How EnglishiExcel's Language Teaching Methodology Dovetails with the Singapore Ministry of Education's Pedagogical Practices & Curriculum


English Language Syllabus
Primary & Secondary (Express/ Normal [Academic])

CURRICULUM PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SINGAPORE

Desired Outcomes for 21st Century EL Learners in Singapore

The Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes identifies three categories of competencies to enable our learners to take advantage of the opportunities in the digital age while staying connected to the Singapore heartbeat:

- core values as the moral compass, with character as the foundation of learning and behaviour
- social and emotional competencies
- 21st century competencies for the globalised world
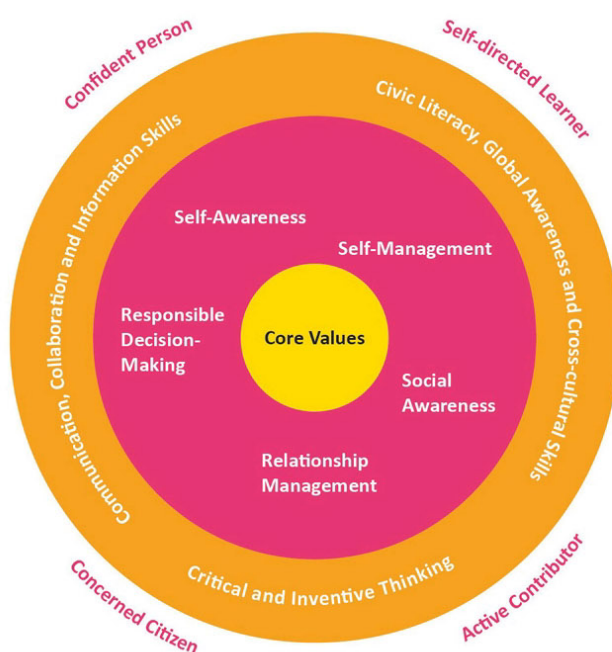
Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes[4]
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Learner Outcomes and Values

Taking reference from the Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes, the *EL Syllabus 2020* seeks to develop these competencies in our learners through the teaching and learning of EL to enable them to be:

Empathetic communicators	Discerning readers	Creative inquirers
who possess the values, dispositions and skills to listen actively to different perspectives; communicate confidently, effectively and sensitively while collaborating with others to work towards shared goals; and balance an appreciation of the Singapore spirit with multi-ethnic and multicultural sensitivities.	who possess broad worldviews by staying well informed and self-directed in the use of information, and are able to distinguish fact from falsehood by processing and evaluating information, critically and with discernment according to purpose, audience, context and culture.	who explore and evaluate real-world issues and multiple perspectives as well as gather and synthesise information from diverse print, non-print and digital networked sources, so as to co-create knowledge and solutions in familiar or new contexts.

Given the importance of 21st century competencies, our desired outcomes for our learners will also include opportunities to develop the following **core values**:

Respect	through appreciating diverse views and adopting appropriate social conventions
Responsibility	through seeking out accurate, credible and current information to make informed decisions
Resilience	through self-appraising and self-regulated learning, and persevering in the pursuit of knowledge, understanding and personal growth
Integrity	through articulating ethical principles in the use and exchange of information and expression of ideas
Care	through expressing empathy in communication and using language purposefully to contribute to the community
Harmony	through interacting and collaborating meaningfully and respectfully with others to achieve shared goals

Specific Aims of *EL Syllabus 2020*

The overarching aim of the EL Syllabus 2020 is to develop effective and affective[5] language use in students. For students offering FEL or N(T) EL, emphasis is placed on reinforcing their foundation in English in order to help them gain mastery in using language for functional purposes[6] and strengthen their academic literacy[7] in the following areas:

1. **Listen to, read and view critically and with accuracy, understanding and appreciation a suitable range of literary and informational texts in standard English[8] from print, non-print and digital networked sources.**

2. **Speak, write and represent in standard English that is grammatical, fluent, intelligible and appropriate for different purposes, audiences, contexts and cultures.**

3. **Use standard English grammar and vocabulary accurately and appropriately, and understand how speakers/writers put words together and use language to communicate meaning and achieve impact.**

4. **Use English with impact, effect and affect.**

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[5]   Andres (1999); Aoki (1999); Dörnyei & Otto (1998).
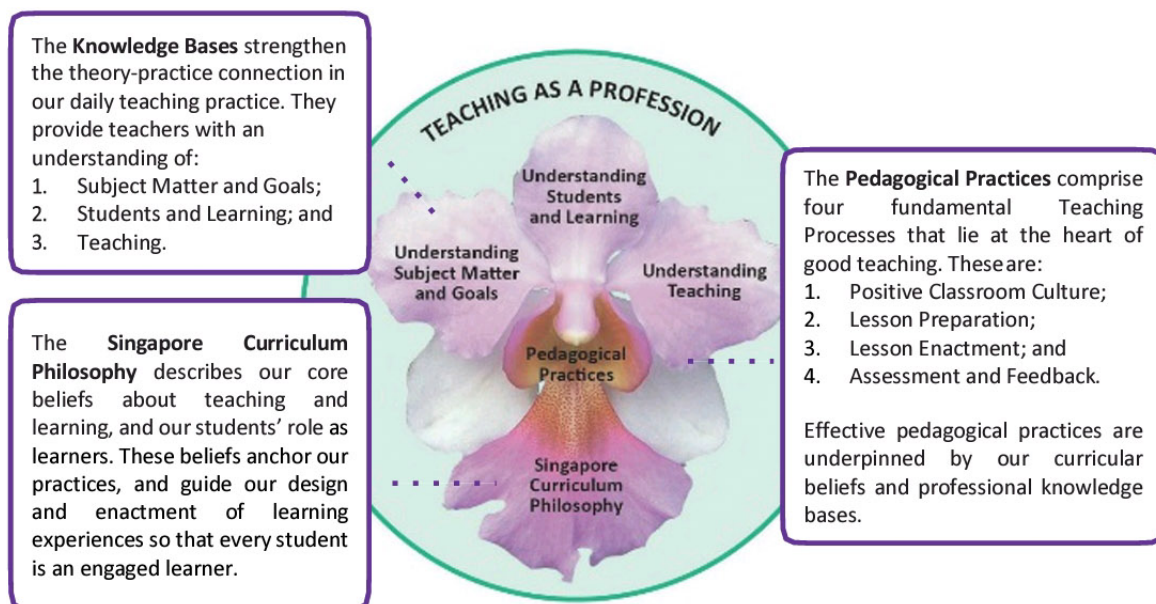[6]   UNESCO (2005); Canale & Swain (1980); Hymes (1972).
[7]   Academic literacy refers to the use of language for academic purposes, including an understanding of texts in the different subject areas.
[8]   Internationally acceptable English that is grammatical, fluent and appropriate for purpose, audience, context and culture refers to the formal register of English used in different parts of the world.

Drawing on the Singapore Teaching Practice to Develop 21st Century EL Learners[9]

The Singapore Teaching Practice (STP) is a model that makes explicit how effective teaching and learning is achieved in the Singapore classroom. It encompasses the Singapore Curriculum Philosophy, Knowledge Bases and Pedagogical Practices that guide Singapore educators to design and enact effective teaching experiences for our students. Besides the Framework for 21st Century Competencies and Student Outcomes, the *EL Syllabus 2020* draws from the STP to facilitate effective teaching and learning of EL in Singapore.

The **Knowledge Bases** strengthen the theory-practice connection in our daily teaching practice. They provide teachers with an understanding of:
1. Subject Matter and Goals;
2. Students and Learning; and
3. Teaching.

The **Singapore Curriculum Philosophy** describes our core beliefs about teaching and learning, and our students' role as learners. These beliefs anchor our practices, and guide our design and enactment of learning experiences so that every student is an engaged learner.

TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

Understanding Students and Learning

Understanding Subject Matter and Goals

Understanding Teaching

Pedagogical Practices

Singapore Curriculum Philosophy

The **Pedagogical Practices** comprise four fundamental Teaching Processes that lie at the heart of good teaching. These are:
1. Positive Classroom Culture;
2. Lesson Preparation;
3. Lesson Enactment; and
4. Assessment and Feedback.

Effective pedagogical practices are underpinned by our curricular beliefs and professional knowledge bases.

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Singapore Curriculum Philosophy	In the *EL Syllabus 2020*, the core belief about EL teaching takes into consideration our vision of 21st century EL learners as well as the nature of language and language learning.
Knowledge Bases	In the *EL Syllabus 2020*, the principles of EL teaching and learning are encapsulated in CLLIPS.[10] Together with the learning outcomes and areas of language learning, the Syllabus draws on our beliefs about students, and understanding about teaching and learning articulated through the Knowledge Bases in the STP.
Pedagogical Practices	In the *EL Syllabus 2020*, ACoLADE,[11] which distills the essential EL Teaching Processes, draws from the Teaching Areas under the Pedagogical Practices of the STP. CLLIPS and ACoLADE together will guide teachers in the design and enactment of instruction and learning experiences differentiated for the 21st century EL classroom.

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[9] For more information on the Singapore Teaching Practice, access https://www.moe.gov.sg/about/singapore-teaching-practice
[10] CLLIPS refers to the six principles of EL teaching and learning – **C**ontextualisation, **L**earner-centredness, **L**earning-focused Interaction, **I**ntegration, **P**rocess Orientation, **S**piral Progression.
[11] ACoLADE refers to EL teaching processes to be employed during the pre-, main and post phases of EL lessons – Raising **A**wareness, Structuring **Co**nsolidation, Facilitating Assessment for **L**earning, Enabling **A**pplication, Guiding **D**iscovery, Instructing **E**xplicitly.

Summary Features of *EL Syllabus 2020*

The following diagram presents the key features of the *EL Syllabus 2020* undergirded by the principles of EL teaching and learning (CLLIPS) and EL teaching processes (ACoLADE). A pedagogical emphasis on Multiliteracies, Metacognition, and Inquiry through Dialogue in the EL classroom helps to develop knowledge of language and ensures effective and affective language use for all EL learners across all areas of language learning. The approach to language teaching and learning ensures a firm and rich foundation for all for future learning.
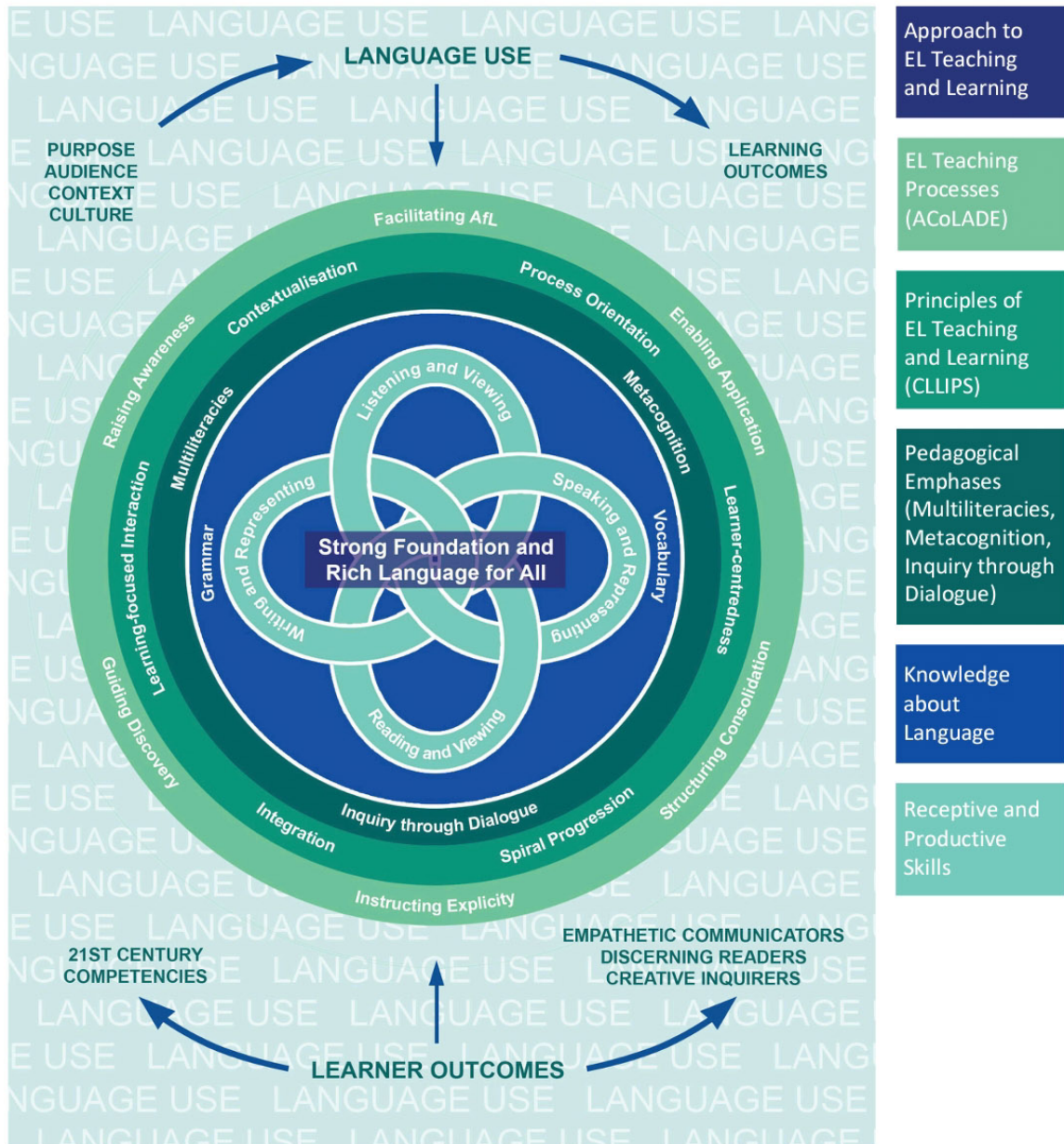
LISTENING AND VIEWING

Overview Diagram

LISTENING AND VIEWING

Develop appropriate listening and viewing attitudes and behaviour, and apply skills and strategies in a variety of contexts for effective communication and collaboration, strengthened by exposure to a wide range of listening and viewing texts.

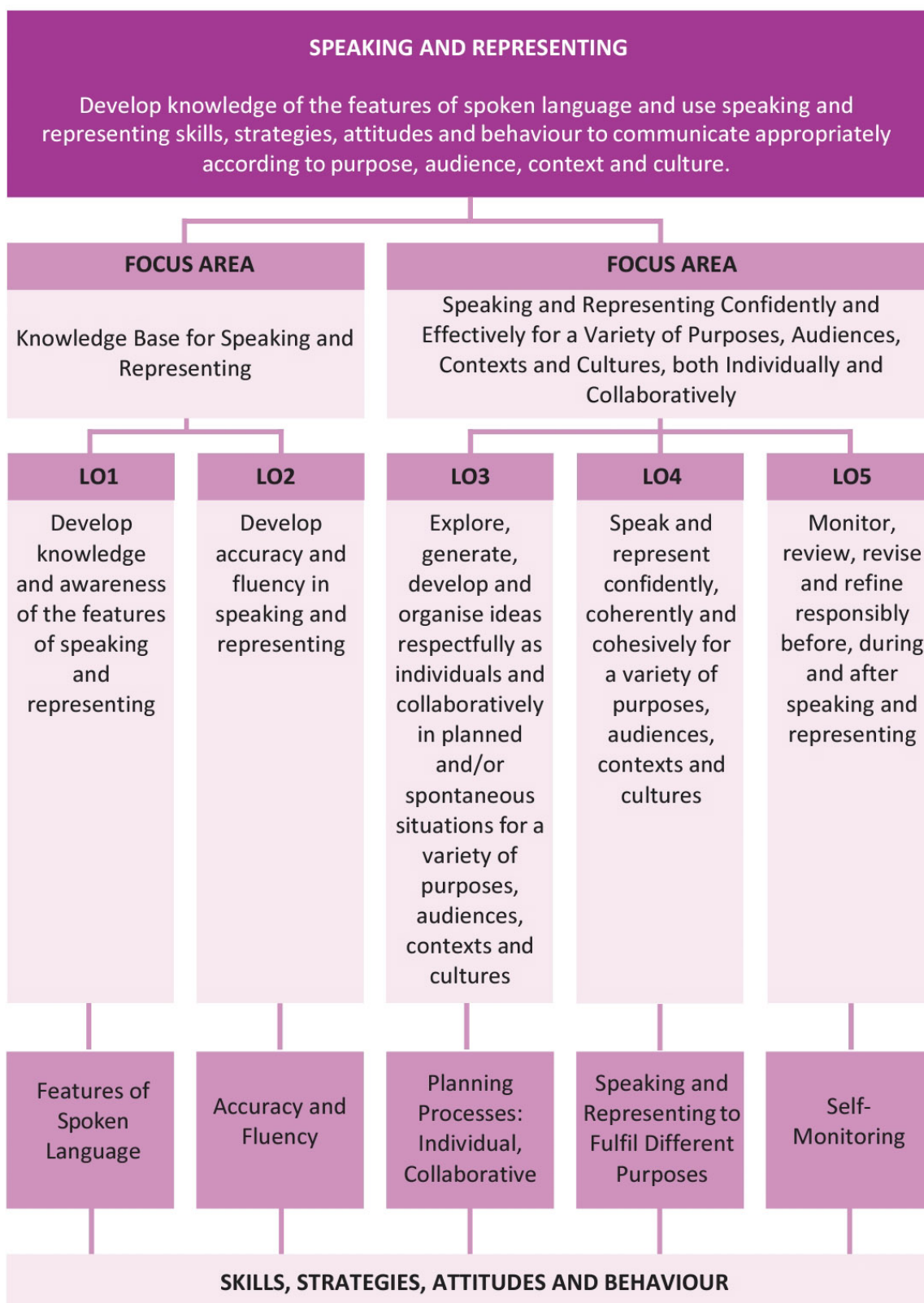| **FOCUS AREA**	**FOCUS AREA**	**FOCUS AREA**
Listening and Viewing Closely with a Positive Disposition	Listening and Viewing Critically	Listening and Viewing Extensively

LO1	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**
Develop auditory discrimination skills and positive listening and viewing attitudes and behaviour	Develop listening and viewing skills for understanding by focusing on literal and inferential meaning	Develop critical listening and viewing by focusing on implied meaning, higher-order thinking and evaluation	Listen to, view and respond to a variety of texts

Listening and Viewing Attitudes and Behaviour	Listening and Viewing to Recognise Sounds and Words in Context	Listening and Viewing for Understanding	Listening and Viewing for Critical Evaluation	Listening and Viewing Extensively for Understanding and Enjoyment

SKILLS, STRATEGIES, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR

SPEAKING AND REPRESENTING

Overview Diagram

SPEAKING AND REPRESENTING
Develop knowledge of the features of spoken language and use speaking and representing skills, strategies, attitudes and behaviour to communicate appropriately according to purpose, audience, context and culture.

FOCUS AREA	FOCUS AREA
Knowledge Base for Speaking and Representing	Speaking and Representing Confidently and Effectively for a Variety of Purposes, Audiences, Contexts and Cultures, both Individually and Collaboratively

LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5
Develop knowledge and awareness of the features of speaking and representing	Develop accuracy and fluency in speaking and representing	Explore, generate, develop and organise ideas respectfully as individuals and collaboratively in planned and/or spontaneous situations for a variety of purposes, audiences, contexts and cultures	Speak and represent confidently, coherently and cohesively for a variety of purposes, audiences, contexts and cultures	Monitor, review, revise and refine responsibly before, during and after speaking and representing
Features of Spoken Language	Accuracy and Fluency	Planning Processes: Individual, Collaborative	Speaking and Representing to Fulfil Different Purposes	Self-Monitoring

SKILLS, STRATEGIES, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR

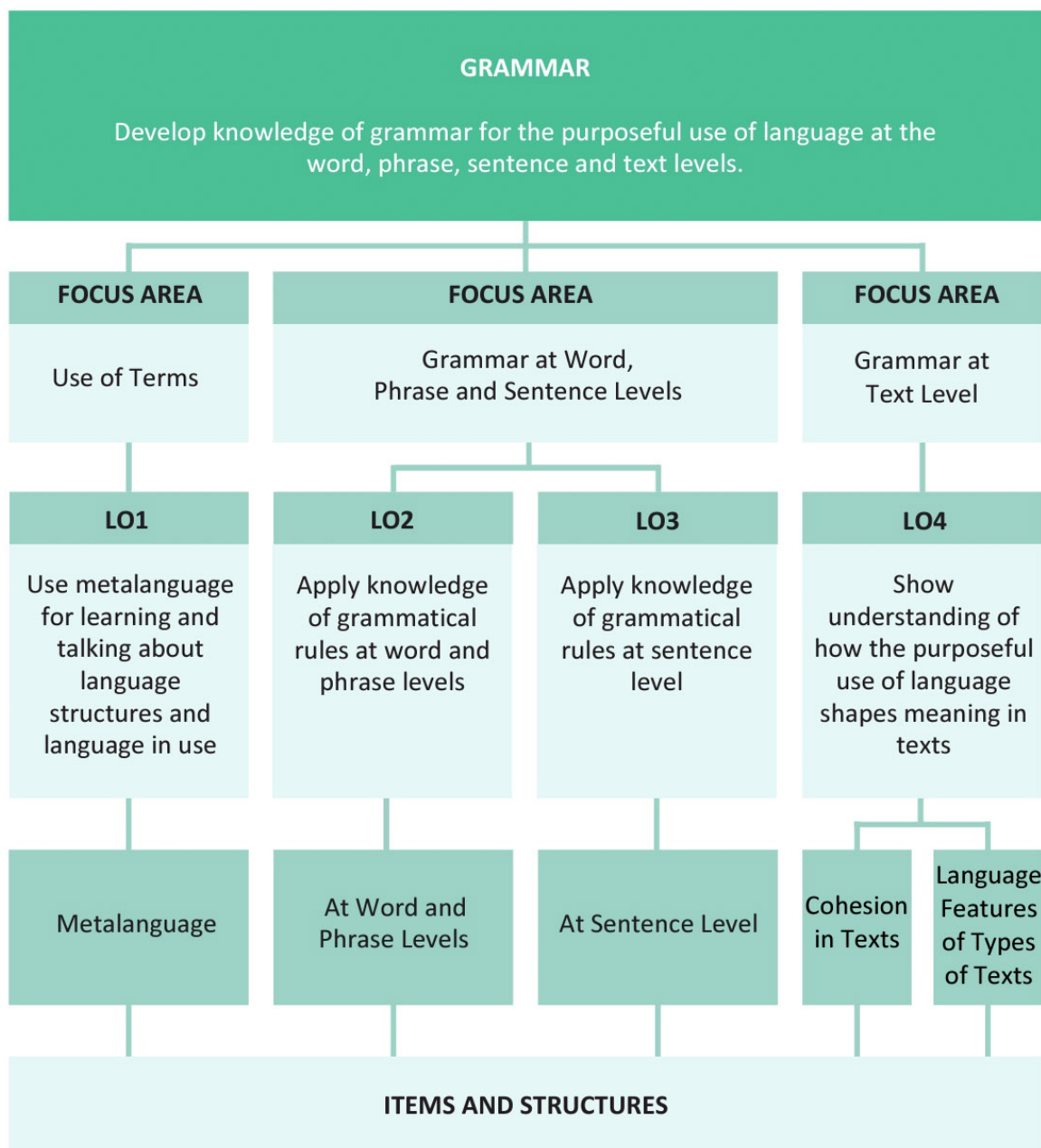**Progression of Skills from Primary 5 FEL to Secondary 4N(T)**

AREA OF LANGUAGE LEARNING	FOCUS AREAS	PRIMARY		SECONDARY			
		FEL		LOWER SECONDARY		UPPER SECONDARY	
		P5	P6	S1N(T)	S2N(T)	S3N(T)	S4N(T)
Writing and Representing		Develop a positive disposition towards writing and representing.					
	Acquiring the Mechanics of Writing*	Write neatly, legibly and fluently. Apply spelling skills and learner strategies accurately for writing frequently misspelled and multisyllabic words.		Apply spelling skills and learner strategies for writing accurately and consistently in internationally acceptable English (standard English).			
	Writing and Representing Creatively and Critically for a Variety of Purposes, Audiences, Contexts and Cultures, both Individually and Collaboratively	Apply skills for idea generation, selection, organisation, development, expression and revision so as to address the writer's purpose, needs of the audience, context and culture in writing and representing. Pay increasing attention to the use of semiotic modes in text creation.		Apply increasingly sophisticated and higher-order skills for idea generation, selection, organisation, development, expression and revision so as to achieve intended effects in writing and representing. Consider how various semiotic modes work together to convey the text's intended message.			
		Create a variety of texts for different purposes, using an appropriate tone and register. Understand how the skills and knowledge of writing and representing specific types of texts can inform and be applied to the creation of other increasingly sophisticated texts of different types and forms.					
		Write and represent with an explicit awareness of the appropriate prosodic and language features of texts for different purposes.		Apply knowledge of appropriate organisational structures and language features to create a variety of increasingly sophisticated texts for different purposes.			
		Pay increasing attention to writing and representing texts that instruct, describe, inform, explain and respond.				Pay increasing attention to writing and representing texts that respond, argue, evaluate and/or persuade.	

*Support also the use of keyboarding and word processing skills to create texts.

GRAMMAR

Overview Diagram

GRAMMAR
Develop knowledge of grammar for the purposeful use of language at the word, phrase, sentence and text levels.

FOCUS AREA	FOCUS AREA	FOCUS AREA
Use of Terms	Grammar at Word, Phrase and Sentence Levels	Grammar at Text Level

LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4
Use metalanguage for learning and talking about language structures and language in use	Apply knowledge of grammatical rules at word and phrase levels	Apply knowledge of grammatical rules at sentence level	Show understanding of how the purposeful use of language shapes meaning in texts

Metalanguage	At Word and Phrase Levels	At Sentence Level	Cohesion in Texts	Language Features of Types of Texts

ITEMS AND STRUCTURES

Progression of Skills from Primary 5 FEL to Secondary 4N(T)

AREA OF LANGUAGE LEARNING	FOCUS AREAS						
		FEL		LOWER SECONDARY		UPPER SECONDARY	
		P5	P6	S1N(T)	S2N(T)	S3N(T)	S4N(T)
Grammar	**Use of Terms**	Use and revise the metalanguage to talk about how language works at the word, phrase, sentence and text levels, and during editing and self-correction.					
				Develop grammatical knowledge by learning additional terms.			
	Grammar at Word, Phrase and Sentence Levels	Use and revise grammatical knowledge at the word, phrase and sentence levels.		Revisit and develop grammatical knowledge learnt previously. Identify errors and address recurring language errors to develop greater control in the use of language for speaking, writing and representing.			
		Use appropriate language structures to convey thoughts and opinions in interactions with others.					
	Grammar at Text Level	Recognise and use predominant language features to achieve intended purposes of various texts.					

Overview Chart

Progression of Skills from Primary 1 to Secondary 4E/ 5N

Teachers will:
- teach all areas of language learning in an integrated manner.
- teach the SSAB and/ or items and structures indicated for each year level.
- reinforce the SSAB and/ or items and structures at increasing levels of difficulty as pupils progress through the year levels.
- extend the teaching of the SSAB and/ or items and structures beyond the stipulated year level or, conversely, introduce them earlier when the pupils are able and ready.

AREAS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING	FOCUS AREAS	PRIMARY						SECONDARY				
		LOWER PRIMARY		MIDDLE PRIMARY		UPPER PRIMARY		LOWER SECONDARY			UPPER SECONDARY	
		P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	S1N	S2N/ 1E	S3N/ 2E	S4N/ 3E	S5N/ 4E
Grammar	Use of Terms	Focus on the experience and enjoyment of language. Begin explicit teaching of metalanguage in meaningful contexts, based on the needs and abilities of pupils.		Use grammatical terms to talk about how language works at the text level and during editing and self-correction.				Revisit and reinforce grammatical terms learned previously.				
	Grammar at Word, Phrase and Sentence Levels	Apply knowledge of grammatical rules at the word, phrase and sentence levels.						Revisit grammatical rules learned previously. Identify errors to address recurring language errors and develop greater control in the use of language for speaking, writing and representing.				
	Grammar at Text Level			Use cohesive devices and grammatical structures to create links across different clauses, sentences and paragraphs. Identify and apply knowledge of language features in different types of texts during speaking, writing and representing. Show understanding of how the purposeful use of language shapes meaning in texts.				Apply knowledge of cohesive devices and grammatical structures to achieve coherence in texts. Apply knowledge of language features of texts and reproduce them in a full range of texts, including a mixture of types and forms. Show understanding of how the purposeful use of language shapes meaning in texts.				
Vocabulary	Use of Terms	Focus on the experience and enjoyment of language. Begin explicit teaching of metalanguage in meaningful contexts, based on the needs and abilities of pupils.		Use vocabulary terms to talk about how language works at the text level and during editing and self-correction.				Revisit and reinforce vocabulary terms learned previously.				
	Development of Rich Vocabulary	Develop vocabulary through exposure to rich texts and extensive reading.		Develop vocabulary through the use of print and online resources.				Develop vocabulary through extensive reading and learn words specific to content areas/ subjects.				
		Use various learner strategies to deduce the meaning of words.										
						Recognise the playful use of words in spoken and written language.		Recognise the playful use of words in a wider range of texts in spoken and written language.				
	Use of Vocabulary	Use words appropriate for purpose, audience, context and culture.										
				Recognise and use literary language.				Use and recognise the more sophisticated literary language used by writers to achieve meaning and impact.				

Overview Charts

Progression of Skills from Primary 5 FEL to Secondary 4N(T)

AREA OF LANGUAGE LEARNING	FOCUS AREAS	PRIMARY		SECONDARY			
		FEL		LOWER SECONDARY		UPPER SECONDARY	
		P5	P6	S1N(T)	S2N(T)	S3N(T)	S4N(T)
Listening and Viewing	**Listening and Viewing Closely with a Positive Disposition**	Develop a positive disposition by listening and viewing attentively for a sustained period, with empathy and respect, and by indicating response appropriately in a range of communicative contexts and interactions.					
		Develop perception and recognition of sounds and words in context through identification of key words, prosodic features and non-fluency features of spoken language.		Strengthen perception and recognition of words in context through identification of key words, prosodic features and non-fluency features of spoken language.			
		Listen and view for understanding by drawing on prior knowledge and contextual clues, including semiotic features, and applying a range of listening and viewing skills and learner strategies to interpret texts.				Listen and view for understanding increasingly more complex information by applying the full range of listening and viewing skills and learner strategies.	
	Listening and Viewing Critically	Listen and view critically by making connections between parts of texts and analysing different semiotic features in texts, determining the credibility of sources, and using comprehension monitoring strategies while listening and viewing.		Listen and view critically by applying the full range of critical listening and viewing skills and strategies, including evaluating the relevance of information, and using comprehension monitoring strategies while listening and viewing.			
	Listening and Viewing Extensively	Listen to, view and respond to texts for different purposes in a variety of contexts for enjoyment and understanding, and apply knowledge from texts to other areas of language learning.					

C **Contextualisation** involves designing learning tasks and activities for students to learn language in authentic and meaningful contexts. For example, lessons will be planned around learning outcomes, a theme or a type of text to help students use related linguistic and non-linguistic skills, grammatical items, structures and vocabulary appropriately in spoken and written language using different semiotic modes to suit purpose, audience, context and culture.

L **Learner-centredness** means putting learners at the heart of the teaching and learning process and empowering them. It involves differentiating teaching according to students' readiness, interests and learning profiles. It also requires employing effective pedagogies to engage students, strengthen their language development and stretch their potential.

L **Learning-focused Interaction** entails providing a rich and responsive learning environment for communication. It explicitly fosters oral communication skills and focuses on achieving learner and learning outcomes. It actively engages students by encouraging participation, interaction and boosting their confidence in the use of language. It promotes collaboration and rapport among learners from different socio-cultural backgrounds by fostering positive relationships among students. This can be accomplished by creating a positive classroom culture, for example, through building trust among students, establishing clear expectations and routines, and maintaining positive discipline by encouraging fair and appropriate behaviour in EL lessons.

I **Integration** involves teaching the receptive skills, productive skills, grammar and vocabulary in an integrated way, with one set of skills building on another, using texts from relevant print, non-print and digital networked sources, to provide different perspectives and meaningful connections, including to the wider contexts of language use.

P **Process Orientation** sees the teacher modelling, scaffolding and differentiating the learning processes for the development of language skills and knowledge about language, while guiding students to put together their final spoken, written and/or multimodal products.

S To achieve **Spiral Progression**, the teacher instructs, revises and revisits skills, grammatical items, structures and various types and forms of texts, including multimodal and hybrid texts, at increasing levels of difficulty and sophistication.

A — Raising Awareness

Motivate learning and help students pay attention to what is to be learnt. Help them make connections with what they already know by activating prior knowledge.

Co — Structuring Consolidation

Revisit and reinforce what has been learnt.

L — Facilitating Assessment for Learning (AfL)

Identify students' readiness for learning, interests and learning profiles. Monitor their learning and provide timely and useful feedback for improving learning and self-assessment.

A — Enabling Application

Teach language in authentic contexts of use and model its use. Let students learn through working collaboratively with the teacher and other students.

D — Guiding Discovery

Facilitate discovery by prompting, posing questions and supporting the process by which students can learn about a skill, strategy, process or rule without prior or explicit instruction.

E — Instructing Explicitly

Explain and clarify a skill, strategy or process directly and systematically, in addition to teaching it in contexts of meaningful use.