities to inform feedback	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
I deliver actionable feedback to learners	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
Tailored follow-up						
I use the insights and information gained by assessment activities to offer learners personalised learning opportunities	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
I differentiate instruction to better meet individual learner needs and help them improve	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	
Total score						

Once you have completed the quiz, determine your overall score by totalling your answers to each statement, then check your recommendation below:

Your score	Recommendation
35 or more	You are integrating learning and assessment well. You could either choose to build on a current strength or to improve an area in which you feel less confident.
20-34	You have a foundation of good practice to build on. Focus on integrating learning and assessment through learning objectives and collecting evidence of progress, and build from there.
19 or below	There is significant potential to improve learner outcomes in your context by aligning learning and assessment. Begin by focusing on learning objectives.



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