future learning language school

How is Future Learning different from traditional language schools?

How our junior students are taught and learn through technology:

The traditional English language schools all do things very similarly. The easiest way to distinguish FL from your average traditional language programme can be seen in the following table which mentions all the main areas of importance when attending a language programme.
It displays how technology is at the core of everything we do:

Future Learning	VS	Traditional Language School
100% Digital. Students receive their welcome packs in advance of arrival along with their @flireland.com email address. All information including digital maps, sample activities, pre arrival documents are located in student's cloud storage platform.	WELCOME PACK	Students receives a hardback copy welcome pack or folder at the airport or on the bus or at the meeting point upon arrival.
Student self-assessment using an online "can do" questionnaire supported by teacher assessed group communication task.	ENTRANCE TESTING	Multiple choice based, language knowledge tests supported by brief 1-1 interviews.
Technology enhanced learning is the use of technology to improve the access to learning, the effectiveness of teaching and the overall learning experience. Learning at FL is blended, which means we balance between online and offline learning through the use of: - ePortfolio - Tablet applications for language learning - Cloud-based learning resources developed by FL	LESSONS	Use of technology limited to internet research on project topics and occasional use of projectors and rarely the effective use of interactive boards.
Paperlight lessons. Students all must bring a tablet or smartphone on our course. No waste, environmentally friendly.	Materials	Use books which students are used to using in their home country. Lots of photocopied notes and wasted paper.
Learning is project-based, which means that students work collaboratively in groups and on real-life tasks which include: - Website Design - Filmmaking & Editing - Blogs & Interactive Maps These products are published online and links are shared with parents which mean they can see the students work in real time.	Learning	Teacher-led classes which do not engage student's creativity.
FL offers collaborative and creative learning environments where students work together to create the digital material that the lesson is based around. All lessons involve students working in international groups of 3-4 in classrooms that are set up to encourage group work. The lesson timing is also conducive to project work.	Collaboration	Collaboration is limited to controlled inauthentic pair-work activities in classrooms set up in a traditional U shape most of the time.
FL employs 'monitors' (the industry term) to assist in the classrooms as facilitators and helpers alongside the teachers. This is to help aid the students who might need help adapting to the technology and new method of learning and also gives us the scope to facilitate some students with specific learning difficulties.	Support staff (monitors)	We have not come across another school who employs monitors outside of the role of activities and cleaning.
FL is a research-led institution. Our approach is informed by and we seek to contribute to best educational practice.	Research	Summer schools develop through trial and error but rarely engage with research.
FL link the students' activities and weekend excursions to lessons. This means they use their smartphone/tablet to complete tasks and gather material which will then be inputted to their ePortfolio during class time. This encourages learning outside the classroom in a fun manner which students like. The theme of collaboration is continued through afternoon activities where students take part in team building exercises. The linking of lessons to activities is key to the success of the technology learning platforms being utilised in class. Where possible FL uses its links with Dublin's large tech companies to bring students on a field trip to their head offices.	ACTIVITIES & EXCURSIONS	Most schools offer the same activities - football, basketball, volleyball, table quizzes, karaoke, trip to the city etc. and have no direct link with the lessons. In some cases there will be a link between the full day excursion or culture of Ireland but in general it is not a strong link and is not thematic throughout the duration of a two, three or four week course.
Students order their lunch through our cloud based platform. This allows us to deliver exact information to our caterers before lessons start and ensures little waste and most importantly ensures portions are exact and students get what they would like.	LUNCH	Students often queue for long periods of time and those at the end are left with whatever is remaining.

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FL has received much attention within the sector both nationally and internationally where we are now noted to be the first language school which is truly delivering technology enhanced lessons.

The FL self developed certification

Traditional language schools all have a very similar certificates. FL have developed their own truly unique certificate which reflects the development of the students as whole, rather than looking at language skills in isolation. We feel this could be a benchmark for the sector moving forward. In addition to assessing language skills at the end of the course we also grade their 'Technology Skills' and 'Collaborative Skills' under a range of subheadings. This certification firmly shows our dedication and innovation in the field of technology enhanced English language learning and emphasises that our students are learning a different skillset to any other traditional language school student.

Teacher Training Workshops

FL organises tailor-made week long workshops for Primary and Secondary teachers based on their needs and the needs of their school. The focus of these workshops is to help schools get the most out of their technology/hardware by introducing teachers to the most successful approaches for using educational technology. FL mainly works with schools who have introduced one to one tablet devices.

FL has also introduced its 'Making Technology Work in the Classroom' course which is recognised by Erasmus+. During summer 2017 FL will bring European teachers from a range of countries to our summer school in Donabate to partake in these EU funded courses.

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