

3.1.2 Learners

Activities

Activity 1: What I think about my learners' practices

How do you think your learners actually use English? Tick the statements that you think are true about your learners' actual use of English.

- 1. They use English when they speak to friends and relatives who don't know their mother tongue (face-to-face, or on Skype, Viber, etc.)
- 2. They use English when they travel to places where others don't speak their mother tongue
- 3. They speak English when tourists in their country ask them questions
- 4. They use English in social media (like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Whatsapp...)
- 5. They listen to English when they watch YouTube videos
- 6. They listen to English when they watch movies and TV-series
- 7. They listen to English when they play online games
- 8. They listen to English when they enjoy song lyrics
- 9. They listen to English when they use podcasts
- 10. They speak English when they watch YouTube videos
- 11. They speak English when they watch movies and TV-series
- 12. They speak English when they play online games
- 13. They read English in books
- 14. They read English in comics
- 15. They read English in apps
- 16. They read English in websites
- 17. They read English in games
- 18. They use English sometimes when they write messages
- 19. They use English sometimes when they write e-mails or letters
- 20. They use English sometimes when they write stories
- 21. They use English sometimes when they write fanfiction
- 22. They use English sometimes when they write various other types of text at school or as homework
- 23. They speak English to themselves or with their friends just because they like it
- 24. They speak English to themselves in order to practice
- 25. They use English to learn other subjects at school

Activity 2: Using “My language portrait” in my classroom

Print out the file “My language portrait” and distribute it to your students. You can find it in the “Supplementary Materials” part of this Section.

Activity 3: Reflection on the learners’ language portraits

After you have done Activity 2 with your students, think about the following three questions:

- Was there anything in their language portraits that surprised you?
- Were you able to discern any common patterns?
- To what extent was this Activity useful to you as a teacher of English?

Write your views in the text box below.

Activity 4: The good English learner

This Activity aims at helping you explore the characteristics of a strategic learner of EFL and a user of English as a contact language (ELF).

Question 4.1

What characterizes a “good English language learner”?

From the statements below, select those that you believe illustrate what a strategic learner needs to do inside the EFL classroom. In the text box below, feel free to add other points you find important.

In the EFL classroom, a strategic learner needs to...

- a) make sure they listen to and read English frequently
- b) pay attention to form and look for patterns in the language
- c) notice characteristics of pronunciation and intonation
- d) develop their vocabulary
- e) take risks and use the language to communicate
- f) make use of a variety of effective learning strategies
- g) consider mistakes as opportunities for making progress

Write your views in the text box below.

Question 4.2

What characterizes a “competent user of English”?

From the statements below, select those that you believe illustrate what competent users do in real life interactions to ensure effective communication with their interlocutors (see also the “ELF” Sections in the Course). In the text box below, feel free to add other points you find important.

In real life, competent users of English...

- a) ask for clarification when there is something they don't understand
- b) try to rephrase their message if their interlocutor doesn't understand
- c) use simpler grammar to get their message across
- d) use translanguaging
- e) make use of contextual clues to interpret what is said

Write your views in the text box below.

Question 4.3

What should teachers do?

- To what extent would you say the characteristics of “good language learners” inside the EFL classroom and those of “competent users of English” are compatible with and relevant to each other? Why?
- In your opinion, what should teachers primarily do to ensure that their learners will eventually become competent users of English?

Write your views in the text box below.

Activity 5: Using the “Model classroom survey” in my classroom

Print out the file “Model classroom survey” and distribute it to your students. You can find it in the “Supplementary Materials” part of this Section.

Activity 6: Reflection on the learners’ actual use of English

You have reached the end of the Section about our learners and their use of English inside and outside the classroom. You have also worked with some key concepts when it comes to multilingual learner-users of English.

Here are some very important questions for you to reflect on and discuss:

- How, that is, where and with whom, do your own learners use English outside the classroom (extramural English)?
- What are your own learners’ attitudes to the way they use English outside the classroom?
- Which of your learners’ responses did you expect?
- Which of your learners’ responses did you not expect?
- In what ways do you think your teaching practices can be changed or modified based on the findings of your classroom research? Why is that the case, do you think?

Write your views in the text box below.

