



Cyprus  
University of  
Technology

Language Centre

**Master's Thesis**

**Design Thinking and its Integration in an ESL classroom**

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**Limassol, May 2019**





CYPRUS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Language Centre in collaboration with the  
Department of Multimedia and Graphic Arts

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## Approval Form

Master's Thesis

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## **ABSTRACT**

Design-Thinking is a method becoming popular in education nowadays, aiming at allowing learners to engage, discover problems on a given topic and find a solution for it. This innovative method escapes from the traditional teaching methods used by educators, allowing learners to expand their knowledge by thinking, engaging and developing. This dissertation introduces the use of Design-Thinking in an English as a Second Language classroom (ESL). This research aims to illustrate how is Design-Thinking implemented in an ESL classroom through the use of design-based research and the collection of data through researcher`s classroom observations, student`s reflections and instructor`s reflection, what are students` perceptions of Design-Thinking towards the Design-Thinking activities introduced in the classroom, what role(s) do students and instructor encompass in an ESL Design-Thinking classroom and how is Design-Thinking implemented in an ESL classroom. It introduced learners to a number of Design-Thinking tasks which were implemented four times by the researcher/instructor. Within each implementation changes took place based on the collected results after each implementation in order to improve each activity. These changes, therefore, allow the instructor to discover whether or not design based activities can serve for a new way of teaching language learners a topic and escaping from the traditional teaching methods. The developed activities are to give educators a new point of view of design thinking as an example of what can be used in the language teaching environment. The activities were designed to meet the student's needs, aiming in helping them discover problems on a given topic, engage and work collaboratively on providing the correct solution to it. Favourable



results were collected from the implementation of Design-Thinking by the instructor for the purpose of this study. What is more, from the use of Design-Thinking and design-based activities, the researcher has developed a guide for instructors, providing information on the steps to be followed for the successful creation of a Design-Thinking task and its implementation in class. This is hence one of the main outputs of this paper. From the obtained results, it has been concluded that Design-Thinking is well perceived from learners in the ESL classroom, allowing them to encompass more as instructors/explorers rather than students and hence help them perceive well information and the usage of a new teaching method in class.

**Keywords:** Design-Thinking, ESL, design-based research, learning through design thinking