

# A Blended Learning Solution For Developing Communicative Competence

**Simon Buckland**  
Director of Curriculum Development  
Wall Street Institute International

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**Wall Street** INSTITUTE  
SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

# Overview

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1. **Wall Street Institute: company and student profile**
2. **An introduction to Blended Learning**
3. **The Wall Street Institute approach to Blended Learning**
4. **Some methodological considerations**
5. **Conclusions and discussion points**

# WSI Student and Company Profile

# WSI Students

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- In non-English-speaking countries
- Adult, mostly professional (aged 25-35)
- Studied English at school
- “Sub-functional” at communicating in spoken English
- Typically Lower Elementary-Lower Intermediate
- English for career/professional purposes
- Busy, other commitments (time-poor)

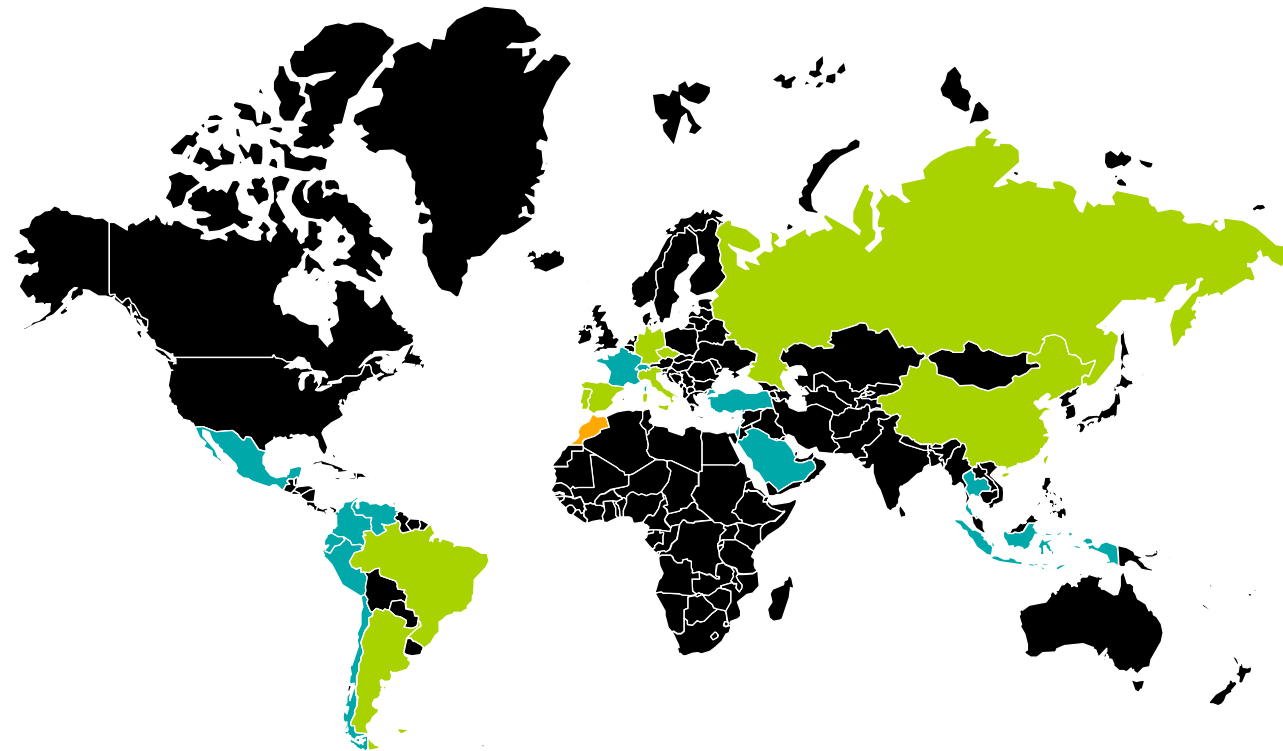
# WSI Numbers

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- **160,000+ students**
- **28 countries/territories**
- **402 centers (schools) – 62 in France**
- **Founded in 1972**
- **Blended learning method since 1981**
- **(Partially) computer-based learning since 1992**

# WSI around the world

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- Company Owned Locations
- Franchised Locations
- Launch Pending –Morocco

# What WSI students are looking for

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- **Spoken English**
- **Business/professional focus**
- **Significant boost to ability to communicate in English**
- **Contact with English speakers and English-speaking environment**
- **Flexible timetable**
- **Time-efficient and cost-effective**

# An introduction to Blended Learning

# An introduction to Blended Learning

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## Two views from training experts

- ... the use of two or more distinct methods ... blending classroom instruction with online instruction, access to a coach, simulations, on-the-job training, informal sessions ...  
*(Eliot Masie)*
- Blended learning seems to mean ... some e-learning and some classroom learning. No one wants to spend that much on e-learning and people ... want to preserve what they have, so they have made up this nice name for not changing much ...  
*(Roger Schank)*

# An introduction to Blended Learning

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## Waves of technology in learning

- **Writing (manuscripts/scrolls)**
- **Printing (textbooks)**
- **Broadcast media (distance learning)**
- **Consumer storage media (home learning)**
- **PC and CD-ROM (published e-learning)**
- **Internet (two-way, community e-learning)**

# An introduction to Blended Learning

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## Higher education – the first example

- **Self-instruction**
  - library
  - textbook
  - online
- **Classes with teachers**
  - lectures
  - tutorials
  - online (distance degrees)
- **Modular/credit system**
  - flexibility
  - variable length of course
  - distance degrees

# An introduction to Blended Learning

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## Origins of Blended Learning

- **PC/CD-ROM:**
  - Back-up/practice/information on CD-ROM
  - Instructor-led sessions for assessment/trouble-shooting/activation + motivation
- **Internet:**
  - Same, plus creation of learner communities
  - User-created and -rated learning content
  - Online instructor sessions?

# An introduction to Blended Learning

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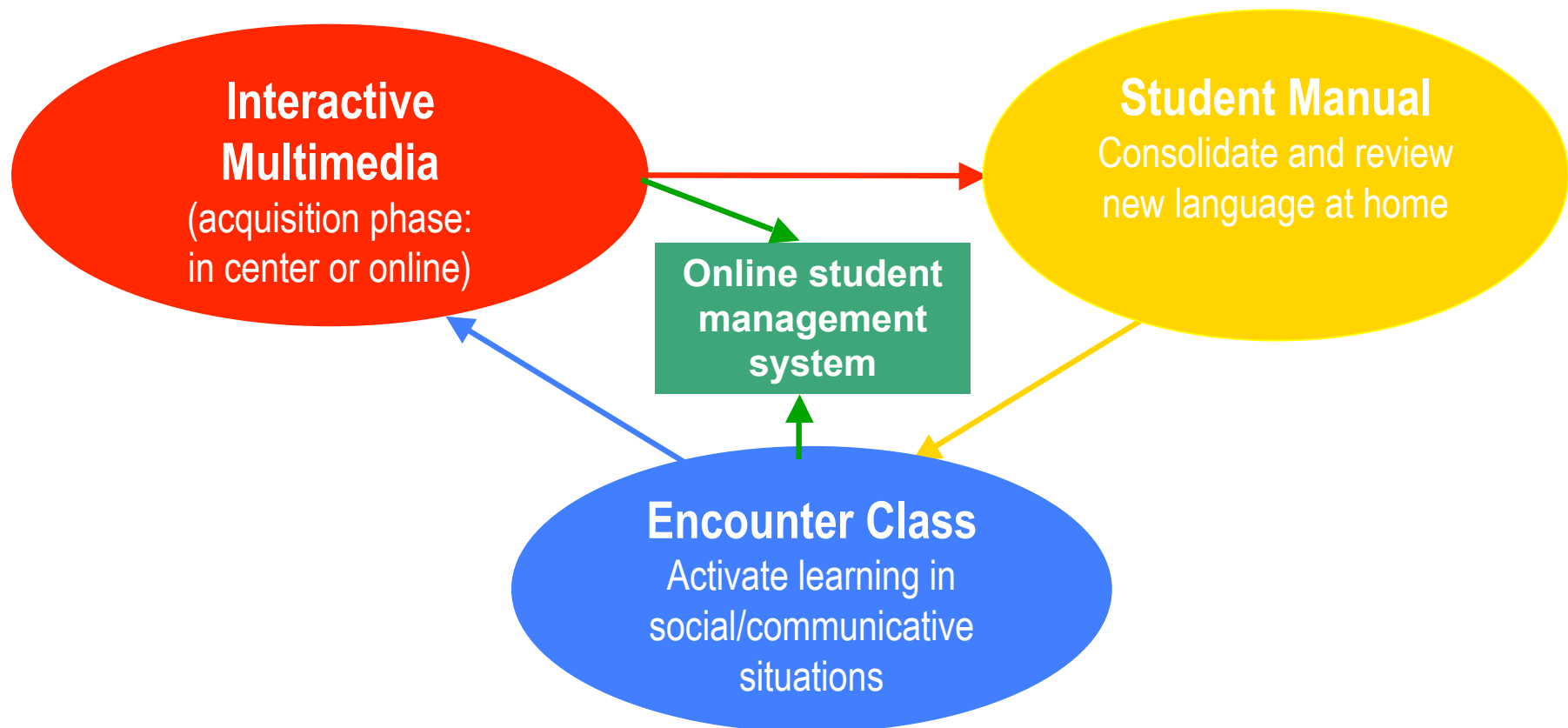
## Benefits of Blended Learning

- **Efficient use of limited resources**
  - Routine practice, exploration, information acquisition in self-access
  - Instructor sessions for activation, feedback, assessment
  - Enable student to follow optimum learning path without training/preparation
- **Leverage technology**
  - Instruction, practice, simulation in online mode
  - Collaborative learning, learning communities
  - Track and monitor learner progress
  - Provide data-based performance tracking
- **Maintain the human and social dimension**
  - Pure e-learning becomes mechanical, disconnected, not “convivial”
  - Face-to-face social contact reinforces community, motivation (online?)
  - Instructor/learner contact identifies problems, disaffection

# The Wall Street Institute approach to Blended Learning

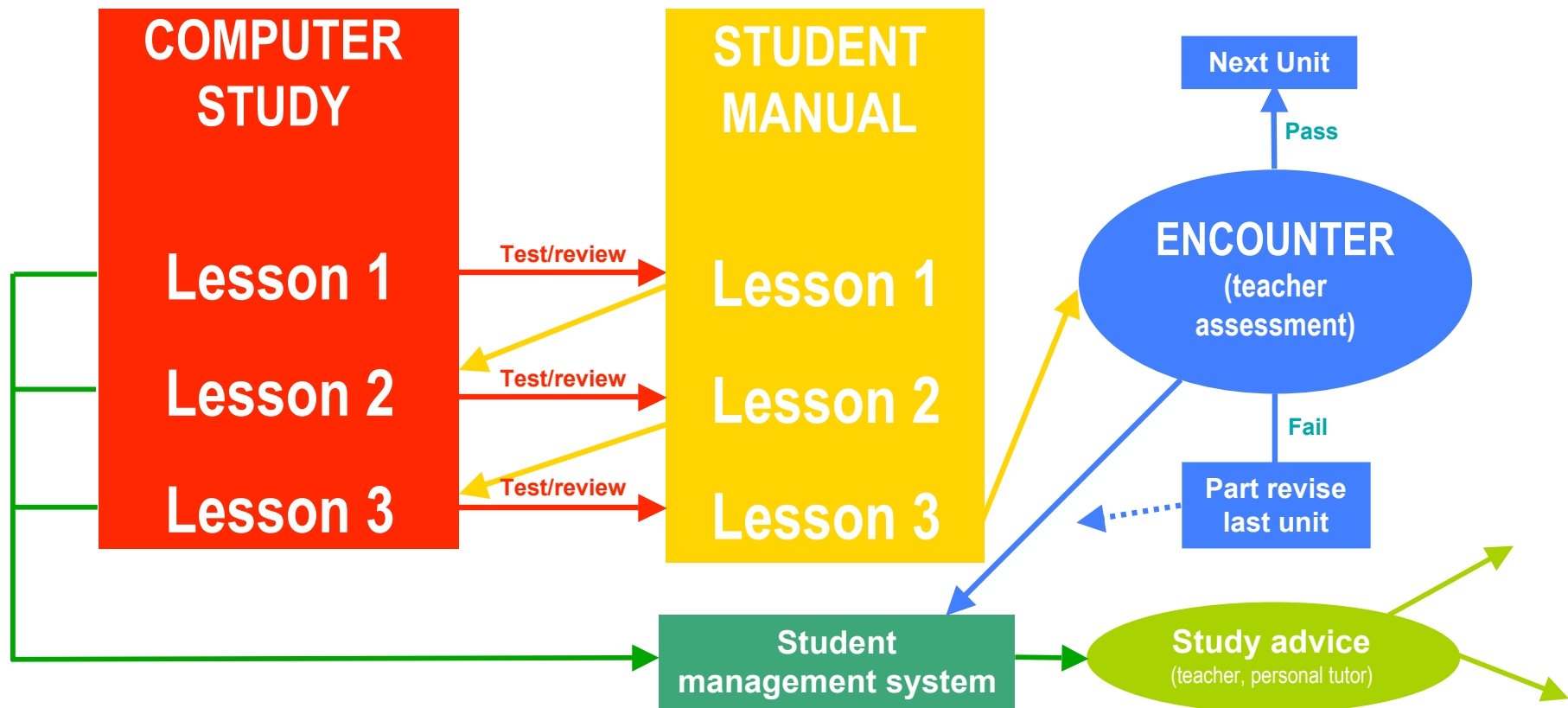
# The WSI approach to Blended Learning

## The Basic Formula



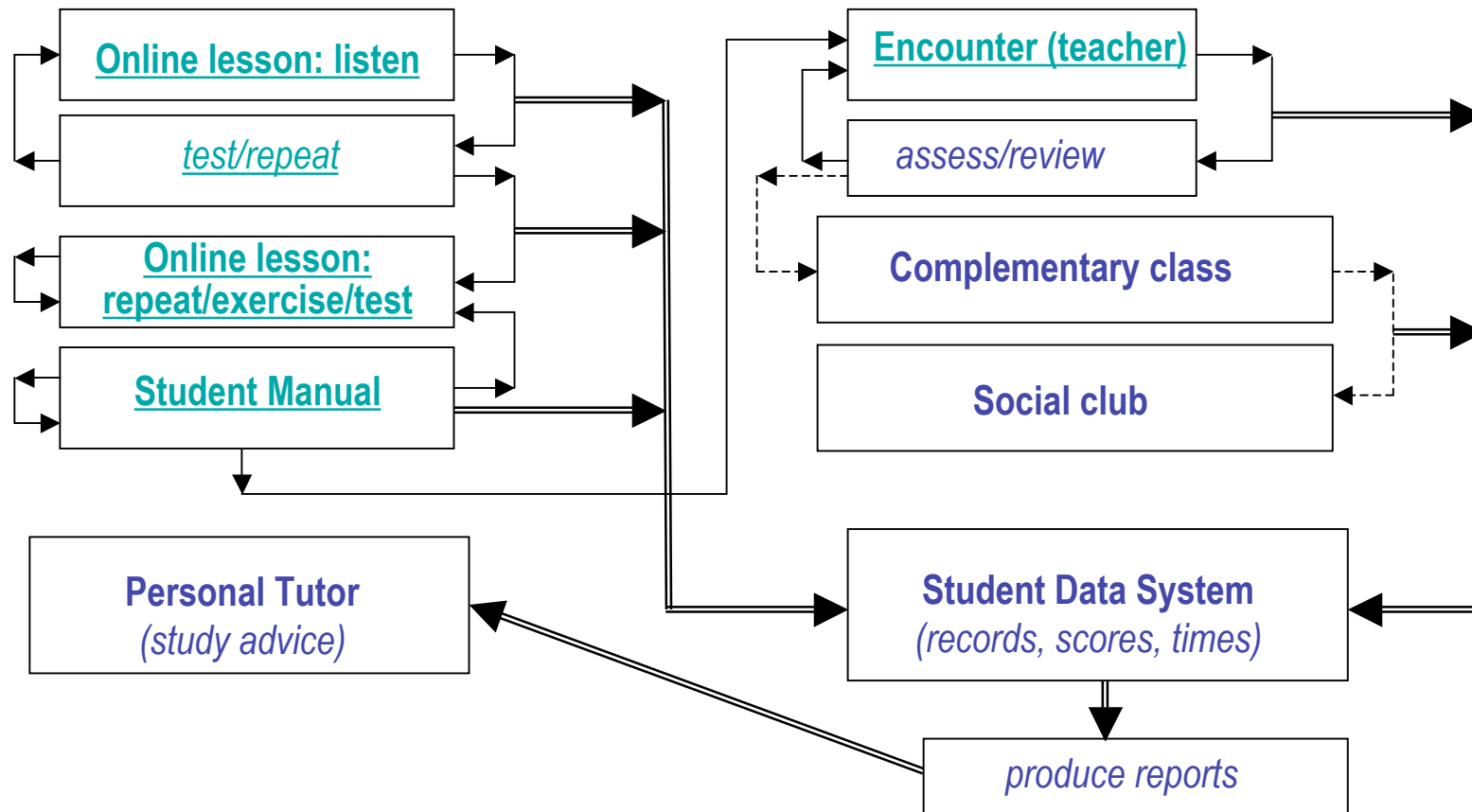
# The WSI approach to Blended Learning

## Integrated curriculum and assessment system



# The WSI approach to Blended Learning

## “Under the hood”



# Theory and Methodology

# Theory and methodology

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*From Ellis: Principles of Instructed Language Learning  
(Elsevier, 2004)*

- **If SLA is to offer teachers guidance there is a need to bite the bullet and proffer advice**
- **... [I present] my own provisional specifications in the form of principles.**
- **I hope ... that they will provide a basis for argument and for reflection.**

# Theory and methodology

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## Ellis's "10 principles"

#1: ... formulaic expressions and rule-based competence

#2: ... focus predominantly on meaning

#3: ... also focus on form

#4: ... predominantly directed at ... implicit knowledge of the L2 while not neglecting explicit knowledge

#5: ... the learner's 'built-in syllabus'

#6: ... extensive L2 input

#7: ... opportunities for output

#8: ... opportunity to interact in the L2

#9: ... individual differences in learners

#10: In assessing ... examine free as well as controlled production

# Theory and methodology

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## Methodological requirements

Formulaic expressions plus rule-based competence

Focus predominantly on meaning

Focus on form

Extensive input

Output + interaction

Cater for individual differences in learners

Opportunities to produce and correct output

Interaction and negotiation of meaning

Examine free as well as controlled production

## Blended learning system

By-rote repetition + cognitively-oriented exercises

Online dramas, task-based teacher lessons

Cognitively-oriented exercises, printed manuals

50%+ listening in self-access

Small-group classes

Modular, learner-paced system

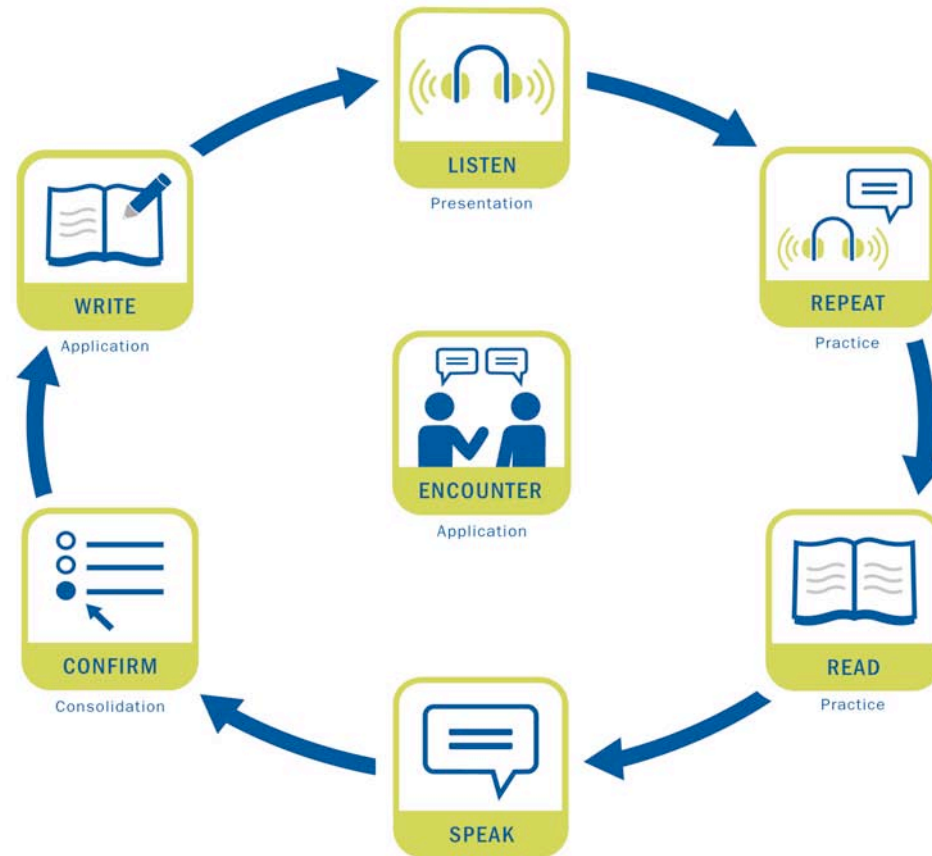
Variety of teacher-led classes

Online “role plays” and communicative activities in class

“Blended” assessment

# Theory and Methodology

## The WSI “Acquisition Cycle”



# Conclusions and Discussion Points

# Conclusions and Discussion Points

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- You don't need €1 million
- Blended = integrated
- Enable learners to work away from the classroom
- Printed element is optional (though nice)
- Internet provides the best way in
- Develop learning community (online + offline)

Thank  
you