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EXTRANJEROS MENCIÓN ENSEÑANZA DE INGLÉS**

**TÍTULO DE LA MONOGRAFÍA**

**IMPLEMENTING EMBODIED LEARNING METHOD IN AN EFL CLASS TO  
ENGAGE STUDENTS WITHIN THE LEARNING PROCESS**

**PREVIO A LA OBTENCIÓN DEL TÍTULO DE MAGÍSTER EN  
PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y EXTRANJEROS  
MENCIÓN ENSEÑANZA DE INGLÉS**

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**ADVISOR'S APPROVAL**

In my role as Advisor of the research paper entitled “ **IMPLEMENTING EMBODIED LEARNING METHOD IN AN EFL CLASS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS WITHIN THE LEARNING PROCESS** prepared by **LIC.ANDREA ALEXANDRA LABANDA VITERI**, an undergraduate student of the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages Major, at School of Educational Sciences and Languages at Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena, I declare that after oriented, studied and reviewed the project, I approve it in its entirety, because it meets the requirements and is sufficient for its submission to the evaluation of the academic tribunal.

**Sincerely,**



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## **DEDICATION**

From the bottom of my heart, I dedicate him:

To God, who has filled me up with wisdom and with his infinitive goodness and love, allowed me to achieve this desired goal.

To my family, for being an essential part of my life, despite the distance, they have always been present with their prayers and motivating words, which have encouraged me to move forward. They are the ones who, like me, we are full of joy to see how, with the grace and blessing of God I have achieved another important goal in my life, growing up in the professional field.

## **THE AUTHOR**

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First of all, I would like to extend my gratitude to God, who has allowed me to achieve this goal, for keeping me healthy, full of energy which is what I need to continue day to day.

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**ANDREA LABANDA**

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## RESUMEN

Este estudio se centró en demostrar que implementar el método de aprendizaje incorporado en una clase en donde el inglés es estudiado como lengua extranjera, ayuda a que los estudiantes se involucren dentro del proceso de aprendizaje, para esto se realizó un estudio descriptivo y bibliográfico, que ayudó a examinar y sintetizar la información sobre el mismo.

Después de haber leído toda la información recopilada, el investigador ratifica que, este método ayuda a los estudiantes a participar dentro del proceso de aprendizaje, diferentes estudios de investigación se han llevado a cabo teniendo efectos positivos como: el rendimiento académico y emocional de los estudiantes ha mejorado, la retención y la adquisición de nuevas expresiones y palabras ha sido mayor que antes.

El método tradicional, no ha tenido un gran impacto en la adquisición de un segundo idioma, es por eso que se deben implementar métodos innovadores y sofisticados en una clase en donde el inglés es estudiado como lengua extranjera, el método de aprendizaje incorporado es un enfoque en donde permite que los maestros vuelvan sus clases interactivas. Integrar la mente, corazón y cuerpo juega un papel fundamental dentro del proceso, estos aspectos deben funcionar como un todo, siendo este el reto que los docentes deben superar, en este estudio presenta una visión clara de cómo integrar: mente, corazón y cuerpo, con el fin de involucrar a los estudiantes en el aprendizaje.

Para concluir, este estudio demuestra que el aprendizaje incorporado involucra a los estudiantes dentro del proceso, la información es clara y tiene ilustraciones para facilitar su comprensión.

**Palabras clave:** aprendizaje incorporado, cognición, inglés como lengua extranjera, retención, adquisición del aprendizaje.

## ABSTRACT

This study was focused on demonstrating that, implementing embodied learning method in an EFL class, engage students within the learning process, in order to get this aim, a descriptive and bibliographic study was done, which helped the researcher to examine and synthesize all data related to embodied learning, to present the most relevant information about this approach, after having read all the information the researcher ratify that implementing embodied learning help students to engage in the learning process, different studies have been carried out and in all of these studies, this approach has had a positive effect, such as students' academic and emotional performance is increased, students retention and acquiring new expressions or word is greater than before.

The Traditional method has not had a big impact on acquiring a second language, that is why innovative and sophisticated methods need to be implemented in an EFL class, embodied learning method is one approach that can allow teachers to become their classes interactive. Integrating mind, heart and body play an important role in the learning process, all of these aspects should work as a whole, and that is the challenge that teachers should overcome, but in this study, you can find a clear view of how to integrate body and mind, in order to engage students in learning.

To conclude, the study demonstrates that, implementing embodied learning in an EFL class engages students within the learning process, the information is clear, and it has illustrations to facilitate the understanding of this approach.

**Key words:** embodied learning, EFL (English as a foreign language), retention. Learning acquisition.

## INTRODUCTION

Teachers should be wise at the time of getting students engaged in the learning process, different methods can help to become this process interactive and interesting, the method that the researcher wants to talk about is Embodied Learning, which is an educational method that involves using the whole body in the learning process.

Embodied learning method involved the use of the whole body such as mind, body, physical action, cognition, and emotions as part of the lesson, in that way students have the chance to use all their creativity to accomplish an activity and at the same time teachers have the opportunity to become their classes more attractive and interesting. The students-teacher interaction in embodied learning class is more satisfying, and effective. It helps that the interaction prevails through good communication both inside and outside the classroom.

Applying this method, students will be fostered to use senses, perceptions, and mind-body reactions, that is the close relationship between cognition and learning, which involves acquiring knowledge and skills through experiences, and study, for that reason integrating body and mind plays a vital role into the learning process, teachers have to consider this method to implement in their lesson plans.

The researcher considers that students should learn as they learn their mother tongue, teachers have to consider that children have acquired the mother tongue by exploring things, discussing using the mind and the body, in these factors embodied learning method is focused. If teachers get students emotionally, intellectually, physically and, socially engaged, teachers will succeed in the teaching process and so, students will also succeed in the learning process.

# CHAPTER I

## **TITLE:**

Implementing Embodied Learning Method in an EFL Class to Engage Students within the Learning Process.

## **PRESENTATION**

Implementing embodied learning in an EFL class is advantageous, there are many positive factors on which teachers should focus to help students in the learning process. According to ( Darling-Hammond et al.,2019) “That function coherently and consistently to build strong relationships and learning communities; support social, and cognitive development; and provide a system of support as needed for healthy development, productive relationships and academic progress”

Undoubtedly; language learning is a complex process, for that reason, the body and mind play an essential role in the learning process; if the body is physically well, the mind will be active and ready to learn and acquire all the possible knowledge, on the other hand, if something wrong happens with the body, it will also affect the mental performance, bringing together difficulties in the learning process.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- To demonstrate the effectiveness of implementing embodied learning method in an EFL classroom to engage students within the Learning process.
- To illustrate how embodied learning method is related to students’ engagement within the Learning process.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

This research aims to describe the effectiveness of implementing embodied learning method in an EFL classroom to engage students within the Learning process. Teaching and Learning in an EFL class is not simple at all, but with the appropriate strategies or methods, it can be successful; students most of the time feel bored and frustrated within the learning, and even do, some of them have quit their studies, just because they do not get the fully English understanding, considering the various difficulties students have with the English language learning, through this research, the researcher wants to demonstrate that, if teachers apply embodied learning in the classes, they will get proficient students with higher academic performance.

This research study will give teachers another view how they can get students engaged with the learning, if teachers implement embodied learning method as part of the classroom, they will notice the radical changes that students will have in academically and emotionally aspect.

Likewise, this research also will contribute to the social field, implementing embodied learning students just not become proficient but also will help to develop other cognitive social skills, which are necessary to have learners with self-confidence and with higher increase self-esteem, getting that; students will love and enjoy the learning process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology is an essential part of any research study, that is why the researcher will detail below the used methodology for this study.

**Descriptive or cross sectional study** is called in that way because it helped the researcher to describe and demonstrate that implementing embodied learning in an EFL class engages students within the learning process. This kind of study is conducted to demonstrate associations or relationships between variables.

**Bibliographic study** because it was based on reading, analyzing and interpreting theoretical positions in order to obtain relevant information that validates implementing embodied learning method is useful to engage students with the learning process, say it differently it contributed to building up the literature review.

## **CONTENT**

It is important to point out that, during the 21<sup>st</sup> century, pedagogical science has tried to introduce innovative methodologies in traditional education, considering the complex and changing reality that learners face every day throughout the learning process, and one methodology is embodied learning which helps students to engage with the learning process.

In chapter II, the researcher gives enough arguments validating, implementing learning in an EFL class is effective to engage students within the learning process, and in chapter III, the researcher will present some conclusions and recommendations to be considered by novel researchers or teachers who intend to apply embodied learning to the class.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **EMBODIED LEARNING METHOD**

Back then, the learning experience was conceived just as a mental process, is implemented exclusively mental process: reading, listening and, repeating, which divides the mind and the body. Fortunately, this method was almost immediately absorbed by the main school practices in the United States and Europe.

According to ( Edgington, Matthews, & Channon, 2018) “There are a number of ways in which physical movement in lectures and seminars can contribute positively towards students’ critical, intellectual development”, based on that, the researcher says, implementing embodied learning method in an EFL class, teachers can get active and engage students with their learning, helping them to develop their critical thinking skills, which is necessary to increase students’ self-esteem, and so students can feel more confident to participate actively in class, getting not just great academic performance, but teachers will also train students who have self- confidence and it will help them to succeed in life.

(Lazoudis et al., 2016 as was cited in Gavilanes, 2020) “Embodied learning is an innovative pedagogical theory of learning, which focuses on using the body in educational practices”, in view of to this claim, using the body is essential in concept of representation and communication, emphasizing the body as a learning tool, because if the body is ready to learn the heart and mind will be connected to it, and so the learning will be fruitful. For that reason, the educational practices should be innovated, and by applying embodied learning method teachers could notice how students ‘performance will increase little by little.



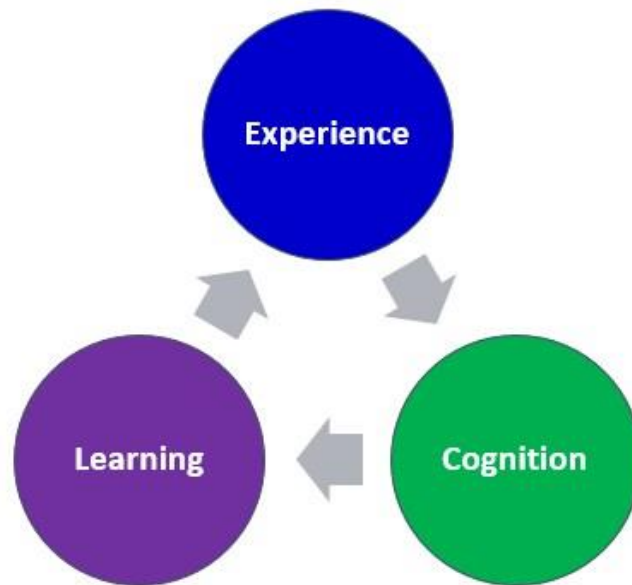
Previous studies have shown that implementing embodied learning in an EFL class should be emphasized by teachers. On Sanako Blog (2021), it is possible to differentiate the concept of body and mind according to the traditional method and embodied learning method. In contrast, the traditional method separates the body and mind, while embodied learning aims to renew school practices through innovative and sophisticated activities that allow students to be motivated and integrate body and mind in the learning process.

“Learning comes at the end of a series of cognitive processes. You experience, you process, and you learn. Hence learning is a result of cognition. You process information and you generate new knowledge as a result of the processing”... (The Peak Performance Center, 2020).

To put it differently, the learning process involves absorbing, processing, and applying the knowledge, likewise, to engage students in the learning process, teachers should consider implementing embodied learning method because it helps to develop all the necessary skills, which must be integrated with the body, facilitating the learning process.

## Figure 1

*Cycle of Cognition.*



**Source:** Figure taken from a web page The Peak Performance Center:  
**Elaborated by:** The Peak Performance Center: Cognition and Learning.

According to Arioli (2018), the social cognition aspect is crucial to social interaction, having these skills developed, learners will feel free to share and express their emotions, participating actively during class, and that is a big problem that teachers face in the class, because students do not feel motivated to participate, and for that reason, implementing embodied learning is effective on engaging students with the learning process.

Referring to the view of Kosmas (2021) who considers embodied learning (EL) as an emerging method that focuses on bodily movements in the learning process, Kosmas argues that, combining movements with technologies, provides strategies and methods for delivering a more engaged and interactive lesson. This approach is part of the solution for the academic problems that teachers and students face every day, implementing this method will facilitate

the learning process, it allows teachers to look for interactive and engaging activities which will attract students' attention and interest in learning.

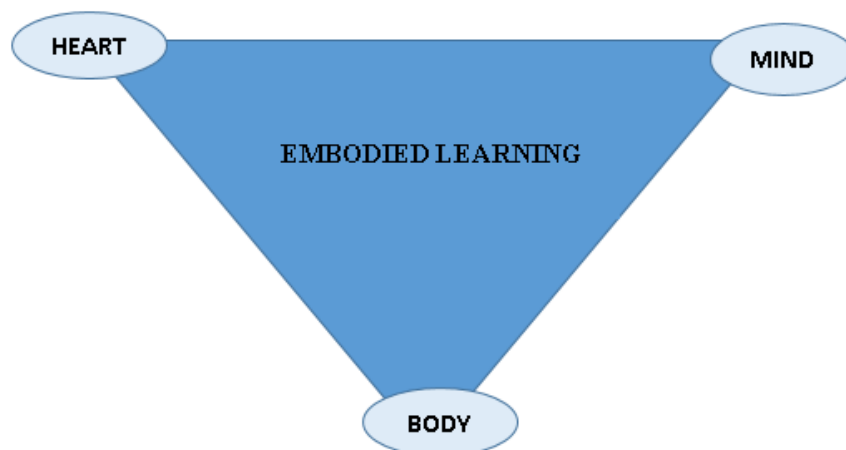
## **PRINCIPLES OF EMBODIED LEARNING METHOD**

According to Poskua (2018), embodied learning has some principles; an illustration was done to understand how heart, mind, and body are related in the learning process. Body, and mind cooperate in the learning process, action and thinking are intertwined and also there is a connection between movements and concepts, definitely, embodied learning method is essential in the learning process.

Integrating heart, mind and body must be fostered by teachers, because if learners do not have their minds focus on learning, any knowledge could be acquired, and in the same way if learners block their minds, they will not produce any kind of learning and it will become mindless learning.

### **Figure 2.**

*Principles of embodied learning.*



**Source:** It is adapted from an online conference. Embodied Learning as a Facilitation Technique in an Online Classroom.

**Elaborated by:** The author, 2022.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF EMBODIED LEARNING.**

According to the study carried out by Smymaiou et al., (2018), there are some primary characteristic of embodied learning, these are:

- a) sensorimotor activity.
- b) relevance of gestures to theme that is to be reproduced.
- c) emotional involvement.

In the study, they refer that, the sensorimotor system and body movements are involved in the process of embodied learning and the perceived stimuli can be converted into a more stable memory and cognitive demonstrations. It is also mentioned that embodied learning involves coordinating movements either of the body or the whole body, to achieve a goal combining the students' sensorimotor activity and their emotional involvement.

In 2017, Foglia has concluded that, the body is capable of playing an important role in thinking, the cognitive process, the comprehension of concepts, and acting in the world. According to Payne & Costas (2020), body movements and senses should be integrated to have success in the learning process, due to didactic and physical interactive activities being included in the teaching and learning process.

Lindgren& Glenberg (2013 as was cited in Payne & Costas, 2018); supports that embodied learning not only includes the body itself but also the senses, mind, and brain. Hence, the connection between these aspects is essential if teachers want to have students engaged with the learning.

## **SKILLS INTEGRATION IN EMBODIED LEARNING**

“The need for strong, supportive relationships that enable students to take advantage of productive learning opportunities in cognitive, social, and emotional domains, plus additional supports, (physical, social, emotional, and /or academic)[...] to maintain a positive development” (Darling-Hammond et al.,2019)”. Given this claim, the researcher considers that the integration of the different aspects is necessary to have proficient students, with the higher development of the cognitive skills, which are fundamental in the learning process. To have a clear idea about what I mean, let’s look at figure 3, where the four areas such as Supportive environment, Productive Instructional Strategies, Social and emotional development, and Systems of support need to be interrelated to give learners the chance to enjoy the learning process.

Notably, all of these are interactive and interrelated and must be designed to work together as a whole and, teachers must select the appropriate activities to motivate and enhance students, developing and integrating the different areas.

**Figure 3**

*SoLD principles of practice*



**Source:** It is taken from the research article. Implications for educational practice of the science of learning and development.

**Elaborated by:** Darling-Hammond et al.,2019. Applied Developmental Science.

Thereby, teachers should foster and help students to develop cognitive skills and integrate them with the body, because there is a connection between movements and concepts, and this

can be done, by implementing embodied learning method in the class, in that way, teachers will engage students within the learning process.

The results obtained by Schmidta et al., (2019), in their research paper entitled Embodied learning in the classroom: Effects on primary school children's attention and foreign language vocabulary learning, demonstrate that learners have produced higher learning gains than physically active learning and more than the traditional sedentary type of learning. Embodied learning condition yielded better memory performance than the sedentary condition, underlining the importance of including physical activities in the learning of a new language, and that is what this approach allows teachers, interactive and innovative activities can be planned to engage students in the learning process.

### **IMPLEMENTING EMBODIED LEARNING IN AN EFL CLASS**

Focused on (Smyrniou et al.,2018), "Cooperation in school environment increases the students' learning outcomes, offers motivation and further enhances their social skills", it does not matter the environment, either at schools or in a virtual class, cooperation plays an essential role in Embodied Learning. Considering these benefits, teachers can bear in mind this approach to implement in the class.

As well as, implementing Embodied Learning, students' participation in the learning procedure is not only limited to the students being physically in class, because students' response also depends on other factors such as personality, physical presence, mental development, sensorimotor ability, and past experiences. On the one side, students have the chance to expand what they know. On the other side, teachers should take advantage of the students' previous knowledge to help them to learn meaningfully.

In fact, “Embodied learning approach is based on the idea of an inseparable link between body and mind in learning, aiming for teaching methods that promote children’s active engagement in the classroom” (Kosmas et al., 2019), considering this claim, implementing embodied learning in an EFL class is not simple but neither impossible, due to, this approach is flexible, and different technological resources can be used to apply this method in the class. Several studies support that implementing embodied learning in an EFL class engages students in the learning process, for example, in the study carried out by Kosmas et al., (2019) shows that, there was a significant effect on children’s cognitive skills and academic performance. In 2020 Gavilanes has concluded that, integrated learning and the human body can play a key role in the cognitive process, students’ academic performance was improved, by implementing embodied learning, and in the same way, the acquisition of new vocabulary was significant.

“Embodied interaction improves connectivity within the brain. Along the same lines, other studies in this area have pointed out the link between movement and specific words demonstrating children acquire new vocabulary better when they connect a movement with a word” (Zaphiris & Kosmas, 2020). It is worth highlighting this claim, because learners always learn and put more interest in activities where they can connect with the physical movement, in that way they increase the retention capacity because they learn by doing, which has a close relation with experiential learning, where active, sensory, somatic experience is the key.

Lazoudis et al., (2016 as was cited in Gavilanes, 2020); mentioned some elements to consider at the time of intend to plan an activity implementing embodied learning method.



- a. Cognitive involvement in the topic, cognitive processes
- b. Body movements
- c. Expressions of the feelings of the students
- d. Clarify of instructions
- e. Holistic design of activities
- f. Cooperation of students
- g. Students' abilities to apply acquired knowledge to new environments.

It is worth mentioning that, all of these elements are essential to engage students in the learning process through interactive and innovative activities, where they feel motivated to participate actively in the class, once more time, it is necessary to mention that to have meaningful learning, students must be motivated to learn, that is the key.

Considering the different elements, teachers have lots of options in order to develop an interactive activity, and become the class dynamic and interesting. An important point at the time of teaching is that, teachers should use all that they have around, for example, if teachers want to teach about nature, teachers could plan activities outside the classroom where students can observe, manipulate the different objects around them and it will help students to learn and retain information, and thus, acquiring new knowledge will be successful.

The teaching and learning process does not involve just teaching any content, it goes beyond, to have good teaching and learning practices, teachers must be updated, looking for strategies, methodologies that can contribute to the process and at the same time facilitate students acquisition of new skills and knowledge.

Acquiring or developing skills, is not complex at all, if teachers look for the appropriate strategies it will result in easy and enjoyable, there are a lot of interactive activities and interactive online resources that teachers can implement in their classes to get students engaged in learning, that is why embodied learning is flexible.

To conclude, based on the different authors' points of view, implementing embodied learning in an EFL class, is effective in engaging students in the learning process, because this approach allows students to develop cognitive social skills, that help them to increase their self- confidence, and obviously it will help students to be motivated in learning, and that is the main purpose of teachers. Implementing embodied learning method is significant, because this approach integrates the whole body, in the learning process.

## CHAPTER III

### CONCLUSIONS:

- Once finished checking all the bibliographical resources about embodied learning method, and considering the different studies that have been carried, the researcher concluded that implementing embodied learning method in an EFL class is effective to engage students within the learning process.
- The researcher based on Poskua (2018), has concluded, that if there is no integration between heart, mind, and body, teachers will not succeed in the teaching and learning process, these principles must be working as a whole, because the cognitive process involved the mental factor and to acquire any kind of knowledge learners needs to be emotionally well.
- Another conclusion that the researcher wants to mention is that there is no better knowledge than the one that is acquired by doing, and that is what embodied learning allows, this approach gets students to learn on their own, integrating the body and mind is effective because students first, have to metalize what they want to reach, and the body is just a tool to get what they want.
- In conclusion, the researcher emphasizes the importance that cognitive skills have in the learning process, that is why social and emotional development should be prioritized in order to enhance students in the learning process.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Based on the studies, the researcher suggests to implement embodied learning in their classes because it is a way to become an interactive and interesting class, where all the students feel motivated with learning, there are many activities that can be used in such virtual and face to face class.
  
- Talking about activities, the researcher also recommends that before selecting the activities, first, teachers should be clear with what they want their students to learn about, and also should be considered the different elements the embodied learning method provides such as body movements, students expressions, students' abilities, and others, considering these factors is almost sure that the teaching and learning process will succeed.
  
- To finish with this part, the researcher highly recommends to change the environment, because a class not only can be developed in a classroom in a sedentary way, teachers could decide on going outside the classroom where students feel free and motivated to learn. Something important to keep in mind is that before to teach any topic, teachers must be aware of the students' emotional aspect, because the mind is the key, the body is just a tool to get what students want. That is why the researcher says, it is possible to turn the learning process into a funny and interesting process, where students love to learn.

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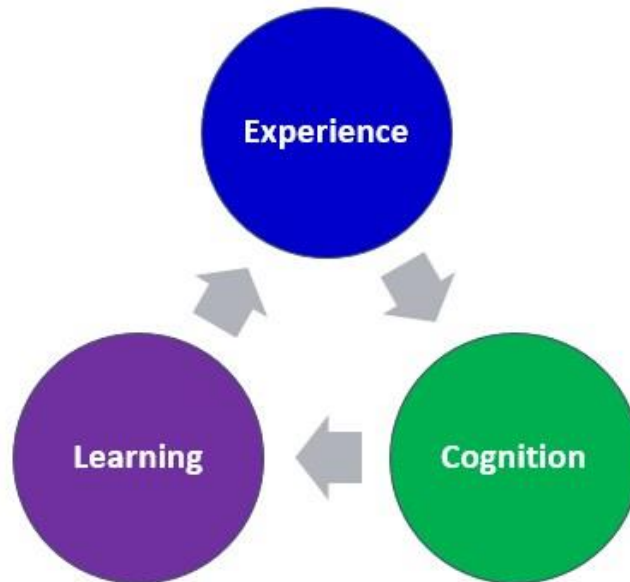
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## ANNEXES

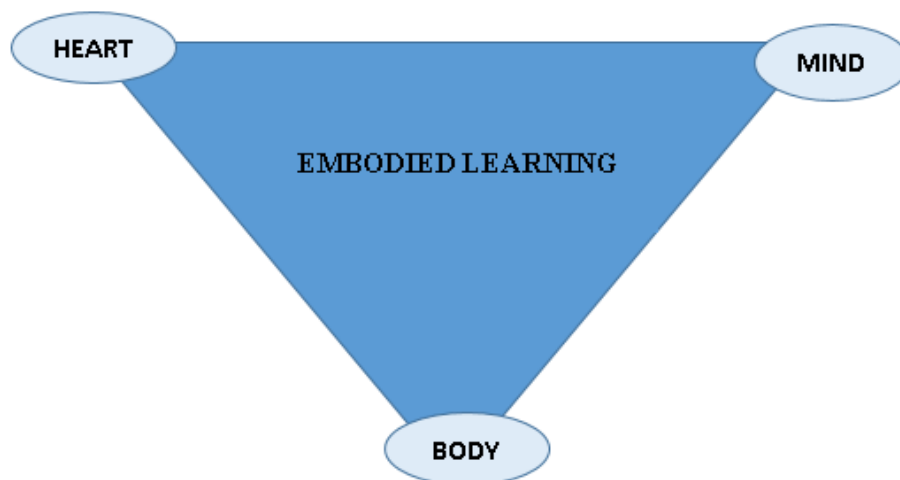
### Annex 1

*Cycle of cognition*



### Annex 2

*Principles of embodied learning.*



### Annex 3

#### SoLD principles of practice

