

STUDY by  
Loredana Ivan

# TEACHING THE CONTINUOUS ASPECT IN ENGLISH USING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY



# **TEACHING THE CONTINUOUS ASPECT IN ENGLISH USING THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY**

## **STUDY**

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## Contents

Introduction .....	5
A Methodological Approach to the Continuous Aspect in English .....	8
STUDY.....	10
Class Teacher: M.M.....	10
Language Acquisition Process .....	11
In Class .....	12
The Use of Technology in Teaching .....	15
The Impact of Examples upon Learning.....	18
The Focus on Learning .....	21
Lesson Plan with Technology 4 in One –Laptop Class .....	28
TEST .....	39
The Learning Outcomes .....	43
Student Grade Chart .....	45
Student Grade Graph 1 .....	46
Student Grade Graph 2 .....	47
Conclusions: .....	48
REFERENCES.....	56



## Introduction

Teaching grammar to students who are studying a foreign language is much more difficult when you come across parts of language that students find hard to understand, e.g. the Progressive or the Continuous, because they do not have an equivalent for them in their native language. The difficulties the teachers meet with in the process of teaching can only make them even more responsible and look towards teaching as a means of educating students to think and feel at the same time. I have found the topic challenging from the start. This is exactly the reason why I have chosen to write about my experiences with the Progressive. Along the years I have learned that no matter how much exercise students do with the Progressive they always tend to switch the predicate to the simple form of the verb or to miss the auxiliary *-be* in its required form. The explanation is simple: students translate the sentence from Romanian into English and, since they do not recognize the verb form in their mother tongue, they do not use it in English either. My job as a teacher is firstly to reach to them so as not to feel that

grammatical structure as a burden and to encourage them to see beyond the problems that might occur in their learning it.

Students get familiar with the use of the Present Progressive Tense in their first year of studying English when they have to perform activities in class as part of games or have to complete activities provided by the textbook. Everything is going perfectly well until they have to differentiate between the Present Simple and the Present Progressive or when they learn that the latter can be used in several other situations than they know and now they look confused. It is now that the teacher has a problem and unless the teacher sees them through this puzzle, he/she will lose them. Such an intervention leads to a series of questions that the teacher asks to himself/herself such as: *How am I going to make them understand and use that structure correctly? What right tools should I use for them to learn this effortlessly? Will I be clear enough for them? Will I be able to keep their interest arisen?* while the students will be asking: *Is it correct to say I am living in this town?* And, a year later, just when everything seems to be in order there comes

another question from a diligent student: Why is it not correct to say *I'm living here all my life*? The students now are in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade so the teacher must find solutions to get to their level of understanding the problem. It's difficult for both the teacher to explain why such sentences are grammatically incorrect and for the students to understand the explanation of when and how the Present Perfect Progressive is used and if the explanation resumes to just one long and boring definition and one example then the teacher has failed in his/her attempt to clarify the problem and can expect this to occur again and again. It proves that only in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade do students become more aware of what they are studying and even though they still have questions to be answered (mostly the same they have been asking all along) they have grasped the idea of how the Progressive Aspect works and they have, by now, even familiarized with the term. The teacher, on the other hand, has reached that professional wisdom after long lasting attempts to perfect his/her methods, figure out procedures/strategies and find the right tools to guide the students through their studying English.

## **A Methodological Approach to the Continuous Aspect in English**

According to Dr. M.F. Patel and Praveen M. Jain “the primary functions of language are communication, self-expression and thinking.<sup>1</sup>” Starting from this assertion, we will take into consideration the interdependence of these functions, throughout this chapter. We will see how the command of words and groups of words grows with practicing language with the help of modern methods to make communication real as opposed to the long-gone methods that suppress it. I will support my study on Bloom’s Taxonomy which is a classification of different learning objectives that teachers set for students and Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. Further on, we will discuss the impact of mother tongue on learning a foreign language and highlight the value of using Anderson’s cognitive skill-

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. M.F. Patel and Praveen M. Jain: *English Language Teaching (Methods, Tools & Techniques)* Sunrise Publishers & Distributors E-566, Vaishali Nagar, 2008, p 108



learning theory of the “three types of memory structures: declarative, procedural and working memory<sup>2</sup>”, as a framework for sequencing instructional activities aimed at improving the formal accuracy of the fluent speech of immersion students’ production of the language.

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<sup>2</sup> Anderson, J. : *The Architecture of Cognition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983, p. 57

## STUDY

*Class Teacher: M.M.*

This section is focused on the teacher's using the latest technology to develop initiative in making decisions in seven grade students, to boost their confidence in solving complex problems, in communicating effectively and in sharing experiences and good practice. The lesson follows 6 teaching episodes and attempts to show a few ways in which technology is used to adapt information and curriculum experiences to the needs of the individual learner, in accordance with Bloom's taxonomy which says that there are more than one type of learning and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. The learning objectives selected are guided by the objectives for Year 6 in the non-language speakers and the teaching sequence strongly guided by materials produced by the English language speakers. The strategy specifies learning objectives which are fully connected to contexts and purposes. The lesson is thoroughly planned and the teacher will have the planning as teaching support

throughout the class. The average student should be able to understand the content of the lesson and especially since the lesson focuses on students' practice of an already taught grammar structure, with proper practice and encouraging feedback, master the skills it is demonstrating.

The teacher states that throughout the lesson, she is interested in both implicit and explicit knowledge of the terminology for the students not only to be able to use a particular grammar structure but to also know when and why that structure is used.

### ***Language Acquisition Process***

Teaching English as a foreign language is not easy especially with young students. It takes a lot of imagination, very good communication skills and the will and ability to change strategies and techniques to get through to them. When asked how the teacher thinks her students will learn grammar better and with little effort, the teacher said she first thinks of her students' learning needs and does her best to meet those needs. This is how she decided to use the latest technology in her classes. The outcome of such teaching is definitely rewarding as

students are happy to learn and their progress is soon noticed.

### ***In Class***

50 minutes

By naming five students, the teacher checks their homework which consists in using the Future Continuous forms of the verbs in brackets which makes her see whether they have acknowledged the formation of the Future Continuous correctly. She asks each of them a question to emphasize the verbs in the Future Continuous. At the end of the exercise the teacher congratulates the students for their work.

Student 1: Tomorrow morning at 8.15 I *will be having breakfast*.

Teacher: What *will you be doing* at 8.15 tomorrow morning?

Student 1: I *will be having* breakfast.

Student 2: This time tomorrow she *will be flying* to London.

Teacher : What *will she be doing* this time tomorrow?

Student 2: She *will be flying* to London.

Student 3: In two years' time you *will be studying* with computers at school.

Teacher : What *will I be doing* in two years' time?

Student 3: You *will be studying* with computers at school.

Student 4: He *will be driving* to Bucharest next Monday at 6 pm.

Teacher :What *will he be doing next Monday at 6 pm?*

Student 4:He *will be driving* to Bucharest next Monday at 6 pm.

Student 5: Good luck , John ! We will be thinking of you !

Teacher :What *will we be doing* ?

Student 5:We *will be thinking* of you !

Teacher to the whole class while writing the words ***past, present and future*** on the OHP Screen:  
When will all this be happening?

The class : In the future.

The teacher underlines the word future and then congratulates them.

Teacher : Well done!

From the planning, the intention to help children ‘understand future continuous’ is evident, formally framed by the non-language speakers ‘learning objective (to understand the term future continuous and to practice this tense).

The teacher writes the title of the lesson on the OHP Screen *Tomorrow’s World* and *Future Continuous* below it to make students aware of the aims of the lesson.

In the next episode the teacher needs further proof that the students have learned the Future Continuous form so she suggests practicing it more by assigning them to solve an online exercise at <http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/future-1-progressive/exercises> which instructs them to use the future continuous form of the verbs in brackets. Students write the solutions on their notebooks and then take turns to come to the laptop to write down their solutions. At the end of the exercise they press “Check “ for instant feedback. The skills used for this activity are writing

(students write the sentences in their notebooks), reading (students read the sentences aloud), speaking (when students make mistakes the teacher leads them to the correct answer by asking them questions and eliciting responses) and listening (when they have written the full sentences on the laptop students can listen to each of them read by a native English speaker provided by the internet site).

### ***The Use of Technology in Teaching***

Students are to be submitted to different teaching strategies, since they have a variety of curriculum activities. What is more, the right tools must be provided for group or pair, as well as independent study, with the result to learner autonomy.

The teacher was asked why she chose the internet to teach her students a foreign language. Her answer was: *“First of all, I thought of how I could draw my students’ attention upon the knowledge subject and then I realized I had to make my classes attractive. Latest technologies appeal to children and they seem to become very skilled at using them. Moreover, once they are accustomed to*

*using such technological device as the computer, they find working on it very easy and pleasant. Next, all I had to do was put my ideas in practice and the technology I had, to good use.”* This dedicated teacher is not only making her classes active and entertaining but she is also showing her students that they can use the internet for other purposes rather than chatting and playing computer games. The Internet is a rich source of authentic materials in English language, an integration of images, videos, graphics, animations, audio recordings for students to benefit. In addition, the Internet creates a real and interdisciplinary context for the student to compare and comment. The personal use of the Internet can develop the skills required in the twenty-first century: the ability to work well with others, to make decisions well thought of, to take initiative, to solve complex problems, to communicate effectively, and to share your experience and good practice which helps the process of training students in class and at home where students can continue to work individually. This lesson attempts to show a few ways in which technology is used to adapt information and the curriculum to the needs of the individual learner, in



accordance with Bloom's taxonomy and Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. The students are provided with the right tools for independent study, with the result to learner autonomy.

## The Impact of Examples upon Learning

We must not underestimate the power of examples to support or confound the acquisition of understanding. In this lesson, the teacher is guided by support material for the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening in teaching Future Continuous in the Year 7. Examples and activities give the students the chance to learn through experience and to begin to take ownership of the learning in hand. However, if the learning purposes underpinning the choice of any given example or strategy is not clear, or if the key principles the example was intended to illuminate are not drawn out, it is very easy to lose sight of the learning:<sup>3</sup> *‘One of the real dangers of an emphasis on children’s capacities to learn from their own activity and experience is that their understanding of things will remain at the level of specific experience and practical procedures while the hoped-for principled understandings are never grasped or articulated’*

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<sup>3</sup> Edwards, D. and Mercer, N. (1987) *Common Knowledge*; London, p. 98

To spark the students' interest and to avoid the students' sole involvement in trying to experience any future occurrence the teacher decides to give her students an authentic situation for this tense in the following episode. *City of Ember* is a short and pleasant text to read, which puts the students' imagination to the test. They are mere directors who are trying to set the scene for the actors (the people in Ember City) and decide their fate in 200 years. The teacher splits the class in pairs and hands over the hand-outs. Then, she asks them to read aloud the introductory part in order to create the context. After the students read the general presentation they watch the film trailer. While watching they mark down sentences from exercise B as true or false. Next, they check their work and report to the class.

To transfer knowledge to a certain situation the teacher takes another step and asks the students to work in pairs to complete exercise C with activities in Future Continuous (negative and affirmative) according to the previous exercise. When the students have completed the task they report their pair's choices using future continuous. Their final answers will be written on the

laptop. The teacher appreciates the students' work with stickers.

## The Focus on Learning

The effective teaching of grammar is dependent upon secure subject knowledge and this teacher shows that she can handle this grammatical structure quite well and has the means and the spirit to make her students learn almost effortlessly.

The lesson observed shows an enthusiastic teacher who has positive relationships with her class and a variety of teaching strategies at her disposal, supported by focused planning supporting Wragg's opinion that *'If you have a good grasp of the content (i.e. what is to be taught) it puts you in a better position to determine appropriate strategies (i.e. how to explain the topic)'*<sup>4</sup>.

The lesson planning indicates the focus upon objectives to be taught and these objectives remained strongly foregrounded throughout the lesson. Furthermore, the focus is placed on the student and student alone while the teacher is just a guide who leads the student's way throughout the learning process for him

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<sup>4</sup> Wragg, E.C. (2001) *Explaining in the Primary School*. London: Routledge Falmer, p. 143

to achieve knowledge by relating what is already known to new experiences. *'Knowledge is constructed by the individual knower, through an interaction between what is already known and new experience<sup>5</sup>'* . The teacher encourages learners to articulate what they think about the importance of Future Continuous, and creates opportunities for the teacher to monitor the level of genuine understanding. She rarely interferes with the students' learning as they make very few mistakes but when she does, she does not represent a threat and the corrections are perceived as ordinary, useful guidelines. The lesson consists of student-based activities and the role of the teacher is mostly as an instructor and an observer. She makes sure that the instructions she gives are well-understood and is in the class to observe the students' performances and she only interferes when they need her support.

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<sup>5</sup> Debra Myhill and Margaret Brackley: *British Journal of Educational Studies* Vol. 52, No. 3 (Sep., 2004), p. 82

Guided by Bloom's Taxonomy which is a classification of different learning objectives <sup>6</sup>that teachers set for students and Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences <sup>7</sup>which argues that the existing applications fold on the different styles of students' language-learning, foster and develop the potential of multiple cognitive abilities of the students, the teacher confidently uses modern means and approaches of student-based teaching. The teaching materials, chosen by this teacher, consider prior knowledge and appear to address cognitive progression. She takes the students through stages of *remembering* - when she asks them recall relevant information and write the continuous future forms in the affirmative, negative and interrogative, *understanding* by identifying the context created by the moving picture; here they understand how future continuous functions in a given context. A great part of the lesson is devoted to

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<sup>6</sup> Bloom, B. S., Engelhart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., & Krathwohl, D. R.(1956) , *Taxonomy of educational objectives: the classification of educational goals; Handbook I: Cognitive Domain* New York, Longmans, Green, p. 111

<sup>7</sup> Gardner, Howard (1983), *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, New York, p. 183

*identification* of the future continuous forms with the aim for students to gain explicit metalinguistic knowledge, an insight of both the theoretical and the practical usage and finally, to consider the impact of the future continuous in writing and speaking. By using authentic texts or presentations either written or visual the teacher presents the language as a whole and the grammatical structure is not learnt in isolation, a means which provides opportunities for natural language acquisition. The last three stages which are considered equally important in student-based teaching are: *analyzing*- when the students discriminate between the affirmative and negative usage of future continuous forms, *evaluating* – when students use a taught process in a familiar or new situation and are able to formulate sentences of their own using future continuous forms and, *creating*, an ability which refers to the combination of existing things to make something new. In order to meet creative tasks, those who learn generate planners and produce. Therefore, students conclude their knowledge of future continuous by using the Fotobabble online resource in their work. The whole



activity is consolidation practice and the students are to plan and produce coherent and structured sentences.

The study is revealing interactivity in whole-class teaching, characterized by regular exchange of contributions between students. Interactive teaching is more than participation and response levels, or teaching strategies which ensure continuation of teacher–pupil interactions: it is engaging learners in learning and thinking. Throughout the lesson the students interact efficiently by observing and using the English language to report their opinion and decisions. The students are encouraged to use the devices at hand confidently and their work is much appreciated by the teacher.

The teacher strongly believes that only through the use of contexts will the students be able to learn and remember what they learned while the teacher’s role is to monitor and assess. The traditional teacher who was the transmitter of the information has emerged into the modern teacher, the key enabler of learning through reconsideration of his own mission: to create an ambient (purpose, information, resources, strategy) to enable learners to build and to develop their knowledge, using

ICT. The teacher has the role to make resources available to students so that they work on their own account while resources must be organized in such a way that inspires students, helps learning, stimulates the ability for reflection of higher order and supports practice.

The perspective of modern teaching which goes beyond the textbook or the handbook, is focused on student who, under the teacher's supervision, takes responsibility of his own learning and, at the same time, acquires knowledge which helps him find solutions to problems that need to be resolved in different ways; these problems are introduced in meaningful contexts, but and in such a way that they appeal to the use of to different types of intelligences or skills. This modern perspective causes teachers to become more aware of their students' needs and to better themselves at teaching English as a foreign language assisted by modern means with countless activities which can develop all skills.

The Internet is a source of attractive materials that inspire creativity and communication, representing a breaking of daily routine. A preference for the use of the Internet in English teaching offers both the teacher and

student advantages, such as instant feedback, an opportunity to learn in a pleasant, relaxing and almost effortless way at school and at home. Interactive teaching and learning of the English language, based on the type of intelligence of each student, require the student's involvement in different activities where the student is motivated to prove his talents and skills with the aim to improve them.

# **Lesson Plan with Technology 4 in One – Laptop Class**

TEACHER: M.M

DATE: 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022

FORM: 7<sup>th</sup> D

GROUP I

LEVEL: pre-intermediate

UNIT 8 –Progress and Change

LESSON : Lesson 3 *Tomorrow's World*

SKILLS COVERED: Listening, Writing, Speaking,  
Reading

TYPE OF LESSON: Practice lesson

INTERACTION: - T- Ss

- Ss-T

- IW (individual work)

- PW (pair work)

METHOD OF TEACHING: Communicative Approach

TEACHING AIDS: laptop, video-projector, screen,  
Internet connection, hand –out

#### RESOURCES:

Technology component downloaded from/accessed in  
class at:

-Future Continuous exercise :

<http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/future-1-progressive/exercises>

-Trailer of “ The City of Ember “

<http://moviesegmentstoassessgrammargoaals.blogspot.com/2009/06/city-of-ember-future-continuous.html>

-Fotobabble <http://www.fotobabble.com/>

Other materials:

1. Official: The Curriculum for Secondary Education
2. Methodology: Harmer, Jeremy: *'The Practical of English Language Teaching'*, Longman, UK, 1991
3. Textbook: *'English Scrapbook'*, Oxford University Press

OBJECTIVES according to Bloom's Taxonomy :

#### A) COGNITIVE DOMAIN OBJECTIVES:

- Ss will write the Future Continuous forms (affirmative, negative, interrogative) in an online exercise (Remembering)
- Ss will identify the context created by the movie for using Future Continuous (Understanding)
- Ss will illustrate the video comprehension by selecting the true sentences (Apply)
- Ss will discriminate between affirmative and negative usage of Future Continuous (Analyzing)
- Ss will formulate sentences using Future Continuous (Evaluating)
- Ss will conclude their knowledge about Future Continuous by using the online resource, Fotobabble, in their homework (Creating)

#### B) AFFECTIVE DOMAIN OBJECTIVES:

- Ss will receive feedback from their peers and T (Receiving)
- Ss will cooperate to fulfil the tasks (Responding)
- Ss will interact with each other (Valuing)

## LEARNING STYLES ADDRESSED:

- **Linguistic:** by utilizing speaking and writing skills , by creating the Fotobabble as homework
- **Logical-Mathematical:** by practicing sequential step-by-step thinking in using Future Continuous, by recognizing patterns of the tense usage
- **Spatial:** by using visual clues in teaching and in this case in homework, too
- **Bodily-Kinesthetic:** by having contact with the keyboard, mouse, by being allowed to stand up during group work
- **Interpersonal:** by working with others, in pairs or in groups
- **Intrapersonal** : by individual work and homework

## Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences

## Eight Intelligences <sup>8</sup>



**Nature Smart**  
*(Naturalist)*



**People Smart**  
*(Interpersonal)*



**Number Smart**  
*(Logical/Mathematical)*



**Picture Smart**  
*(Spatial/Visual)*



**Self Smart**  
*(Intrapersonal)*



**Body Smart**  
*(Bodily-Kinesthetic)*



**Music Smart**  
*(Musical)*



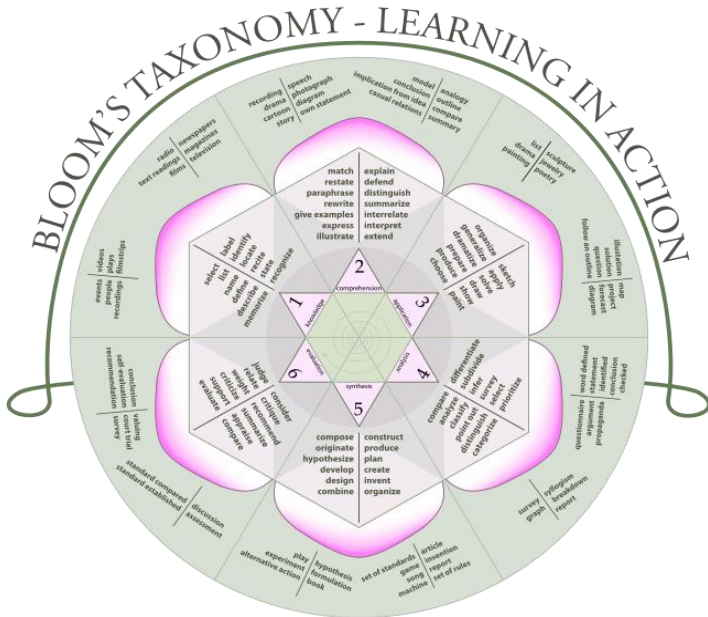
**Word Smart**  
*(Linguistic)*

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.google.com/search?q=Eight+Intelligences&rls>



# Bloom's Taxonomy<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom%27s\\_Taxonomy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom%27s_Taxonomy)

Timing	Stage of lesson/aim	Teacher's activity	Students' activity	interaction	Skills	Teaching technique	Aids
2'	CHECKING ATTENDANCE -to check attendance	- T. checks attendance 'Who's absent today?'	- Ss answer 'X is absent today.'	T-S S-T	Speaking	Dialogue	
8'	WARM UP -to check previous knowledge	T asks Ss to read their homework	Ss read their homework aloud and correct it where necessary (Appendix 1)	S-S Ss-T	Listening Speaking Writing	Eliciting	Notebooks
2'	ANNOUNCING OBJECTIVES -to make Ss aware of the aims of the lesson	- T writes down the date ,the title ( <i>Tomorrow's World</i> ) and the objectives on the screen: <i>-future continuous</i>	- Ss write them down in their notebooks	T-Ss  Ss-T	Speaking  Writing	Explaining	Laptop OHP Screen Notebooks

35'	<p>PRACTICE</p> <p>-to transfer their knowledge about future continuous in different contexts</p> <p>- to spark the Ss' interest</p> <p>-to create an authentic situation for this tense</p>	<p>-Activity 1 -8'</p> <p>T asks Ss to solve an online exercise at <a href="http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/future-1-progressive/exercises">http://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/grammar/future-1-progressive/exercises</a></p> <p>Activity 2 -10'</p> <p>T splits the class in pairs . She hands them the hand outs ( Appendix 12).</p> <p>T asks Ss to read aloud the introductory part in order to create the context.</p> <p>T shows the Ss the video about a future city called Ember (<a href="http://moviesegmentstoassessgrammargoaals.blogspot.com/2009/06/city-of-ember-future-continuous.html">http://moviesegmentstoassessgrammargoaals.blogspot.com/2009/06/city-of-ember-future-continuous.html</a> )</p>	<p>Ss take turns to come to the laptop to write down their solutions. At the end of the exercise they press “ Check “ for instant feedback (Appendix 2 )</p>	<p>Ss-T</p> <p>T-Ss</p> <p>S-S</p>	<p>Speaking</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>Listening</p>	<p>Reporting</p> <p>Dialogue</p>	<p>Laptop</p> <p>OHP</p> <p>Screen</p> <p>Internet</p>
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			<p>Ss read the general presentation.</p> <p>Ss watch the film trailer.</p> <p>While watching they mark down sentences from exercise B as true or false.</p> <p>Ss check their work in pairs after watching (1') and then they report to the class.</p>	<p>T-Ss</p> <p>Ss-T</p> <p>I W</p> <p>PW</p>	<p>Listening</p> <p>Speaking</p> <p>Reading</p> <p>Writing</p>	<p>Collaboration</p> <p>Audio Video method</p> <p>Discussion</p>	<p>Laptop</p> <p>OHP</p> <p>Screen</p> <p>Internet</p> <p>Hand out</p>
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	to transfer knowledge to an authentic situation	Activity3 -17' T asks Ss to work in pairs to complete exercise C with activities in Future Continuous ( negative and affirmative ) according to the previous exercise	Ss complete de task . Then they report their pair's choices using future continuous. Their final answers will be written on the laptop	S-S T-Ss Ss-T	Listen ing  Speak ing  Readi ng  Writi ng	Conversati on Collaborati on  Reporting  Peer Correction	Lapto p  OHP Scree n Hand out
1'	FEED-BACK -to provide feed-back		T appreciates the Ss' work with stickers	T-Ss	Speak ing		Sticke rs

2'	TRANSFER (HOMEWORK SETTING) -to provide further practice	beginning. The URL of the Fotobabble will be send on the teacher's e- mail address to ce checked by the teacher. Example: <i>In 2 months' time I will be in Spain on holiday. I will be swimming but I won't be sunbathing too much because of the hot weather.</i>		T-Ss	Speak ing Listen ing	Explaining  Modeling	Lapto p OHP Scree n Inter net E- mail
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# TEST

**Level – Intermediate**

**For completion of all tasks students are granted 10 points**

**I. Use the present simple or continuous tenses and future forms to complete this text.**

**(25 points)**

I .....1 (not do) housework on Sundays normally. But tomorrow I.....2 (tidy) my room, because my boyfriend Jim.....3 (come). The bus ..... 4(arrive) at 10. I think Jim .....5 (come) on time as usual, because he ..... 6 (like) to be punctual. I .....7 (look) forward to him. We .....8 (have) a date every Sunday and I .....9 (always look) forward to him. Tomorrow we .....10 (have) a special date.

**II. Make questions to match the answers.**

**(35 points)**

1. What time ..... ?

The meeting starts at 8.30 tonight.

2..... ?

No, I don't watch TV every day.

3. What ..... after school?

I don't know.

4..... ?

Yes, she is going to try it.

5. When ..... ?

He is leaving next month.

6. How often ..... ?

She helps me twice a week.

7..... ?

No, no. I'm not coming today.

**III. Choose which verb tense (simple past or past continuous) fits better.**

**(30 points)**

1. I \_\_\_\_\_ - I didn't hear you come in.

a) was sleeping b) slept



2. I \_\_\_\_\_ to see her twice, but she wasn't home.  
a) was coming b) came
3. What \_\_\_\_\_? I was watching TV.  
a) did you do b) were you doing
4. Robin Hood was a character who \_\_\_\_\_ from the rich and gave to the poor.  
a) stole b) was stealing
5. Hey, did you talk to her? Yes, I \_\_\_\_\_ to her  
a) was talking b) talked
6. I \_\_\_\_\_ home very late last night.  
a) came b) was coming
7. How long \_\_\_\_\_ the flu?  
a) did you have b) were you having
8. \_\_\_\_\_ a good time in Brazil? Yes, I had a blast!  
a) Were you having b) Did you have
9. We \_\_\_\_\_ breakfast when she walked into the room.  
a) had b) were having
10. Last month I decided to buy a new car, and today I finally \_\_\_\_\_ it.  
a) bought b) was buying

Answers:

1.....

...10 verbs x 2.5 points = 25 points

1. do not do
2. am going to tidy
3. is coming
4. arrives
5. will come
6. likes
7. am looking
8. have
9. look forward to
10. Have

2.....

....7 questions x 5 points = 35 points

1. What time does the meeting start?
2. Do you watch TV every day?
3. What are you doing after school?
4. Is she going to try it?
5. When is he leaving?
6. How often does she help you?
7. Are you coming today?

3.....

10 correct answers x 3 points = 30points

1. a 2. b 3. b 4. a 5. b 6. a 7. a 8. b 9. b 10. a

## The Learning Outcomes

The aim of the test was to check the students' acquiring the language after the experiment. The outcome of the four-week teaching and learning process is far from satisfactory as far as group 12 B is concerned and, if the traditional way of teaching came handiest once, now it can only come between student as an active learner of a foreign language and learning itself. The chart below shows significant progress made by group 12 A as they scored higher in the test than 12 B who made little progress.

Students from both groups made more or less the same mistakes (they used the Simple Present instead of the Present Continuous, they used *is* instead of *does + infinitive* in questions or they made no inversion at all and they used the past continuous form instead of the past simple form of the verb *steal* for repetitive actions in the past tense) I would have expected them to make before the experiment but the number of students in group 12 B who made those mistakes was larger which made me conclude that

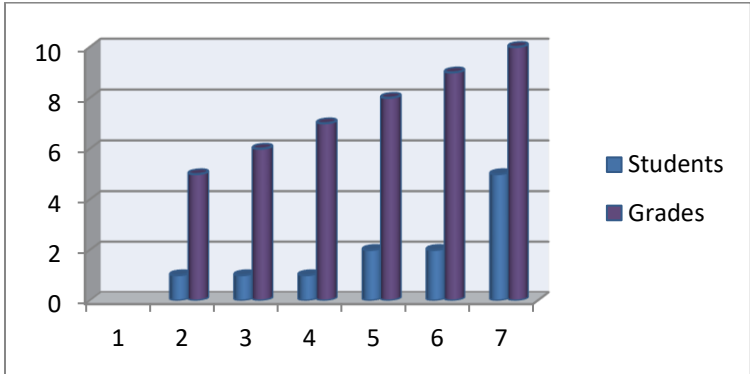
traditional teaching methods prevent students from going fast forward with their learning.

## Student Grade Chart

12 A: 12 Students			12 B: 12 Students		
Students	Grade	Percentage	Students	Grade	Percentage
0	4	0%	1	4	10%
1	5	11%	2	5	13%
1	6	13%	4	6	15%
1	7	16%	3	7	18%
2	8	18%	1	8	21%
2	9	20%	1	9	23%
5	10	22%	0	10	0%

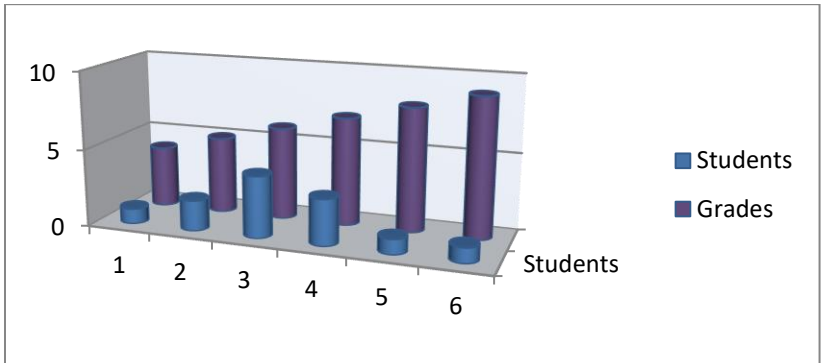
## Student Grade Graph 1

This graph is a representation of the number of students and the scores that group 12 A made on the test.



## Student Grade Graph 2

This graph is a representation of the number of students and the scores that group 12 B made on the test.



## **Conclusions:**

As far as the progress in learning tenses and aspect is concerned it is to be noticed that this goal has been reached with most students in group 12 A and with very few students in group 12 B. This leads us to conclude that the advantages of using modern techniques in teaching English as a foreign language outweigh the traditional ones.

After seeing the results and getting some feedback from the students in both groups, I realized that they have some difficulties, especially when it comes to grammar problems. I decided that from then on I was going to approach grammar only through communicative activities and modern techniques and strategies and I could not help noticing the fact that the whole atmosphere in class changed when I started using strategies like pair work and group work more intensively. The students became more relaxed and more cooperative as they started to feel confident and trust their capacity to learn. They enjoyed the activities



better and they considered some of them fun and so they became talkative and competitive at the same time

Grammar was introduced in contexts which made it become so much easier and more enjoyable that the students did not even realize they were doing grammar. They liked studying grammar in an interactive way by watching videos, telling stories, playing games and singing and even role-playing.

Following the mistakes that they made and the reasons why those mistakes were made I can conclude that some students show little interest in learning language as far as the Aspect is concerned. They only see this as one more problem to tackle and they do not see the point in learning more than The Present, The Past and The Future Tenses in the Simple Aspect. So, it is rather a problem of attitude than one of grammar difficulty. In order to raise their interest and show them how important it is to speak a language like a native speaker I will bring recordings and videos of songs and stories to compare and contrast language and then, I will ask them to do some creative writing exercises on those recordings and stories in which they will use

grammar accurately without even knowing they are doing it.

These studies focused on the problems in teaching and tenses to Romanian students at different levels. Some of the problematic and confusing tenses such as Past Continuous and Present Perfect Continuous Tense, Present Continuous, Future Continuous and Past Perfect Continuous have been handled with great responsibility. Most frequently occurred errors have been mentioned and they have been analysed in detail. The findings reveal that the reasons for these errors mostly derive from mother tongue interference and lack of proper linguistic background.

The studies also offer tips for teaching activities so as to remedy the shortcomings of foreign language learners.

### **Findings**

During the teaching sessions and the tests, I have listed a core of errors that students tend to make frequently when they have to use the continuous form of the verb. They misuse the continuous aspect as they

confuse it with the simple aspect. The Present Perfect Tense which is one of the most problematic tenses for Romanian students to learn is usually confused with the Simple Past and Present Perfect Continuous Tense with Present Continuous by many students. The Past Perfect Continuous Tense, on the other hand, is confused with The Past Continuous Tense while the latter is often misused in sentences that require the past simple form for habitual actions in the past. The main reason why they make such mistakes is that they do not make the difference between mother tongue and the new language, English in our case, and the former interferes with the latter. However, teachers must admit that errors are a natural and important part of the learning process itself, and do not all come from mother tongue interference. Some of them come from teachers' misconceptions and misunderstandings of their students' needs, while others come from the students' misinterpretations of the language.

### **Solutions**

The teacher needs to plan his/her remedial treatment of errors into syllabus for the coming weeks

and months. He/she will consider supplying the students with efficient practice teaching materials for them to consciously and unconsciously learn the structures in contexts or, students will not be able to understand the language which will result in lack of communicative competence. Anderson has a very interesting theory on cognitive teaching. He distinguishes among three types of memory structures: declarative, procedural and working memory. He believes that declarative memory takes the form of a semantic net linking propositions, images, and sequences by associations while procedural memory (also long-term) represents information in the form of productions; each production has a set of conditions and actions based in declarative memory. The nodes of long-term memory all have some degree of activation and working memory is that part of long-term memory that is most highly activated.

What he asserts is that all knowledge begins as declarative information; procedural knowledge is learned by making inferences from already existing factual knowledge and he supports three fundamental

types of learning: generalization, in which productions become broader in their range of application, discrimination, in which productions become narrow in their range of application, and strengthening, in which some productions are applied more often. New productions are formed by the conjunction or disjunction of existing productions.

For this, we will apply drillings to demonstrate John Anderson's general theory of cognition. But before that we need to determine such work principles as identify the goal, provide instruction in the context of problem-solving, provide immediate feedback on errors, minimize working memory load, adjust the "grain size" of instruction with learning to account for the knowledge compilation process and enable the student to approach the target skill by successive approximation.

### **Present Continuous (Oral development)**

The teacher asks the students several questions in the continuous aspect and tells the student to give true, short answers and only one long answer when they consider fit.

Teacher I *am reading*. Are you reading, too?

Student: No, I *am not*.

Teacher: Are you writing?

Student: No, I *am not*.

Teacher: Are you listening to me?

Student: Yes *I am* and I *am looking* at you at the same time.

This kind of activity can be applied to all tenses and aspects and involves all types of memory; the activity is performed through sequences by associations which the teacher and the students activate and produce and which students will be able to associate with other activities at a definite moment. New productions of the kind can be applied every time we need our students to practice language.

The paper does not attempt to exhaust all the problems raised by teaching of the Progressive Aspect in English, but it offers a wide range of ideas and exercises that can be used in teaching it in a relaxing and pleasant way which targets and motivates the development of students' creative writing, critical

thinking and communication skills by cooperation and interaction.

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