ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT-CLASSROOM STRATEGIES

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Abstract:The purpose of this piece is to demonstrate how step by step, teachers start to successfully integrate the technology into their classes. Students tend to engage in their learning only if their teachers are inventive, modern and create new opportunities for the studentsř learning. Students learn better when they show interest and when they are challenged by the activities that teachers create for them.

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The study Pedagogy and Practice: Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools, created by DfE UK (Department for Education) offers a few practical strategies that teachers might want to incorporate in their teaching. The department state that:

Engagement is about promoting those approaches to teaching and learning that help pupils understand subject knowledge and its application and that demand their active participation. (DfE, 2004:1).

When we refer to students being engaged in a lesson, it means that they show interest, behave well and are ready to learn new, interesting things. The great advantage is that if the students are hooked, teachers do not have to cope with behavior management and do not have to worry about it. The department discussed the possibilities of how can we make sure that the students are fascinated by our resources and our teaching style. It has been demonstrated that the teacher must provide a varied amount of opportunities for students to experience that will develop their interest and concerns; encourage students to always ask questions, especially when they are stuck with a task. Sometimes, because they are not encouraged enough, students might feel embarrassed if they asked something in front of their peers, whilst others who are more confident, always try out ideas and exchange knowledge. Equally important, the teachers must develop a great relationship with the students in order to create a calm and relaxed atmosphere during the lesson. When tension is created, it can affect the evolution and progress that can be made in the lesson.

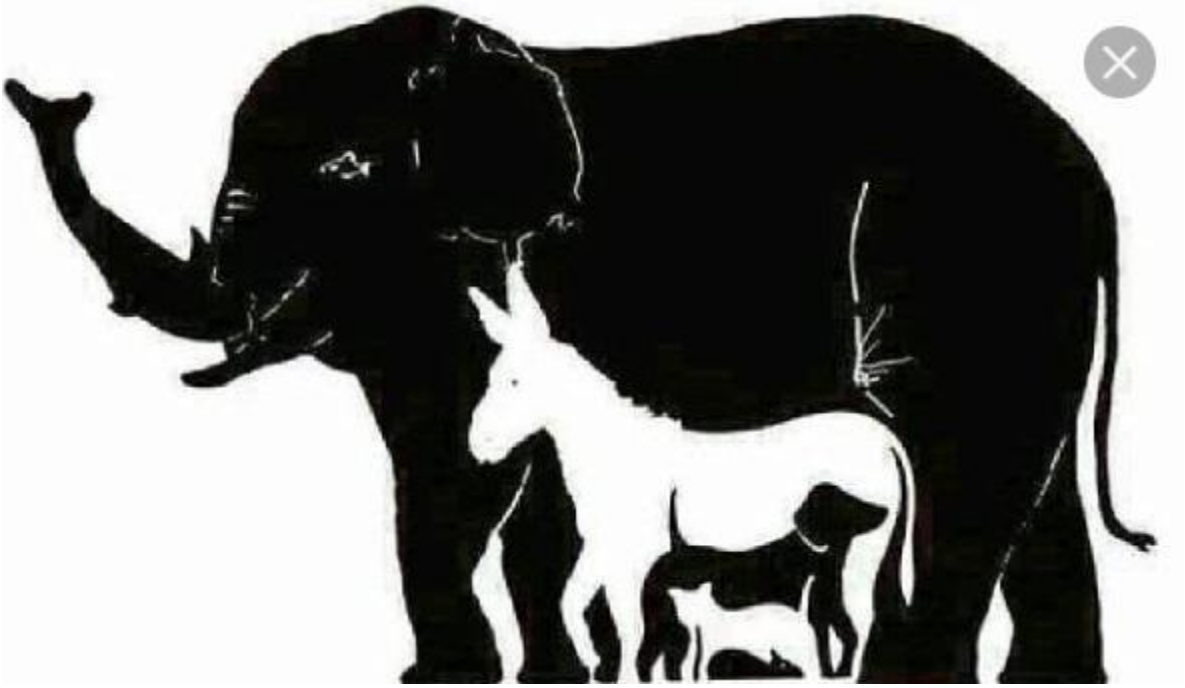
Nowadays, the use of a video projector and a computer for every single lesson, the use of the internet, a laser pointer, a timer for most competitions, visual aids, interactive board and games such as Kahoot, SPLAT and Memrise provide outstanding activities. Once we welcome the technology in our classroom, we can benefit from better learning, happier students and good results. Let us discover which style is more favorable for the studentsř intelligence and creativity.

- **Splat:** The teacher displays pictures from the current topic on the interactive board and then chooses two volunteers to play the game. The teacher says a word in the target language and the students have to hit the board, showing the right picture that matches with the word said by the teacher. This game works for every topic.
- **Kahoot**: It is a learning platform that contains a collection of quizzes on specific topics. ŖCreated by teachers, students, business people and social users, they are asked in real-time, to an unlimited number of ŘplayersŘ, creating a social, fun and game-like learning environment. There is no limit to

the number of questions in a quiz. Each question can have an associated picture or video, and 2-4 multiple choice answers. The time-limit for each question can be individually set from 5 seconds to 2 minutes. The faster someone answers a question correctly, the more points they get.ŗ(What is a Kahoot?)
http://blog.getkahoot.com/post/58906886260/what-is-a-kahoot

- **Memrise:** It is am effective and interactive app that can be set up by the teacher and helps students to memorise a specific vocabulary in different languages, based on specific modules learn at school, such as ŘLes Vacancesř, ŘLa Technologieř. Students are invited by the teacher to create an account themselves, too. The teacher can set different tasks that the students need to complete by a specific date. The teacher can also monitor the studentsř progress online. It has been demonstrated that it has a bigger impact than just learning the new content from their books or folder.

DfE suggested some techniques that we can use successfully in the lesson, regardless the subject and topic we teach. For example, visual starter is one of them; it gives the students the chance to be provoked and ask questions about the picture. At the same time, it stimulates the studentsř imagination and it offers concepts about what it could be. I have used a few times the following image as a starter, first lesson after students had learnt animals in French. I asked to write down as many animals they can see, in target language. In this case, we can link ideas to learning focus. The advantage is that all students are involved and, most importantly, it activates prior learning and motivates them to generate connections.



Visuals make learning more permanent because most of the students remember things that they have seen and that is why the use of these pictures and images displayed around the classroom facilitate learning. The intention of the visual aids is that they present and check understanding. They need to be creative and interesting, to attract students. The pictures are used the most as prompts for creative writing, in order to inspire the students to produce the best piece of writing. They can be hung on the walls or displayed on the computer. Visual aids can also be useful for matching activities, such as ŘFind the partnerř game. Students are given different cards and they have to move around the classroom to find their partner. For

example, if one student has got a card on which is written ŘJe me reveille….ř he has to find the student that has written on his card Řà 6 heures du matin.ř

Another idea that is suggested by DfE refers to the plenary. At the end of the lesson, in the last 5 minutes, students can be asked to write a newspaper title about what they learnt in the lesson; they could stand up and play ŘThe ball gameř. The teacher throws a ball and the students that get it must answer a question related to the lesson. This idea creates a great assessment opportunity and it targets the ones that are orally confident. At the same time, it also consolidates learning and the students share good practice, by evaluating what they have learnt in the lesson.

Focused video sequence is another great idea recommended by DfE. In this case, students have to look for information and write the ideas down and/or discuss with peers and then give feedback to the teacher. For example, this is a great idea to teach Y10 students about technology.

Carmen-Stromae

1) Montrez aux apprenants ces photos et expliquez-leur qu'elles apparaissent dans le clip vidéo Carmen de Stromae.

Posez-leur quelques questions :

- **De quoi s'agit-il ?**
- **Est-ce que vous vous pouvez décrire ces photos ?**
- **Est-ce que vous reconnaissez l'homme qui apparaît sur les photos ?**
- **À quoi elles vous font penser ?**
- **Devinez-vous quel thème aborde la chanson qu'on va écouter ?**

2) Faites visionner le début du clip (- 0.17). Faites commenter la première scène.

La vidéo commence avec un petit oiseau bleu sur le rebord de la fenêtre et un petit garçon en train de surfer sur Internet.

Avant de continuer, divisez la classe en 3 groupes. Le 1er groupe sera chargé de relever toutes les personnes, le 2e groupe fera une liste de tous les lieux tandis que le 3e va énumérer les actions.

Personnes	Lieux	Actions
Stromae (petit garçon)	Dans la chambre	Surfer sur Internet
L'oiseau bleu	Dans la cuisine	Prendre des selfies
Stromae (ado)	Dans la rue	Manger
Sa famille (mère, père, grand-mère, petite sœur)	Au restaurant	Sortir dans la rue
Une petite fille	A une fête d'anniversaire	Faire de la trotinette
Une jeune fille	Au cinéma	Marcher
Sa femme	Au parc	Dîner
Justin Bieber	Dans sa chambre	Etre assis sur un banc au parc
Lady Gaga	Au bord du précipice	Se disputer avec sa femme
La reine d'Angleterre	Dans la chambre d'une petite fille	Partir de chez lui
Barack Obama		Tomber du précipice
Un oiseau bleu géant		
Une petite fille		

Quel est le message véhiculé par la chanson?

In other words, it is fascinating to note that the teachers use the computer in order to prepare the lessons. We only need a computer, a projector and a laser pointer, that helps us to move from one slide to another. It changes the rituals in a classroom. It easily changes the ŘOld-fashionř teaching into a modern and enjoyable environment. First of all, the projector helps the students when they take notes-it is easier to look at the content and write information down than to listen to the teacher and write at the same time. Another bonus that this offers is that it stimulates participation. The students are not scared to come in front and they normally take this role very seriously. We call this trick ŘBe the teacherř-a student has to come in front and pretend he is the teacher. In this way, he explains a part of the grammar or asks his peers to complete different tasks and activities.

For example, if we are teaching about traditions in France, Germany or any other place, it is advisable to use these resources in order to make the activities more interactive. We can look on Google Earth for that place.

The computers are very useful when we want to book a lesson in an ICT room, where students can discover interactive activities. They can use the links below in order to practise a certain topic in French, Spanish or German.

- www.francais-extra.co.uk
- www.languagesonline.org.uk

Of course, the only disadvantage is represented by an electricity or internet failure. Then, until the problem is sorted, the teachers can go back to ŘOld-fashionř system. It happened to me once (the internet didnřt work for about an hour) and I felt very happy to show the students that there are other ways of learning. They enjoyed completing worksheets and they found the grammar exercises more challenging that the games we were normally playing. I consider that, at least sometimes, all the teachers should move from modern to ŘOld-fashionř system or the other way round. That helps to eliminate the boredom of routines.

Conclusions

To summarize, in order for the students to develop high-esteem, make great progress, feel more confident and work well with peers, teachers need to establish great relationships with students, create a supportive and safe environment and engage students accordingly, by using modern ways of teaching, such as computers, games and songs.

Modern teachers are more focused on getting the routines right in order to tackle the studentsř poor behavior. That is why we need a good structure of the syllabus, including a lot of ICT skills, as technology nowadays plays a very important role in teaching and learning. This article gives teachers another perspective in terms of the modern equipment used within a lesson but also factors, tricks and games to raise studentsř motivation for learning.

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